

Society for American Baseball Research

BIBLIOGRAPHY COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

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Comments from the Chair

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I'd like to start off by welcoming two new members to the Committee (and I'm hoping to involve both of them in Baseball Online):

Cliff Wexler (48 Silvernail Road, Valatie, NY 12184; wexler@vaxa.sunycgcc.edu) aims to produce some book reviews for this newsletter.

You may recognize Tom Hetrick (6023 Pocol Dr., Clifton, VA 22024) as the author of *Misfits!*, a 1991 book from McFarland on the 1899 Cleveland Spiders. Tom's new book (a biography of Chris Von Der Ahe) should be out soon, also from McFarland. Tom is interested in doing some book reviews.

As you probably noticed, newsletter 96-1 that should have reached you around Feb. 1 was a tad late. We had some communication problems between SABR Headquarters (which copies and mails the newsletter) and Rich Arpi (who prepares *Current Baseball Publications*, which is mailed with the newsletter). The newsletter fell into a time/space disjunction from which it was hard to rescue. Skip and I are aiming to keep things on track this time and you should be getting this issue around May 1.

May 1 also should be the middle of the SABR elections and I urge you all to participate. And while I'm urging participation, I'd encourage you all to try to make it to Kansas City for the SABR national convention. It's a real highlight of my year, with all the panels, old and new acquaintances, as well as the stuff that shows up on the agenda. I'm going to try to aim our Committee meeting for Sunday (June 9) morning.

One other activity at the convention is that Ted Hathaway has agreed to bring his computer to Kansas City and we will set up a demonstration of Baseball Online. As usual, we are looking for more volunteers and we feel that if members can walk up and see its possibilities, they'll be more likely to appreciate the project's value and perhaps become a volunteer. We're going to try to set up in the booksellers' room for three or four hours on Friday (June 7) and Saturday (June 8). We hope to provide researchers with help on disk, but should be able to prepare printouts as well.

Speaking of Baseball Online, we're searching for a new name. At the moment, it is much more likely that the database will be showing up as a CD-ROM product than as something available on the Internet. Thus, we're looking for a new name, and suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

Again, like a broken record, I'd like to encourage all of you to participate in Baseball Online by whatever name. This project is really the essence of what our Committee is about, identifying materials of interest to baseball researchers and making the information available to them. We will happily provide you with a bibliography

entry form to use as a master and a manual on how to fill out the forms. Once you get the hang of it, a form shouldn't take longer than five minutes to complete every time you finish a book or an article.

I'd also like to take the time to thank those of you who are the steady bulwarks of our current work—Bernie Esser, Ron Replogle, Steve Milman, Joe Murphy, and Jerry Kirsch. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you'll see a table listing our progress.

We are making progress in other ways. Ted Hathaway (5645 Fremont Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55419; hathae@msus1.msus.edu), who is the key man on the project, has been working with SABR President David Pietrusza and some technically proficient SABR members about turning the database into a CD-ROM product, or perhaps a World Wide Web page. Ted is finishing a grant request for Hewlett-Packard to donate some equipment for use in this task.

Joining Ted and me in managing the project is Tim Cashion (5532 S. Kimbark, #2N, Chicago, IL 60637; tmc5@midway.uchicago.edu).

There are, of course, other projects that the Committee is working on. The first quarterly edition of *Current Baseball Publications* (CBP), put together by Rich Arpi, is enclosed with this issue of the newsletter. In the last issue, I made a plea for more help for Rich in identifying publications; I then ran across a perfect example. All of us are going to see the baseball output of Macmillan, McFarland, St. Martin's, or The Sporting News. We aren't all going to see stuff that is produced by smaller, regional publishers and that's what we need to make the effort to pass on to Rich. I learned last fall that *The Daily News* in New York had published a magazine/paperback commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Dodgers' 1955 championship team. Despite the number of members we have somewhere near New York City, Rich didn't know about this item. I think this is a perfect example of what I was trying to get at with my plea. Take a quick look at the enclosed CBP; then, when you see something a little offbeat, note the pertinent bibliographic information and send it to Rich at 3620 West 32nd St., #105, Minneapolis, MN 55416 (75321.1650@compuserve.com). And, often, Rich will hear about something but not see it, leading perhaps to an incorrect title or a misspelled author's name. Please send him corrections.

In other projects, Jim O'Donnell has finished the index to Shirley Povich's *The Washington Senators* (1954) in the Putnam series. I've placed a copy with Len Levin (282 Doyle Ave., Providence, RI 02906) at the SABR Research Library. If you want a copy, contact Len; he also has copies of all the other indexes that our Committee has prepared.

Joe Murphy's project to update Phil Bergen's 1987 index to SABR publications sits with SABR's Publications Director and the Board of Directors. We hope to get a decision soon on how it will be published and when.

And Rick Johnson (3852 Howard Ave., #1, Los Alamitos, CA 90720; RJohn40787@aol.com) has produced an index of articles in *Total Baseball*, showing which articles and subjects appear in which edition. It's four pages and available from Rick for \$1.

See you in KC!

Index to The Sporting News Baseball Register (1940-1995)

Frank Phelps' mammoth indexing task is finally available!

The index is an invaluable tool for helping to locate the most complete record available of a player's career. It enables one to find the last time any player, coach, or umpire appeared in the *Register*. Thus, one could get the details of minor league seasons at the end of a player's career, or years spent coaching, managing, or umpiring after leaving the majors.

The index is arranged alphabetically and includes the many Hall of Famers and other personalities who had their full records reprinted many years after their retirements.

Frank, former Bibliography Committee Chair, did the vast bulk of the work, but had much useful help from Committee members, especially John Green, who did all the typing and computer formatting for the final product. Thanks John for a superb effort!

The 80-page booklet is available from Committee Chair Andy McCue (4025 Beechwood Place, Riverside, CA 92506) for \$6.

Baseball Online Statistics

| <u>Level</u> | <u>Number</u> | <u>% change over last year</u> |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Books</i> | | |
| 5 | 2,615 | 18.2% |
| 4 | 1,296 | 12.1% |
| <u>Other</u> | <u>9,669</u> | <u>6.9%</u> |
| Total | 13,580 | 9.4% |
| <i>Book Sections</i> | | |
| 5 | 5,303 | 13.0% |
| 4 | 832 | 14.3% |
| <u>Other</u> | <u>38</u> | <u>11.8%</u> |
| Total | 6,173 | 13.1% |
| <i>Magazine/newspaper articles</i> | | |
| 5 | 9,506 | 38.7% |
| 4 | 1 | 0.0% |
| <u>Other</u> | <u>7,836</u> | <u>10.4%</u> |
| Total | 17,343 | 24.3% |
| <i>Total</i> | | |
| 5 | 17,424 | 26.6% |
| 4 | 2,129 | 12.9% |
| <u>Other</u> | <u>17,543</u> | <u>8.5%</u> |
| Total | 37,096 | 16.6% |

Book Reviews

Leverett T. (Terry) Smith

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BASEBALL AND AMERICAN CULTURE: A Thematic Bibliography of Over 4,500 Works

Donald E. Walker and B. Lee Cooper, compilers. Jefferson City (N.C.): McFarland & Co., 1995. 257p. \$39.95

I read this book straight through, every entry, because it's my field of interest. I even get to teach a college course in the subject every once in a while. So I was especially excited to see the book. Alas, it's not as good as it might be. Omissions are inevitable in a book like this one, but *Baseball and American Culture* omits essential works. Another basic problem is that, although there are 4627 entries, there are far fewer "works" listed. In fact, the book sometimes seems padded. Further, there are the occasional errors to which a work of this sort is subject.

That it is a "thematic" bibliography seems to me a strength. The compilers assert (p.xiii) that "the unique character of this study is the thematic format which establishes baseball as a critical factor in explaining, illustrating, and influencing American culture". The book is divided into 25 numbered sections, followed by a section of "Key Resources" and subject and author indexes. Each section is

prefaced with a brief statement and rationale for its contents. By far the largest, approximately one-fourth of the book, is "Biographical Studies of Ballplayers" (something of a misnomer—in addition to ballplayers, also listed are umpires, executives, broadcasters, and folks such as Richard Nixon and Roseanne Arnold!).

The sections seem quite miscellaneous. Here are just a few: "The Anti-Democratic Nature of Baseball", "Commercial Enterprises in Baseball", "Heroic Images in Baseball", "Urban Identification", "Values Treasured by Americans", and "Women in Baseball". These provide good places to start for the beginning researcher. But there are occasional problems. The section called "External Influences on Baseball" seems a curious hodge-podge of influences, not all of which are external to baseball. The essay "American Authors and the National Pastime" by Ralph Graber turns up twice, in "Communication Systems in Baseball" and "External Influences", when it might most likely appear in "Fictionalized Images of Baseball", where it does not.

Baseball and American Culture contains serious omissions. It seems especially strong on magazines such as *Sports Illustrated* and *Maclean's*. Perhaps the most serious omission is the limitation to materials published between 1985 and 1993. The compilers announce this in their introduction, but they provide no rationale, and the decision seems rather arbitrary. Within this time period, there are serious omissions, particularly of an academic nature. I'll mention only a few, having to do with baseball and literature.

Christian Messenger's monumental *Sport and the Spirit of Play in Contemporary American Fiction* (Columbia, 1990), with its two chapters on baseball fiction, is not to be found. Neither is Lee Umphletta's *The Achievement of American Sport Literature: A Critical Appraisal* (Farleigh-Dickinson, 1991), which contains a version of one of Messenger's chapters, an essay on John Tunis' first four baseball novels by me, and an essay on baseball in poetry by Don Johnson. Though the compilers list two of Richard Grossinger's anthologies and some, but by no means all, of their contents, they omit *The Dreamlife of Johnny Baseball* (1987) and *Baseball I Gave You All the Best Years of My Life* (5th ed., 1992). I also find incomprehensible the inclusion in the list of "Key Resources" of Grossinger's *The Temple of Baseball* (1985), but not its much larger successor, *Into the Temple of Baseball* (1990). *The Journal of Sport Literature* (first *Arete*, now *Aethlon*) is largely ignored; I found only three citations. So far as I know, there is not a single reference to the *Journal of Sport History*. Surely these journals should have been more carefully reviewed in preparing a bibliography of this sort.

Three entries list *The Temple of Baseball*, mentioned above. There are many other duplications, so many that I seriously doubt the claim of "over 4,500 works" made by the subtitle of the book. There are several kinds of repetitions, many of which might better have been taken care of by a "see also" reference. Thus, *The Temple of Baseball's* first entry (2725 in "Fictional Images") would be a full one, but the second (3353 in "History and Lore") might better have appeared as "see also 2725" at the end of the "History and Lore" section.

The listing of Arthur Johnson's *Minor League Baseball and Local Economic Development* (Illinois, 1993) illustrates other kinds of repetition. This single book is responsible for 20 different entries in four different sections of the bibliography. It turns up initially in "External Influences on Baseball", where chapters on franchise location, the use of stadiums for downtown redevelopment, and new development, and the book as a whole, are listed. Then, in the section "Geography and Baseball", the chapter on franchise relocation and the whole book are listed. There are 13 entries in the section "Urban Identification", including chapters on ten individual cities, as well as the chapters on the use of stadiums for downtown redevelopment and on new development and the book as a whole. Finally, the whole book is listed among the "Key Resources". Somehow, this seems excessive, even though there are good reasons for multiple listings. Thus, I'm glad to be able to find out that Charlotte (N.C.) is one of the cities Johnson writes about, even as I

wonder why a single book requires 20 entries.

And, in fact, many of the entries sent me scurrying to the library for new material, and so I'm grateful for this book even though I'm initially most conscious of its limitations. One final unfortunate error is the compilers' citation of Cordelia Candelaria's analytic study of baseball novels, *Seeking the Perfect Game* (1989), as a "fine bibliography" in their introduction, though it does contain a bibliography. A much more appropriate citation would be Andy McCue's *Baseball by the Books* (1991), which does have a listing of "Fictionalized Images of Baseball". And I did notice one bizarre misprint. Entry 3342, apparently an essay by Peter Gammons in *Sports Illustrated* on the events of the first half of the 1990 season, is given a July 1989 publication date. Chances are it should be 1990: Gammons is a fine journalist, but not a psychic. But there's not much of this sort of thing. I expect the second edition of this book will be a good deal better than the first.

BASEBALL AND THE AMERICAN LEGAL MIND

Spencer Weber Waller, Neil B. Cohen, and Paul Finkelman, eds.
New York: Garland Publishers, 1995. 525p. \$20 paper

The editors have gotten together a large and rather miscellaneous group of documents on the general subject of baseball and law. As they say in their introduction, the collection explores the "baseball/law nexus": "Neither the close reader nor the casual peruser can escape the conclusion that the relationship between baseball and the American legal mind is truly synergistic." While I found reading through this volume difficult and at times impossible (like most other professionals, lawyers have their own way of talking about things, not always immediately comprehensible to non-lawyers), it should serve at the very least as a useful reference tool, supplementing the few pages in *Total Baseball*. There are many original documents, as specified below.

Naturally, the book is divided into nine parts. The first part is meant as a demonstration of the synergistic relationship of law and baseball and comprises six articles from various law reviews. I found the going here, as Huck Finn said of his experience reading Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, "interesting but tough". The editors at one point describe the material of the book as "relevant and amusing", and I'm still not sure which this was.

Part two has to do with baseball and the antitrust laws, and should prove much more useful to the general reader. Here are reprinted the judges' decisions in the Federal Baseball, Gardella, Toolson, Salerno, Flood, and Finley cases. Brief portions (Casey Stengel's testimony among them) of 1952 and 1958 Congressional hearings are also reprinted.

Part three reproduces a good many more judicial decisions on the subject of organized labor and organized baseball. In addition, there are law review articles published in the significant years of 1946, 1981, 1987, and 1991 (including a review of Marvin Miller's *A Whole Different Ball Game*). The uniform player's contract is printed.

Part four takes up the subject of franchise relocation. Part five deals with the subject of broadcast baseball games and logos as property. Part six reviews several cases in which teams were sued for injuries sustained at the ballpark. Part seven is mostly miscellaneous: titled "Theory and Metaphor", it contains all sorts of odds and ends, from various law review articles, to an essay comparing Supreme Court justices and major league players, to a letter relating jury selection in New York City prior to 1958 and which of the three major league teams the potential juror rooted for. Part eight deals with the legal ramifications of adding lights to Wrigley Field. Part nine is a list of suggested further readings.

Much of this is meant to be fun, but how much fun you have is closely allied to your tolerance for legal writing. I wish mine were higher, but I'm glad to own this large collection of legal documents, if only for reference.

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