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Comments from the Chair

Andy McCue
Riverside, CA

A very successful convention in Atlanta, with a excellent panels on New Technologies in Baseball and the latest research regarding the Black Sox Scandal. Bobby Cox graced us with his presence on a game day and Fredi Gonzalez, between managing jobs, dropped in just to see what he could learn.

Our committee meeting was attended by 27 members and interested parties.

Bob McConnell solicited a volunteer to compile a comprehensive listing of the small, 19th-century newspaper which devoted themselves to baseball. This is not *Sporting Life* or *The Sporting News*, but papers that often last only a few issues. Bob has compiled a starting list, but it needs to be fleshed out with details on how long these papers appeared, what exactly they covered, where there are holdings, and how available such holdings are to researchers. If someone is interested in picking up this task, please contact me.

We had a lively discussion of getting more volunteers involved in our main project, The Baseball Index. Dick Miller suggested that I needed to break proposed tasks into smaller bits, which is excellent advice that I will take to heart.

Dick, Reid Duffy, Tom Metters, and Peter Cottrell all volunteered to work on issues of *Baseball Digest*. I'll be getting back to these volunteers soon. (Parenthetically, Jim Lannen sent me some back issues of *Baseball Digest* which our collection lacked, but the P.O. managed to destroy the package. Alas and alack).

I also solicited some additional volunteers to get involved with the committee. We could use an active vice-chair who is willing to take on some projects (mostly volunteer-raising) at this point, and eventually take over the committee. I have been chair for 18 years now, and while I'm willing to continue, I sense we could use some fresh blood in the chair. Please contact me if interested.

We did have our fourth consecutive rain problem and I can promise you there will be none of that next year. Our convention will be in Southern California from July 6-10 with the opportunity to see Dodger Stadium and Anaheim Stadium on the same weekend.

Hope you all enjoy the playoffs and World Series.

Feature Review

Outside and Inside the Game of Baseball

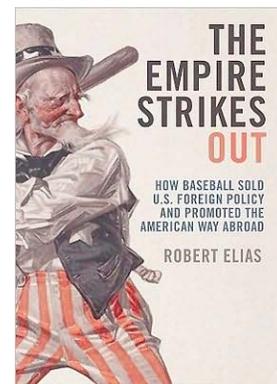
The Empire Strikes Out: How Baseball Sold U.S. Foreign Policy and Promoted the American Way of Life Abroad, by Robert Elias. The New Press, 2010.

High Heat: The Secret History of the Fastball and the Improbable Search for the Fastest Pitcher of All Time, by Tim Wendel. Da Capo Press, 2010.

Allen Guttman has long argued that we must understand sports both in their extrinsic contexts and for their intrinsic qualities. These two volumes illustrate these approaches to an extreme.

In the more comprehensive and academic of the two, political scientist Robert Elias, who teaches at the University of San Francisco and has written extensively on international relations, links his interest in the latter with his apparent love of baseball, though not necessarily of Major League Baseball (MLB). Tim Wendel, although he teaches at Johns Hopkins University, is primarily a journalist and writer, a founding editor of *USA Today Baseball Weekly*, and author of seven sports books. Their focus and approach is dramatically different here, but both touch on the centrality of baseball in the American consciousness and identity.

It can be easily maintained that Elias' thesis is political, even ideological. From its time during the Civil War era as incipient national pastime, organized baseball, which eventually became MLB, "has tried to associate itself with the values of the American dream. It has also sought to equate itself with American masculinity and patriotism, and with U.S. military endeavors in particular." At home it has served in the process of assimilation and racial control, while internationally, it has been an integral part of imperial growth and a model for globalization. This uncompromising support by MLB for condescending, aggressive, often military actions against smaller, weaker peoples continues down to the present, even though in the minds of many, football is



now the premier American pastime and more truly representative of American values and culture.

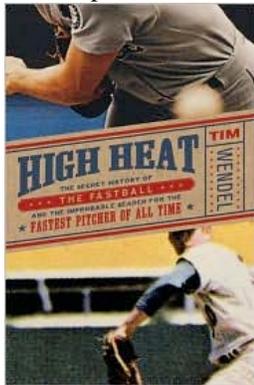
In the end, this marriage did not always aid the imperial push, as dominated societies often rejected the game or turned it into their own nationalistic expression. And the cost to baseball itself was the loss of a certain degree of spontaneity and integrity.

A recent contradiction in baseball's behavior is that, despite the flyovers, flag-waving, prayer times, patriotic sing-alongs, and windy speeches, during Vietnam, the Gulf Wars, post-9/11, Iraq, and Afghanistan, virtually no MLB or high minor league players joined the armed forces to fight, unlike in World Wars I & II and Korea when volunteers and draftees depleted or at least reduced rosters. In short, even more than before, it has been business as usual for MLB since the 1970s, profits trumping patriotism on the home front.

I also found a few what I consider factual errors, suggesting that Elias can at times be loose with the facts and overly exuberant in looking for supportive evidence and in arguing his case. For example, French citizen Philippe Bunau-Varilla was never a "U.S. minister," and the U.S. never "annexed Panama." Later, drawing on William Kelly, Elias claims that, in contrast to baseball, soccer is "played almost universally worldwide with little style variation," an assertion contradicted by such writers as Galeano, Murray, Mason, and even Salman Rushdie.

If Elias' arguments border on overkill, they are not out of line with what others have concluded. Gems, Bjorkman, Klein, Regalado, Pope, and more have previously linked baseball to American cultural, military, political, and economic empire building and likened the signing of foreign baseball talent to U.S. contracts to the classical pattern of exploitation of foreign natural resources for the benefit of the metropolitan center. No denying that Elias' compilation of sources is awesome. I wish, however, that he had included a bibliography because, at times after encountering an abbreviated entry in an endnote, it is almost impossible to find the full citation.

Wendel is less concerned with the heat that the American Empire, supported by MLB, has applied to other peoples and cultures than the heat that exceptionally talented pitchers have tossed at unprotected hitters: "The allure of speed, however fleeting and capricious, remained



one of the game's constants."

What was and is the source of that ability to throw so hard, what explains the success of those who have ridden it to fame and fortune, and who have been the fastest in the game's century and a half of fascination? First is rare, natural talent: the gift of an ability to throw hard and more or less accurately. After that, it's dedication and mental discipline. It's not physical size. And it's not a blessed or cursed upbringing; it

can be either or both. Tied to Wendel's evaluation of these fastball hurlers are several asides that make the book even more intriguing and informative. These include an explana-

tion of biomechanics as related to pitching and of the miraculous Tommy John surgery; also, an introduction to James Creighton, "the game's first true fireballer," and an extensive analysis of the talents and problems of little-known Steve Dalkowski. Unfortunately, the text carries no foot or endnotes, so all the anecdotes and quotes are undocumented.

The careers of Steve Blass, Mark Wohlers, and most dramatically Dalkowski illustrate the meaning of Frank Deford's recent confession that "pitchers fascinate me because a live arm is such a capricious possession and a dicey thing to depend on" (*Sports Illustrated*, March 29, 2010). Wendel also admits that "due to the expectations and pressures of possessing such rare talent, arguably more have suffered and even failed than have succeeded." Some have bounced back due to science and psychology, as seen in the Tommy John surgery, now so common. Others have drifted into obscurity or thoughts of what might have been; J.R. Richard on the mound, brought down by a stroke, and outfielder Tony Conigliaro, struck in the face in the batter's box, come to mind.

Wendel never addresses two intriguing and inter-related questions: 1) If his assumption is correct, why the American fascination with speed and quantification? Is this a uniquely American cultural characteristic? If so: 2) Is this focus on speed an equally important factor in the appeal of baseball outside the United States? Did Wendel's search for the fastest pitcher of all time lead to a conclusion? Based on available stats and loads of anecdotal evidence, the author lists his top twelve in this order: Nolan Ryan, Steve Dalkowski, Bob Feller, Walter Johnson, Sandy Koufax, Billy Wagner, "Satchel" Paige, Joel Zumaya, Amos Rusie, "Goose" Gossage, Bob Gibson, and J.R. Richard. Remember: the issue is speed, not wins, or strikeouts, or ERA.

Although these two authors approach baseball from dramatically different angles, they both touch on one, perhaps marginal, topic that illustrates their personal interests and perspectives: the Caribbean baseball academies.

Consistent with his criticisms of imperialism and globalization, Elias finds conditions at the academies "substandard," 'farms' that are the "modern-day manifestation of the sugar and banana plantations." To Elias, this is further proof that MLB's behavior is "designed primarily to tap resources rather than to supply very much in exchange. Instead of developing the game abroad, organized baseball seems concerned mostly with extracting talent." Wendel, more the optimist and promoter of the game, in contrast asserts that at the academies "the players' dorms or barracks often resemble the chain hotels," modeled "on Days Inns and Holiday Inns," such that "we prepare prospects from outside our borders better than we do the kids signed closer to home." An interesting footnote on this issue is the recent report by Melissa Segura that private capitalists have opened an academy independent of the MLB team programs and in competition with the traditional local scouts or *buscones* (*Sports Illustrated*, April 26, 2010). Wendel may be pleased; I doubt if Elias will see it as a significant shift in the power relationship.

What do these books offer to members of SLA and students of sport literature generally? Directly, not very much. Both were written by authors who have also written sports novels: Elias' *The Deadly Tools of Ignorance* (2005) and Wendel's *Castro's Curveball* (1999). And both contain oc-

casual references to other baseball novels. But the real value for all readers is what they suggest about the nature of the sport and its place in the larger American culture and imagination, thus providing context for writing and/or interpreting baseball fact and fiction.

Joseph Arbena

*Emeritus Professor of History
Clemson University*

*(This review first appeared in ARETE.
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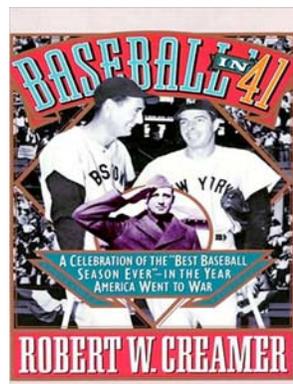


Baseball in '41, by Robert W. Creamer. Viking, 1991.

Robert Creamer, the longtime editor at *Sports Illustrated*, makes a break from his colorful biographies (*Babe: The Legend Comes to Life*; *Stengel: His Life and Times*) to pen a book that comes across as equal parts baseball history and personal history with *Baseball in '41*.

Set against the backdrop of an ongoing war in Europe and the very real probability that the United States was about to engage in the conflict, Creamer tells the story through his perspective as the 18-year old he was during the year's major events. The baseball events that you associate with 1941 are all here: Joe DiMaggio's 56-game hitting streak, Ted Williams' quest to hit .400 for the season and his game-winning home run in the All-Star Game, the pennant race between the Cardinals and Dodgers, and Mickey Owen's memorable dropped third strike that changed the face of the Dodger-Yankee World Series.

Along the way, we're given a look at such characters as Larry MacPhail, Branch Rickey, and Leo Durocher, and we're introduced to a newcomer to the Cardinals late in the season, a nice young fellow named Stan Musial.



Creamer spends enough time looking back prior to 1941 that we're given sufficient context with which to understand the events of the year. Why are Pete Reiser and Joe Medwick so important to the Dodgers-Cardinals rivalry? Why wouldn't Ted Williams be considered a top candidate

to hit .400 in a season? These and many other questions are answered to help explain events in their proper context, as opposed to what looks exceedingly obvious to the modern reader.

Therein lies one of Creamer's strengths in the book. A never-ending challenge to historians and readers of history alike, Creamer presents people and events as they were treated in 1941, not as they are seen in modern times with all of the benefits of knowing how a story ends before we even start to read it.

The year 1941 was not all fun and games, of course. Creamer spends considerable effort to include events from the "real world" into his baseball memoir, including Hitler's advances across the Eastern Hemisphere, Germany's aggression towards Russia, and the United States' peacetime military draft. Even in these events, Creamer remains faithful to his perspective as an 18-year-old, and as such presents some of these events with nonchalance and disinterest. Baseball was clearly the item on the forefront of his mind in 1941, whether or not it should have been.

Creamer covers DiMaggio's streak, Williams' chase and Hank Greenberg's draft status and eventual induction in great detail, and these portions which make up some of the strongest material in the book. The personal recollections of playing a baseball-like game on the beach with family members also add a flair and color to the text that keeps it from turning into a "Team A played Team B and Team A won" story.

However, there are some game-by-game re-tellings, which to my mind are the weakness of the book. There are too many people involved, too many games in too many places to follow easily, and the standings too abstract to keep track of everything accurately. Creamer is at his best not describing the details of a Cardinals-Dodgers game, but rather weaving that same game into the tapestry that was the 1941 season.

Another criticism that could be levied against the work is that Creamer spends too much time focused on New York and its teams to the neglect of the rest of baseball. The fact that DiMaggio – he of the 56-game hitting streak -- played in New York, as did both World Series participants should quell any such concern. Not much is made of either of the Philadelphia franchises, but not much deserves to be said about two teams that finished a combined 94 games out of first place. As one who seeks to avoid New York-centrism in baseball literature, I did not find this to be an issue.

All told, *Baseball in '41* is a nice, breezy read that adequately covers several important aspects of baseball and the world on the edge of World War II, and does so in a manner faithful to how things really were, not just how we want to think about them so long after the fact.

Andy Sturgill
West Chester, PA



The Great Match and Our Base Ball Club: Two Novels from the Early Days of Base Ball, edited by Trey Strecker and Geri Strecker. McFarland & Company, Inc., 2010.

These two early baseball texts are well met (and well married) in the recently published book edited by Trey and Geri Strecker. While *Our Base Ball Club* focuses more on illustrating how "baseball fever" could overtake a 19th century American town, both texts demonstrate the contempo-

rary significance of the game. Both authors — Noah Brooks, who had ties to Bret Harte and the local color movement and Mary Prudence Wells, whom Geri Strecker identified in a recent *Nine* article as the most likely candidate for the anonymous writer of *The Great Match* — treat the game as a recent and popular phenomenon. Thus, as cultural artifacts, these texts provide insight to the early days of baseball and the game’s evolution into America’s pastime. What’s more, both authors develop the formula that would later be used by twentieth century journalists to write the game into American culture through Bildung narrative, transitional values, and the “big game.”

Both narratives involve young men using the game of baseball as an important part of their maturation or Bildung process. Dick Softy, of *The Great Match* (1877), and Larry Boyne, of *Our Base Ball Club* (1884), prepare to take their place in the world through the discipline and self-confidence they develop while training to be baseball players. Both characters also experience resistance from the upper class cultural gatekeepers of their respective communities who frown upon young men who waste their time with “base ball.”

Even though it was published just seven years earlier, *The Great Match* is set in western Massachusetts and harkens back to the cultural supremacy of England, while *Our Base Ball Club* is set closer to the American frontier of northern Illinois and seats cultural authority in the local judge, entrepreneurs, and industrialists. In both cases, however, the authors leverage the status of baseball by showing how the game can aid in the proper development and maturity of a young man. Ring Lardner, Bozeman Bulger, Charles Van Loan, and other early 20th century baseball journalists adopted the same strategy to redact the rowdy image of professional players and make them fitting role models for the

middle-class readers of *The Saturday Evening Post*.

Brooks and Wells anticipate the transitional values used by later baseball authors when the virtues of Puritan and Victorian identity come in conflict with the more commercially driven definitions of manhood and masculinity that were developing in the late nineteenth century. What’s more, both authors anticipate elements used by later baseball

writers when they make gambling the central conflict faced by their protagonists.

In *The Great Match*, admiring fans are torn between their favorite player and his lack of integrity. In *Our Base Ball Club*, Larry Boyne must practice situational ethics to keep a gambling scandal out of the press and thus preserve the image of the burgeoning game of baseball. The players in both texts also enjoy a certain amount of celebrity status that challenges the nineteenth century virtue of humility, as when the small town players walk the streets of Chicago and overhear discussion of their on-field exploits in *Our Base Ball Club* and when an Irish immigrant uses his position as the pitcher of the local nine to exert his will on the local

entrepreneur in *The Great Match*. Later baseball writers addressed some of the same issues when their protagonists struggled between acting within the strictures of Victorian character and developing the modern tastes encouraged by the ads at the back of *The Saturday Evening Post* and other middle-class magazines.

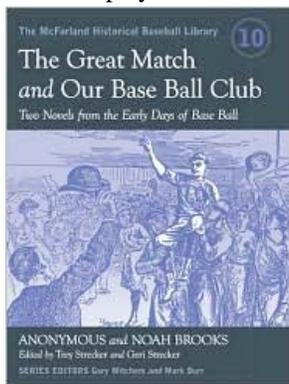
Wells and Brooks also laid the groundwork for the formula used by later writers when they employed the “big game” as the endpoint of baseball narratives featuring best-of-three-game series. *The Great Match* pits the old money of rural Dornfield against the nouveau riche of industrial Milltown. While *Our Base Ball Club* follows a similar pattern, there is less nationalistic freight attached to the matchup between the rural community of Catalpa and the city of Chicago. These similarities and the ones discussed above open the door for a view of *Our Base Ball Club* being written in opposition to *The Great Match*, as if Brooks was determined to produce a truer representation of how a town can be overrun by baseball fever — while also including the elements of romance that might interest the feminine half of his audience. Furthermore, Brooks takes his tale to another level by setting a portion of it in a real city (Chicago) and, according to Albert Goodwill Spalding, peopling it with “personages which are not wholly of his imagination.” Whether or not Brooks actually had Spalding and his hometown in mind is less important than the fact that Spalding saw himself as a model for Larry Boyne and Catalpa as a version of Rockport, Illinois due to the local color Brooks used to create a sense of verisimilitude for his “slender plot” that was “threaded on a base ball match” (to quote Spalding’s introduction again).

Where the author of *The Great Match* bolstered the narrative with country manners and Martha Washington teas, Brooks incorporated early box scores and the telegraph to put the reader in the story and further pave the way for later journalists who used real elements in their fiction.

Thus, not only is it more than fitting that *The Great Match* and *Our Base Ball Club* have been published together in a single volume, but both narratives are also worthy of scholarly attention even if their protagonists are young men and women on the cusp of maturity. The issues of gambling and honesty and situational responses to them make the texts and their characters into snapshots of American culture. What’s more, the use of the Big Game formula by both authors shows how early authors created the formula for writing the game into American culture due to its social, individual, and economic utility. Therefore, readers of this recent book might be drawn in by the baseball — but they should stay for the glimpses of how our modern sport culture developed in the late nineteenth century. The fact that *The Great Match* is not mentioned in Andy McCue’s bibliography, *Baseball By the Book*, further illustrates the service done by the Streckers and the McFarland Historical Baseball Library in bringing it to our attention in the present volume. So, three cheers and a tiger for all involved in the book’s production.

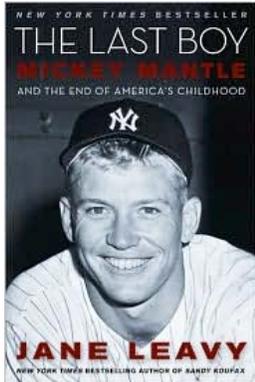
Scott Peterson
University of Maine

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Mickey Mantle and the End of America's Childhood, by Janey Leavy. Harper, 2010.

If she's not careful, Jane Leavy will earn a reputation as the Boswell of the battered ballplayer. In 2002, she wrote the definitive biography (to this point) of the role model to Jewish boomers everywhere in *Sandy Koufax: A Lefty's Legacy*. This year, she published the much-anticipated story of another hero laid low by injury.



Whereas Koufax's arthritic left arm dramatically shortened an amazing career at 30, how much better might Mantle have been without exacerbating his numerous injuries with his profligate ways? How many more home runs could he have powered over the outfield walls without the booze and the broads? Surely he would have retired with the .300 batting average he decided was the mark of a truly great player. Even the

book jacket serves as evidence of Mantle's degeneration, from a smiling rookie with unlimited potential on the front cover to a broken down veteran, almost literally on his last legs on the back.

"The End of America's Childhood" came not with Mantle's death in 1995, but with his retirement almost 30 years earlier (which I suppose *is* a kind of death). The Yankees — indeed Boomer America itself — seemed to fall from innocence with the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Since then, the reverence that would have precluded books such as Jim Bouton's *Ball Four* and Jose Canseco's *Juiced* that take a heroic figure off the pedestal and put him under the microscope have become the norm, and heretofore reverential tomes flew out the window. It was no longer enough to write about hard work and gumption; now every subject had to overcome some traumatic obstacle, whether it was substance or sexual abuse (or, as it turns out in Mantle's case, both).

Leavy, an award-winning former sports and features writer for the *Washington Post*, admits to being an unabashed Mantle fan since childhood — and the journalist's objectivism be damned. In that, she shares his fans' adoration and disappointment. But in demonstrating her impressive investigative skills, Leavy goes perhaps a bit overboard as she deconstructs a few of Mantle's tape-measure home runs and provides testimonials for his considerable athletic skills. It is admirable in scope, as she discusses bat velocity, angles and meteorological conditions with the scientific community, but does it really matter if the ball went 430 feet or 450 or 480? In a Cold War era where it was important for the American psyche to be the best at everything, this display of power was comforting, but such academic studies might have opened the door for the sabermetrics of today, where every action on the field is measured.

The author interviewed hundreds of people when researching the book to turn out this most in-depth look at the Commerce Comet yet published. But like the questionable

tape measure home runs, the reader might wonder about the accuracy of memory, or even the downright fabrication for the sake of building up a personal connection to the Mick.

Leavy alternates between some of the biggest events in Mantle's career (for better or worse) and her fateful interview in April 1983, when he was reduced to working as a glad-hander for an Atlantic City casino. Her rose-colored glasses were shattered. Who kidnapped her beloved Mick and replaced him with this boorish drunk with the foul mouth and roaming hands? Still, Leavy managed to retain her composure and professionalism to get the story done...and serve as the impetus for this book.

There is little joy in *The Last Boy*. Mantle's accomplishments were diminished in his eyes then and many baseball fans' later on when they learned the extent of his boozing and womanizing. That his philosophy stemmed from his "live for today" attitude, based on his belief that he would die young, or came as a result of sexual abuse he suffered as a child (an aspect that doesn't come until the end of the book despite the play it got in the media), makes that outcome all the sadder. The description of his last days, when liver problems and cancer ravaged his once-powerful body, defies even the most *sangfroid* reader from becoming misty-eyed.

**Ron Kaplan
Montclair, NJ**

Once in a lifetime: Ted Williams' perfect coda

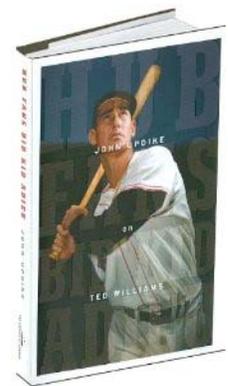


A handful of players have been fortunate enough to enjoy a storybook ending to their career: a home run in their final at bat. None have done it with as much mystique as Ted Williams.

The Splendid Splinter played his last major league game on September 28, 1960, a dreary affair against the Baltimore Orioles with nothing on the line: the Orioles finished eight games behind the Yankees, while the Sox were mired in seventh place at 65-89.

To go into the situation further would be to embarrass myself because no one told the story better than John Updike in his classic essay, "Hub Fans Bid Kid Adieu." The piece originally appeared in the Oct. 22 issue of *The New Yorker*.

Updike's masterpiece was republished earlier this year by The Library of America this year and includes a new preface by the author, written shortly before he died in January 2009. The slim



volume includes a tribute by Updike to Williams written after the Hall of Famer's death. Both essays contain "mild" annotations, explaining a few issues to the readers, both of the boomer generation and since, who might not be aware of the situations.

Charles McGrath, a former editor of *The New York Times* Book Review section, wrote about the anniversary of William's career walk-off and Updike's literary contribution, calling it "probably the most celebrated baseball essay ever."

It's not too much to say that "Hub Fans" changed sportswriting. Affectionately mocking the tradition of sports clichés (as in the title, which didn't actually appear in any of Boston's seven dailies at the time, but easily could have), the essay demonstrated that you could write about baseball, of all things, in a way that was personal, intelligent, even lyrical. Updike compares Williams to Achilles, to a Calder mobile, to Donatello's David, standing on third base as if the bag were the head of Goliath.

Deeper into the tribute to the tribute, McGrath writes:

"Most of all, Updike identified with the artist in Williams: his focus and perfectionism, his single-mindedness in mastering the difficult craft of hitting, the way that, proud and a little aloof, he would not kowtow to the Boston press or court the fans' affection, refusing to the very end to tip his cap in acknowledgment of their applause. He embraced and understood Williams's isolation, writing: 'It is an essentially lonely game. No other player visible to my generation has concentrated within himself so much of the sport's poignance, has so assiduously refined his natural skills, has so constantly brought to the plate that intensity of competence that crowds the throat with joy.'"

More interesting to me was the fact that Updike edited the original for a 1965 anthology, changing his masterpiece ever so slightly. Why mess with perfection, I wondered?

McGrath concludes:

"In the tiny differences between the two versions, the refinements of phrasing, the crucial addition of that "little death," there is something very like the "tissue-thin difference" Updike so admired in Williams's career: the difference in this case not between a thing done well and a thing done ill, but between a thing done well and a thing done even better. Like Williams, Updike never coasted. He knew that over the long season, as he writes earlier in the essay, what holds our interest is not occasional heroics but 'players who always *care*; who care, that is to say, about themselves and their art.'"

Ron Kaplan
Montclair, NJ



Book Ends

Spitball Magazine picks Casey Award finalists

Titles include:

- *The Amazing Tale of Mr. Herbert and His Fabulous Alpine Cowboys Baseball Club: An Illustrated History of the Best Little Semipro Baseball Team in Texas*, by DJ Stout
 - *Cardboard Gods: An All-American Tale Told Through Baseball Cards*, by Josh Wilker
 - *The Empire Strikes Out: How Baseball Sold U.S. Foreign Policy and Promoted the American Way Abroad*, by Robert Elias
 - *Fifty-Nine in '84: Old Hoss Radbourn, Barehanded Baseball & the Greatest Season a Pitcher Ever Had*, by Edward Achorn
 - *The Immortals: An Art Collection of Baseball's Best by Dick Perez*, text by William C. Kashatus
 - *The Last Boy: Mickey Mantle and the End of America's Childhood*, by Jane Leavy
 - *The Last Hero: A Life of Henry Aaron*, by Howard Bryant
 - *Pie Traynor: A Baseball Biography*, by James Forr and David Proctor
 - *Target Field: The New Home of the Minnesota Twins*, by Steve Berg
 - *Willie Mays: The Life, The Legend*, by James S. Hirsch
- The winner will be announced in March.

Award-winning scribes

Kudos to **Bill Conlin**, named recipient for the J.G. Taylor Spink Award by the Baseball Hall of Fame earlier this month. The award is given in recognition of "meritorious contributions to baseball writing." The long-time beat writer for the *Philadelphia Daily News* published *Batting Cleanup Bill Conlin*, a collection of his columns, in 1997 and edited *The Rutledge Book of Baseball* in 1981.

The late **Leonard Koppett** was elected into the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame, Class of 2011. The Hall is located in Netanya, Israel.

Koppett wrote some of the best baseball books to date, including several editions of *The Thinking Fan's Guide to Baseball*, as well as *Koppett's Concise History of Major League Baseball*; *The Man In Dugout*; and *Sports Illusion, Sports Reality: A Reporter's View of Sports, Journalism, and Society*, among others. He received the Spink Award in 1992 and is the only sports journalist elected to both the baseball and basketball halls of fame.

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