

# Society for American Baseball Research

## BIBLIOGRAPHY COMMITTEE

### NEWSLETTER

July 1997 (97-3)

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#### Comments from the Chair

Andy McCue

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Louisville (SABR 27) was a fine time, with much progress made on several fronts.

In regard to RBI (see the following article, which was submitted to the SABR Board of Directors in Louisville), I felt we got a much more positive response from both SABR officials and members than we had had in any previous year. Since searches using the database have been available since early this year, many more SABR members understand the purpose and utility of the project. The SABR Board is indicating a high level of interest and we intend to continue to pursue the growth of RBI.

Rodney Johnson (956 W. La Jolla Dr., Tempe, AZ 85282; 602/968-8065; e-mail FDelhichpt@aol.com), head of the committee that is planning the 1998 SABR Convention in Phoenix, and a founding member of the Flame Delhi chapter in Arizona, has joined the Bibliography Committee. We hope to get Rodney involved in several of the Committee's projects.

Several people approached me in Louisville asking for information about the Bibliography Committee. I hope they return their questionnaires and get enrolled.

Book indexes continued to show progress. Tom Shieber is working on an index to Lee Allen's *100 Years of Baseball* (1950). Tom Hetrick has completed an index to Jim Bouton's *Ball Four* (1970). Brad Sullivan, in addition to his amazing volume of work on RBI, managed to produce an index for Harold Kaese & R.G. Lynch's *The Milwaukee Braves* (1954) to supplement the one Bob Bailey did for Kaese's *The Boston Braves* (1948). Book indexes prepared by Committee members are deposited in the SABR Research Papers Collection, coordinated by Len Levin (282 Doyle Ave., Providence, RI 02906).

Twenty-one people attended the Committee's business meeting and chewed over various projects. I urged them, and I urge all of you, to promote the Committee's work whenever you attend a SABR regional meeting. I think most regional heads would give you a few minutes to solicit volunteers for RBI and for entries that could be sent to Rich Arpi for inclusion in *Current Baseball Publications*.

In one pre-Convention note, Myron J. (Jack) Smith, Jr., who compiled the original *Baseball: A Comprehensive Bibliography* (and its update) for McFarland, contacted me about a forthcoming update possibly as early as next year and a full integrated new book by early in the next century. If any of you have kept records of the mistakes you stumbled across in the earlier editions, pass them on to Smith (1897 Morrison Rd., Chuckey, TN 37641).

In Louisville, I transferred the last 40 copies of Frank Phelps' index to The Sporting News *Baseball Registers* to SABR Headquarters. Thus, it was both the research success that Frank made it

and the financial success I hoped for when I paid Kinko's bill out of my own pocket. I sold enough copies to get my money back and now SABR will sell the remainder.

In a similar vein, let me remind you again about Committee member John Spalding's guide to baseball guides, record books, and registers (1869-1995). Using John's book, you can check a topic you are interested in and then find the short articles and fillers that appeared about it in these reference books. The guide sells for \$14.95; contact John (1875 S. Bascom Ave., Suite 116-257, Campbell, CA 95008).

I hope all is well with you. Please stay in touch and keep working on Committee projects.

#### Research in Baseball Index (RBI)

##### Current Status and Future Considerations

Ted Hathaway, Andy McCue, and Tim Cashion  
RBI Co-Directors

##### Status of the database

- The RBI database is divided currently into three parts reflecting the three principal types of information sources: Books; Book Sections (or chapters); and Articles.

- RBI has grown in less than five years from zero to 64,222 cataloged records, comprising 15,286 books (23.8%), 7801 book sections (12.1%), and 41,135 articles (64.1%).

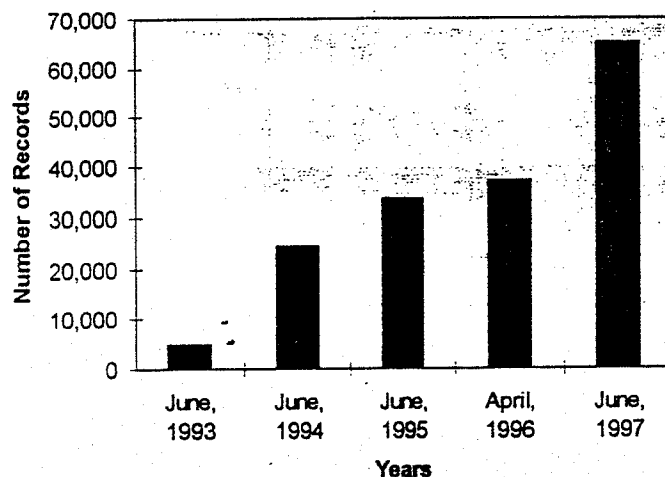
- The initial growth of the Books database was the largest of the three databases, but has slowed in the past couple years. In terms of sheer coverage of existing book titles, this database is nearest to completion. We estimate that 80-90% of all books ever published on baseball are now contained in this database. Surveys of universal bibliographic databases such as WorldCat and OCLC support this estimate. However, only about 20% of the books in the database have been cataloged in full detail.

- The Book Sections database has grown steadily over time and will likely continue to do so. In addition to containing parts of baseball works, there are also a host of sports and nonsports publications that contain significant sections on baseball; these will be added as well.

- The Articles database has experienced the most dramatic growth of the three databases in the past two years, thanks largely

(continued)

#### The Growth of RBI: 1992-1997



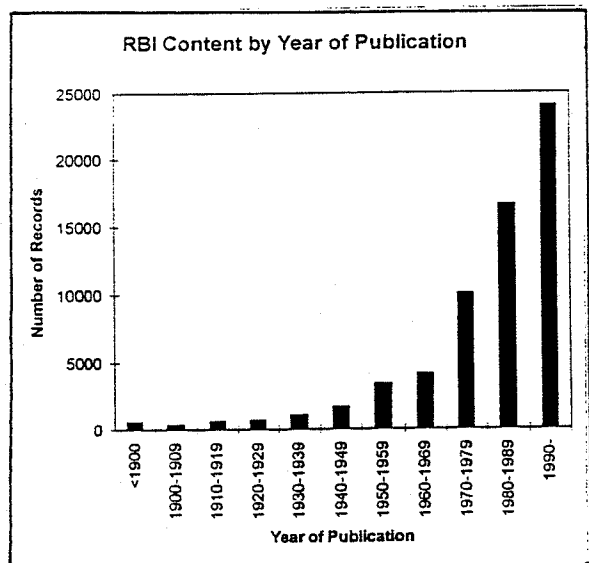
- The Books database will continue to grow slowly as new titles are published each year and various older titles are found and added. More significantly, a steadily increasing number of existing records will be improved as more books are completely cataloged. Better access to the content of books will be the result and the usefulness of this database will increase.

- The Book Sections database will also continue to grow, but perhaps at a slower pace. This database was set up to address biographical and team history compilations, certain kinds of anthologies and collections, and the many books that contain sections on baseball along with other subjects. The number of these kinds of sources is more finite than other kinds of baseball books. Furthermore, most of the current records in this database are fully cataloged. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect an eventual "completion" of this database (excepting newly published titles). It will likely also remain the smallest of the three databases.

- The Articles database represents the Labors of Hercules for this project. The previously mentioned numbers for *The Sporting News* graphically illustrate this activity. Based on these numbers, we could estimate that *TSN* alone might generate a quarter of a million cataloged records. Aside from this output, there are several vitally important publications that have been cataloged only minimally. We won't even bother to mention newspapers.

But should such work be considered a goal for RBI, or should we focus on more attainable objectives that would still improve the breadth and depth of the database? The thousands of articles that Brad Sullivan cataloged from *TSN* cannot be regarded as anything less than vital additions to RBI, but the work he has done on *Athletic Journal*, *Scholastic Coach*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Wall Street Journal* from the 1930s to the 1970s is equally important because of the increased depth of coverage they gave to RBI. More than 85% of this database consists of articles published since 1970. More than 98% since 1940!

Clearly, some effort needs to be made to improve our coverage (see accompanying chart). If not with *TSN*, then perhaps *Baseball Magazine*, *Sporting Life*, or *Porter's Spirit of the Times*. One of the



most frustrating experiences we've had with research using the database is discovering the paucity of information we have on "less than premiere" players from before 1960. Retrospective sources tend to cover mainly better-known players. Only through improved cataloging of contemporary sources earlier in this century can RBI truly begin to approach "comprehensiveness" in its coverage.

#### What is to be done?

Mentioning the volunteer nature of RBI brings us to perhaps the most significant issue facing RBI: the long-range continuation of

the project. McCue and Hathaway have been working on this project for seven years. Cashion has been with us for nearly half that time. Many volunteers have come and gone, interest waxes and wanes. Even the stalwart Brad Sullivan at one point left the project for a couple of years. The project's co-directors will all eventually grow weary of this long-term venture and leave it to someone else. We are not suggesting this is imminent, but rather stating the inevitable. The problem is, obviously, who will take it over.

Even more significant are the issues of the sheer management of the database, both physical and administrative, and the reliability of volunteer contributions, both in terms of output and accuracy. As mentioned earlier, the bulk of the database is the work of a small group of people. While this may seem frustrating for such a large project, in some respects it has been an advantage.

As time goes on, the size of the database will make such changes and corrections increasingly difficult. It will become a considerable burden on whoever is in charge. After conducting hundreds of searches during the past seven months, we cannot overemphasize the importance of accuracy in our catalog records. Misspelled or inaccurate names or terms mean that you can't find the record you're searching for. Some of these problems could be addressed with cross-referencing, but that is currently beyond the scope of our software.

Ideally, we would like to see the following scenario for RBI (our apologies for the technobabble):

- Two persons working on the project full time. Both would work on developing the database, but one would be mainly in charge of cataloging, while the other would handle research and systems operation issues. Based on our experience with Brad Sullivan we could reasonably expect the database to grow at a rate of 25,000 records per year.

- RBI would run off a Sun Workstation, or other such super microcomputer, using database software that would incorporate our cataloging manual allowing for instant corrections and updating, double-checking of anomalous subject terms or personal names, and spell-checking. It would also operate at a much faster pace, allow for full-text searching, and have full-text storage capacity.

- RBI would be accessible via the Internet with a multiple field interface on the World Wide Web. It would also be available on CD-ROM for anyone who wants to own his/her own copy. It might even be available through fee-based vendors, such as DIALOG.

These are the kinds of conditions and materials that RBI will need to become truly useful and manageable. Is it possible for SABR to do this? Unlikely. SABR lacks the funding, personnel, and organizational structure to accommodate a database and service of this kind. SABR research projects, even large ones such as the recently completed home run encyclopedia, have always seen publication as the end result. Obviously, this is not possible for something the size of RBI, nor is it desirable. And while enormous work has been done by our volunteers, the size of the database and the manifold problems attendant with a volunteer-based project will ultimately make RBI unmanageable. Indeed, it may be so already.

RBI must eventually reside with an institution or organization—most likely a college, university, or research institute—that can devote the funding, personnel, and technology necessary for its full development and usefulness. The Hall of Fame is an obvious location for this database, but probably more as a site, rather than in partnership with SABR. The Hall has very limited funds and its special relationship with the Clark family would make additional funding or staffing resources for RBI unlikely. A more workable relationship may be built with a school or research institution having a strong focus on sports or American studies. This possibility may be years in the future, and we are as yet uncertain as to how it can be done. But it is a reality we eventually must face: SABR is not set up to handle something like RBI, even though it might always be its biggest user.

For now, we can focus on more attainable objectives: 1) continue correcting the content of the database to make it more accurate and useful; 2) continue to improve the catalog manual; and

3) provide the Hall of Fame with a copy of the database for use in its library.

While the day of reckoning is perhaps not at hand for RBI, we must address the larger issues now, as well as continue with the database's steady growth, so that we may be confident we are headed in the right direction.

#### For further information

Contact Ted Hathaway, 5645 Fremont Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55419; phone 612/869-1420 (home), 612/372-6662 (work); e-mail: hathae@msus1.msus.edu.

## Annual Report of the Bibliography Committee, 1996-97

**Andy McCue**

*Chairman, SABR Bibliography Committee*

The Bibliography Committee seeks to identify and catalog research materials that could be of interest to SABR members. The Committee was formed in 1984 and has 75 members. Here is a run-down on the Committee's major projects:

Rich Arpi continues to produce *Current Baseball Publications (CBP)*, a quarterly and annual list of baseball books and periodicals. Produced by the Committee since 1985, *CBP* is available from SABR headquarters and is also sold to non-SABR subscribers.

Frank Phelps' 78-page index to *The Sporting News Baseball Registers* continue to sell well. The Committee has recovered the \$500 it spent to produce the pamphlet and is turning over about 40 copies to SABR for future sale.

Howard Pollack finished an index to *The Philadelphia Phillies* by Fred Lieb & Stan Baumgartner (1953) and several other Committee members volunteered to prepare indexes for important baseball books that lacked them. Committee members have completed indexes for virtually all of the Putnam team histories, as well as some other books. Copies of these indexes are available from Len Levin at the SABR Research Exchange.

Skip McAfee, the Committee's Vice Chair, has produced the quarterly newsletter in fine style and on time. Terry Smith and Ron Kaplan led a crew of book reviewers.

The Committee's core project was renamed from Baseball Online to Research in Baseball Index (RBI). This is an electronic catalog of baseball research materials and can be used just as you would use a card catalog in a library as a starting point for research. As of mid-May 1997, RBI had 61,000 items cataloged, up from 37,000 a year ago. The quality of many entries has improved as well. Approximately two-thirds of these citations are fully cataloged.

During the winter, Tim Cashion established access to the RBI database through the SABR Web site ([www.sabr.org](http://www.sabr.org)) on the Internet. Ted Hathaway received and processed dozens of requests and turned over more than \$400 to SABR in fees collected for those searches. Requests have also been taken, and fulfilled, from SABR-L postings, phone calls, letters, and in other ways.

Hathaway, Cashion, and Andy McCue oversee the RBI project, with Ted focusing on periodicals and Andy on books. Exceptional volunteers for the project have been Bernie Esser, Steve Milman, Joe Murphy, Terry Sloope, John McMurray, Bob Boynton, Skip McAfee, and the amazing Brad Sullivan.

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## Literature Review

**Leverett T. (Terry) Smith**

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**Jackie**

I know. I know. We've all heard about Jackie Robinson until our heads are spinning. "No more, please!", I hear you saying. What could I have to say that might add to the extraordinary chorus of praise that has accompanied the 50th anniversary of his major league debut? Nothing, in all probability. I'm writing neither to praise nor to bury Jackie, but to remark the various writings about him that have accumulated in my library during the past 50 years. Thus what follows won't be anywhere near comprehensive. In addition, I'll be speaking from the perspective of a life-long New York Giants fan, for whom Robinson and the Dodgers were always the "enemy".

Jackie Robinson undoubtedly was a more complex human being than the mythic figure we celebrate this year. Even such serious academic historians as Eliot Gorn and Warren Goldstein seem to oversimplify his case in the following statement from *A Brief History of American Sports* (Hill & Wang, 1993; p.218):

"For if the Jackie Robinson saga was a sports-world version of the early stage of the Civil Rights movement—restrained, self-sacrificing, aiming for justice and reconciliation, idealizing integration—the story of Muhammad Ali is just as powerfully rooted in the Black Power and black separatist movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s."

Jackie never seemed restrained, particularly on the basepaths, to this Giants fan: he was a menace. I suspect that Gerald Early's characterization of Robinson as "a complicated and admittedly often disturbing and unappealing man" is the truer one. Early's essay [we remember Gerald Early as one of the talking heads of Ken Burns' *Baseball*!—"Jackie Robinson, Amiri Baraka, Paul Robeson, and a Note on Politics, Sports, and the Black Intellectual" from *Tuxedo Junction: Essays on American Culture* (Ecco Press, 1989; p.208-214)—is well worth reading for its portrait of Robinson, for its summary of Baraka's views (for Baraka, Robinson was "the Frankenstein's monster of American racial pathology"), and for his mention that Martin Duberman's "exhaustive" biography of Robeson (Knopf, 1988) contains material on Robinson. Another essay on Robinson appears in Early's *The Culture of Bruising* (Ecco Press, 1994; p.146-154), in which he compares Robinson and Willie Mays.

Jackie Robinson in his autobiographies tended more and more to acknowledge his own complexity. I have in my library a paperback copy of *Jackie Robinson: My Own Story* as told to Wendell Smith (Greenberg, 1948), undoubtedly given to me then by some rabid Dodgers fan. I never would have bought it myself. Now I'm glad I have it, even though it minimizes (but does not erase) the difficulties Robinson encountered through his first year in the majors. The mood of Robinson's *Baseball Has Done It*, edited by Charles Dexter (Lippincott, 1964)—interviews with African-American major leaguers—is both combative and celebratory, as the title suggests. I don't own a copy of *I Never Had It Made*, with A. Duckett (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1972), but its title suggests an emphasis on conflict (the book was reprinted in 1995 by Ecco Press).

It's no coincidence that some of the best books ever written on the subject of baseball have Jackie Robinson as their subject. Roger Kahn's solemn and operatic *The Boys of Summer* (Harper & Row, 1972) seems as vivid and substantial now as it did when published a quarter of a century ago. The boys of summer are the Jackie Robinson Dodgers, and "the dominant truth of the Jackie Robinson Dodgers was integration" (p.xvi). Robinson himself "bore the burden of a pioneer and the weight made him more strong" (p.xix). Robinson's own ruin involved both the death of his first son and his own physical disintegration. Kahn finds himself shocked "to re-

alize that I was slowing my own pace so as not to walk too quickly for Jackie Robinson" (p.402).

Quite probably the best academic study of any aspect of baseball is Jules Tygiel's *Baseball's Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1983), now available in a Vintage paperback. Tygiel sets Robinson's career in the contexts of the Negro Leagues, major league baseball, and American culture at large.

At a somewhat less exalted level lie Peter Golenbock's fervent oral history of the Dodgers, *Bums* (Putnam, 1984), and David Falkner's biography of the public Robinson, *Great Time Coming* (Simon & Schuster, 1995). Golenbock's book contains plenty of talk from Dodger players, other employers, journalists, and fans. Falkner's is the first biography to look extensively at Robinson's life after he retired from baseball (although the author was denied access to family and archival material).

Robinson's life is also inextricably tied now to the history of the city of Brooklyn, and it's not just that his body is buried there. Frederic Roberts' essay "A Myth Grows in Brooklyn: Urban Death, Resurrection, and the Brooklyn Dodgers (*Baseball History*, Summer 1987, p.4-24,26) engagingly considers the meanings of the connectedness of the team and the city.

Several novels do this as well. Every Dodger fan should have, on his or her bookshelf, a copy of Philip Goldberg's *This is Next Year* (Ballantine Books, 1991), a chronicle of Brooklyn in 1955 as seen through the eyes of one Brooklyn family. Jay Neugeboren's *Sam's Legacy* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973) is, among other things, a portrait of Brooklyn in the early 1970s with its "changing neighborhoods". The Dodgers are a faint but unmistakable presence in the book, and the nature of "race" is a major theme. The protagonist in the course of the novel has to adjust emotionally to the fact that his father has left Brooklyn to retire in (take a wild guess!)—Los Angeles. I understand copies of *Sam's Legacy* are hard to find, and so far as I know, no one has reprinted it. For a scary look at Brooklyn in the 1980s, try Thomas Boyle's *Only the Dead Know Brooklyn* (Penguin Books, 1986). The Dodgers are still a presence, in fact more of a presence than in *Sam's Legacy*. In Boyle's crime novel, the subjects of race, gentrification, and the Dodgers are embodied in the figure of a psychotic killer, an albino Negro who wears a Brooklyn Dodgers warmup jacket and tells people he is the illegitimate son of Jackie Robinson. Roberts gives the book considerable attention in the aforementioned essay (p.20-23).

Of the recent books on Robinson and the Dodgers, three deserve special mention:

1) *Jackie Robinson: An Intimate Portrait* (Harry N. Abrams, 1996) is an extraordinary picture book with an accompanying text by his wife, Rachel Robinson. The text itself seems rather thin, but there are many useful details. For instance, after they moved to Stamford (Conn.), the Robinsons named their dog after supposed mentor Branch Rickey. This would suggest a relatively complicated relationship with the Mahatma. In general, Mrs. Robinson's memories of life with her husband are important and moving. The pictures, though, are the more important part of the book. There's one of Jackie leaving the Brooklyn clubhouse, looking very old; in the background a cat looks up at him. There are wonderful pictures with political implications; e.g., Robinson shaking hands with President Eisenhower at a formal dinner in 1953, and later Robinson sitting at a lunch counter with Malcolm X.

2) Carl E. Prince's *Brooklyn's Dodgers: The Bums, the Borough, and the Best of Baseball* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1996) also is an extraordinary book. An academic treatise, it attempts to show how the team embodied many of the social and political concerns of the day. It's an intriguing effort to see a major league team in its cultural context, even though it seems much too brief (less than 150 pages of text).

3) Although much of the material in *The Jackie Robinson Reader: Perspectives on an American Hero* (Dutton, 1997), edited by Jules Tygiel, initially will seem familiar to the SABRite,

Tygiel's stated concern is to make the book "an alternative biography" of Robinson (p.vii). While there are excerpts from the usual sources, there's also a good deal of material collected from newspapers and magazines, as well as two previously unpublished pieces: a 1945 article by Arthur Mann on the signing of Robinson and part of a 1946 report to major league owners on the "race question". These make the collection especially valuable.

Tygiel's anthology also reminds me of all the books about Robinson and the Dodgers I haven't read, but a Giants fan has to retain some of his dignity. I'm always comforted by the fact that when the Dodgers no longer wanted Robinson's services, they traded him to the Giants. To my mind, this is evidence that Giants owner Horace Stoneham was no dummy. And I find myself wishing Robinson had played that year with the Giants. It would have made that last year of National League baseball in New York a lot less miserable for both Giant and Dodger fans. And it seems no more heretical than Leo Durocher's sudden transfer from the Dodgers to the Giants in 1948, or hated Giant Sal Maglie's appearance as a Dodger pitching mainstay in 1956. In any case, after all this Dodgers reading, I'll need another review of the 1951 National League season, just to regain my equilibrium.

## Book Reviews

Skip McAfee

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### DIAMONDS FOREVER: Reflections from the Field, the Dugout & the Bleachers

W.P. Kinsella, ed. Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd., 1997. 152p. \$12.

### BASEBALL LETTERS: A Fan's Correspondence with His Heroes

Seth Swirsky. New York: Kodansha International, 1996. 180p. \$24.

*Don't buy these books!* Unless you want to throw your money away on a couple of novelty items.

Kinsella assembled a collection of 139 "best baseball quotations" and arranged them into sections such as "the mystery of the game", "humor", "diamond wisdom", "potpourri", and "what's that again?". Unfortunately, there's little justification to indicate that these quotes are the "best". Source citations are given for only half of the entries; and the sources (often incomplete) are listed in small print in the back of the book.

A much more serious concern is that at least two-thirds of the quotations were lifted directly from Paul Dickson's *Baseball's Greatest Quotations* (1991), but *without attribution* to Dickson's much more comprehensive and authoritative work. It's as if the publisher borrowed Kinsella's name to sell a hastily put-together vanity book.

Swirsky (listed as author, but more correctly should be as compiler or assembler, and certainly not as "editor") has gathered copies of 97 original handwritten or typed replies asked of each player or other baseball personality, together with nearly 75 photos and capsule biographies of each correspondent. The intent was to capture "great stories, colorful anecdotes, heartfelt sentiments, and lessons about life". Swirsky hoped that the correspondents would recall special events, set the record straight, or "just plain reminisce".

But the book disappoints because many of the replies are illiterate and uninformative. Hardly any give new insight on special events or a player's career. Questions asked by Swirsky often were not addressed by the player. What began as a nifty idea for a collection of direct quotations results instead in a wish that the players were more forthcoming, articulate, and truthful (Enos Slaughter still contends that he never intentionally spiked Jackie

Robinson) when recounting their stories or anecdotes. The book lacks an index of correspondents and named persons.

## Book Review

**Ted Hathaway**

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### BASEBALL AT WAR: World War II and the Fall of the Color Line

Thomas Gilbert. New York: Franklin Watts, 1997. 144p. illus. ISBN 0-531-113330-2. \$22.95

This is the latest in a series of books Gilbert has written that constitute a multivolume history of baseball: *Elysian Fields: The Birth of Baseball* (1995), *Superstars and Monopoly Wars: Nineteenth-Century Major League Baseball* (1995), *Dead Ball: Major League Baseball before Babe Ruth* (1996), *The Soaring Twenties: Babe Ruth and the Home-Run Decade* (1996), and *The Good Old Days: Baseball in the 1930s* (1996). Although classed as "juvenile literature", they are really for young adults and are sophisticated enough to be worth reading for adults. I believe they represent the first comprehensive effort to chronicle the game for young readers. For this, Gilbert is to be commended.

Most of the books in this series cover a particular decade and this one is no different. As such, the title is a misnomer: it is actually about the decade of the 1940s and most of it concerns issues and events other than the war and integration. The layout of the book is more or less chronological, but focuses especially on notable pennant races and World Series. It proceeds as a series of stories or vignettes, interspersed with facts and figures.

The "storytelling" is the strength of this work and readers will find this the most enjoyable and informative aspect. The oft-told tale of baseball's integration is refreshed here as Gilbert gives the principal credit to Jackie Robinson. Rickey's role, though important, is seen (rightly, I believe) as far more self-serving and opportunistic than is usually acknowledged. The chapter on the Mexican League and the resulting labor conflicts (Robert Murphy and Danny Gardella) is excellent. The "facts and figures" scattered throughout are conveyed mechanically and may seem dull and obvious to most readers, but given the book's juvenile audience (presumably one unfamiliar with such facts), it is important that these are supplied.

This same layout, however, is also the work's principal shortcoming. It lacks any kind of flow and seems all chopped up, much like reading a series of note cards rather than a contiguous whole. Some events are told, then retold (e.g., how Bill Veeck was reviled for bringing Satchel Paige to the majors). Utter trivia, such as the balata ball, are given as much space as the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (dispatched in one paragraph!).

Despite the focus on great pennant races, 1949 goes completely unmentioned. There are also several clinkers: Gilbert repeats the canard of Veeck's "attempt" to integrate the Phillies in 1944; Debs Garms (1940 National League batting titleist) is called "Del"; and lifetime White Sox shortstop Luke Appling is said to play for the Senators.

Children's and young persons' books on baseball typically focus on teams and personalities, with emphasis given to recent figures and events. Gilbert's effort to bring past eras and lesser-known facts to the attention of young people is laudable and his vivid retelling of baseball stories should maintain interest. But this "note card"-strewn effort leaves many gaps and irregularities. While the factoid approach may appeal to television addicts, it makes for a clumsy book.

## Book Review

**Ron Kaplan**

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### THE WHITE SOX ENCYCLOPEDIA

Richard C. Lindberg. Photo research & color photography by Mark Fletcher. Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1997. 571p. illus. \$59.95

Who was the first player for the White Sox to break the 30-homer mark? The first Pale Hose pitcher to toss a no-hitter? Who led the Chisox to their four World Series appearances? Want in-depth profiles of the members of the Black Sox? *The White Sox Encyclopedia* is the source to answer these questions.

Lindberg has put together this marvelous reference work, packed with statistics and copiously illustrated. This fun, albeit high-priced, coffee-table edition, part of a series by Temple Univ. Press that will cover each of the original 16 major league teams, has everything the most discerning fan could ask for.

There are year-by-year reviews with team stats, current through the 1996 season, followed by an extensive chapter of player profiles. Lindberg writes: "[N]ot every player selected for inclusion [in the profile section] is Hall of Fame material. Many are long forgotten. However, each player left behind his imprimatur on Sox history, in a moment of diamond brilliance or throughout an entire career. We have chosen major award winners, the players who lingered in Chicago for 10 or more seasons, perennial fan favorites, the Black Sox (because the scandal is a defining epoch of team history), and a sprinkling of human interest stories." Herein are the likes of Tommie Agee, Gary Peters, Ted Lyons, Luis Aparicio, Eddie Collins, Richard Dotson, Jim Kaat, Ron Karkovice, Dave Nicholson, Frank Owen, Ray Schalk, Luke Sewell, Hoyt Wilhelm, and Walt (No Neck) Williams. And so as not to omit and offend any former Sox player, there is a list of everyone who appeared in the Sox uniform.

"The Strategists" profiles every White Sox manager, regardless of tenure. The subsequent section, "The Front Office", tells the stories not only of the owners and general managers, but the "support staff" as well, paying homage to the people behind the scenes.

There is a paean to Chicago's ballparks, not only both Comiskey, but the 39th Street Grounds, where the Sox played their home games from 1901 to 1910. There are 27 members of baseball's Hall of Fame who played at least part of their careers as members of the Sox; they are acclaimed in their own chapter. "Chicago Media in the Hall of Fame" is included as well.

One of the more entertaining sections consist of "Great Moments" in team history, including: Charlie Robertson's perfect game against Detroit in 1922; Pat Seerey's four-homer game against the Athletics in 1948; Minnie Minoso breaking the Chicago color barrier in 1951; the 1955 game against the Athletics in which the Sox scored 29 runs; and the 1959 pennant clincher. Box scores of other momentous games, sans stories, are also found here. More folksy renderings are offered in "Chisox Yarns".

Bart Williams contributed the chapter on the Sox in postseason play, as well as the "City Series" played between the Sox and their cross-town rivals, the Cubs. There's also a chapter on trades and acquisitions, including the "ten best" and "ten worst" trades in team annals. Finally, there is a very extensive section on "Awards, Milestones, Honors, Stats, and Trivia", with enough fodder to keep a cagey fan winning bar bets for years to come.

Other encyclopedia editions available in the series are the Phillies, Braves, Indians, and Cubs. They all follow the White Sox format for the most part and are all just as entertaining.