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Book Reviews -- Monographic Musings

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From the Reference Desk
from page 66
1588410412, (32) is different from many such guides in that it is not targeted at a need-based audience. This guide is geared to "the students caught in the middle — who have too much family income to meet financial need requirements but not enough to be able to pay for college without help." The College Student’s Guide identifies 1300 programs that fund merit-based financial aid for worthy students. As the title implies, these programs are available to current and returning college students and "none of these programs consider income in the selection process." The entries are arranged by broad categories, sciences, social sciences, humanities, and a catch-all, any subject. However, there is a subject index that keys you into specific areas of interest ranging from accounting to zoology. There are also indexes by program title, sponsor, residency and tenability (programs restricted to a certain geographical area). The individual entries list the title of the program, the sponsor, purpose, eligibility requirements, financial aid, data, duration, limitations, the number of grants awarded, and the deadline for applications. Full contact information for each sponsor is also included including addresses, phone and fax numbers, as well as email and website addresses.

Column Editor: Debbie Vaughn (Reference Librarian, College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Column Editor’s Note: Jacques Barzun stated, "Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had better learn baseball." Our nation’s favorite pastime enraptures men and women, young and old, from all corners of the world, regardless of creed or class. The classic Mudville poem "Casey at the Bat" brings the game into classrooms all over the country. Baseball's greats have given us such adages as "it ain't over till it's over" (Lawrence "Yogi" Berra) and "don't look back—something might be gaining on you" (Leroy "Satchel" Paige). Chicago Cubs announcer Harry Caray is resonant "holly cow!" remains in the ears of fans around the world. In 1998, over 11 million fans attended at least one baseball game per month. It comes as no surprise, then, that the Library of Congress has records for nearly 8,000 baseball resources.

These fresh titles are respectable additions to the body of baseball literature. Timm Boyle's The Most Valuable Players in Baseball offers useful statistics within easy reach. Baseball's segregated past is explored in Leslie A. Heath's The Negro Leagues and Darrell J. Howard's "Sunday Coming." Finally, America’s fascination with the big diamond is explored in Reel Baseball, a collection of essays and interviews edited by Stephen C. Wood and J. David Pintus. McFarland has recently published a multitude of other books about baseball, several of which have landed on my summer to-read list. Their sport-specific Web site, www.mcfarlandbaseball.com, has a boast-worth list of available titles. When not scouring information about my sport of choice, I will enjoy being taken out to the ballpark and the crowds, I will consume peanuts and crackerjacks in mass quantity, and I will heartily root for my home team, the Charleston Riverdogs. Happy reading (and spectating), everyone! — DV

Against the Grain / June 2003

Reviewed by Debbie Vaughn (College of Charleston) <_vaughnd@cofc.edu>

At last, a volume solely dedicated to baseball's most prestigious award. Tim Boyle brings together 60 years of player statistics, season narratives, and winning reports in *The Most Valuable Players in Baseball, 1931-2001*. Hardcover and sporting a cover photograph of 1984 National League MVP Jeff Bagwell, this volume is a valuable addition to public, academic, and high school reference collections.

Boyle prefices his book by highlighting the mystical inconsistency that surrounds the selection of baseball's MVPs. In his brief introduction, he outlines the history of the MVP award, explains the voting process, and lists unanimous and multiple winners. The bulk of *The Most Valuable Players in Baseball* is a chronological account of all winners from both the National League and the American League. Players' vital and playing statistics are followed by a general account of the season and details of winners' season accomplishments. An interesting addition is the list of the top five MVP vote-getters for each league and season. Boyle includes photographs of almost every winner, many of them priceless action shots. Five appendices offer statistics on a macro level: MVPs broken down by specific field positions; records achieved by MVPs during their MVP seasons; MVPs broken down by teams; missing MVPs (pre-1931); and MVPs' career statistics. An extensive index rounds up the book. The only thing missing is Boyle's list of references. A simple list of MVP winners might also prove helpful in a subsequent edition.

The author's credentials are noteworthy. Boyle, a former sportswriter and baseball historian living in Wisconsin, is part of the nation's top publishers, the media relations consultant for the Major League Baseball Players Association. He co-authored *Total Fitness the NBA Way* (2000) and *Baseball's Best: The MVPs* (1987). Boyle has also served as the public relations executive for the Sports Collectors Digest's SportsFest—the ALA conference of sports aficionados—which attracts more than 20,000 people per year. Most importantly, Boyle has an engaging pen and a knack for communicating information that is practical to the scholarly researcher and fascinating to the common enthusiast. Especially charming are the headlines introducing the MVPs' seasons accomplishments. Some memorable captions include “Sauer Grapes MVP” (Hank Sauer, 1952 National League), “Zorro Zeros in” (Zolio Versalles, 1965 American League), and the uncomplicated “Seventy-Three” (Buddy Bombs, 2001 National League), indicating Bonds' record-breaking number of homers.

The *Most Valuable Players in Baseball* is brimming with so many interesting facts that literally every sentence is pregnant with trivia. Who knew that MVPs Elston Howard (1963, American League) and Ernie Banks (1958, 1959, National League) were roommates when they played for the Kansas City Monarchs? Another interesting point of fact: oncethorned man Roger Maris (1960, 1961, American League) is only two-time MVP winner not in baseball's Hall of Fame. An additional perhaps-unknown detail: while in the army, MVP Jackie Robinson (1949, National League) received a court martial (and was later acquitted) after refusing to sit in the back of a bus.

Your library will benefit from the addition of Boyle's *The Most Valuable Players in Baseball*. Fact-finders and pleasure-readers alike are bound to enjoy this conglomeration of award-winners. Public libraries can augment existing baseball reference collections. Academic libraries can cater to patrons' statistical research needs. High school and even middle school students can find inspiration through MVP stories. Myself, I am thankful to have a review copy for my personal library.


Reviewed by Debbie Vaughn (College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

Baseball has been described by journalist Charles Krauthammer as being “modestly republican” because of its democratic progression to the World Series. Often associated with patriotism and apple pie, it has come to hold a romantic, romance-of-the-rich appeal; poverty-stricken kids who played in sandlots have become multimillion-dollar commodities. But this all-American sport has a blemished past in the form of segregation. Leslie A. Heaphy’s *The Negro Leagues, 1869-1960* and Darrell J. Howard’s “Sunday Coming”: Black Baseball in Virginia explore African American teams, their stellar athletes, and baseball’s political climate surrounding civil rights and equal opportunity.

Heaphy introduces her book with an excellent overview of the Negro Leagues from their official inception in 1920 to the last standing team in 1960. All chapters begin with a couple of pertinent quotes from players, newspapers, biographers, historians, and other sources. The first chapter provides a helpful review of baseball’s history and offers more detail about the origins and foundations of black ball clubs. Heaphy spotlights African American leaders—Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Marcus Garvey—and surveys how their role in political society impacted the Negro Leagues. Chapters 2 through 14 combine chronological and topical information, including the movement of the Negro Leagues, management, baseball in Latin America, integration, and the demise of the Negro Leagues. Heaphy’s thoughtful conclusion captures a variety of opinions regarding the end of baseball’s color barrier. Four appendices list African American teams competing before 1920; African American players whose careers began before 1920; league teams; and league standings. Extensive notes, divided by chapter, are followed by subject and standard bibliographies. The book is wrapped up with a thorough index.

While *The Negro Leagues* offers a broad account of African American baseball, “Sunday Coming” focuses on black baseball in the Old Dominion and presents a more intimate description of players and their communities. Howard discusses the professional Negro Leagues as well as ball played in pastures and city parks. Chapters are arranged by decade from 1930 to 1980. A plethora of verbatim memories can be found in each section. References are included at the close of each chapter. Four appendices include the Norfolk Journal and Guide: Baseball Directory; leagues and teams; Virginia’s Negro League players; and a complete player register spanning 50 years. This last appendix, covering 1930-1980, is nothing short of awe-inspiring, as it comprises eight pages of men who took pride in their abilities and communities.

Together, *The Negro Leagues* and “Sunday Coming” provide pertinent historical information regarding the segregationist past of America’s beloved pastime. As time goes on, it becomes increasingly important to not forget the racial segregation endured by so many baseball players on the road to integration. Individually, these books offer different points of view—not necessarily in the authors’ opinions, but rather in the size of the slice-of-life they present. They are fitting companions, and the duo could be rounded out with *The Encyclopedia of Negro League Baseball* (Facts on File, 2003, 0816044305, 384 pages, $75.00), *Black Diamond: The Story of the Negro Baseball Leagues* (Scholastic, 1998, 059068213X, 192 pages, $5.99), and a host of other *McFarland* baseball titles. Suitable for public and academic libraries, *Heaphy*’s and Howard’s works will add essential pieces to your baseball history collection.

Reviewed by Debbie Vaughn (College of Charleston) <vaughn@cofc.edu>

I must admit that the movie Major League had a tremendous influence on my interest in baseball. Field of Dreams only solidified my love of the game. The Bad News Bears, Bull Durham, Angels in the Outfield, and countless other baseball movies gave me a sports-induced rush. Even the guilty pleasure Summer Catch made me cheer out loud. I thought I had seen almost every English language baseball movie until I read Reel Baseball: Essays and Interviews on the National Pastime, Hollywood, and American Culture edited by Stephen C. Wood and J. David Pincus. Two forwards, a lengthy and informative preface, 17 essays on baseball and film, a grand slam conclusion, and a comprehensive index round out this spectacular study of two of my favorite subjects: the big diamond and the silver screen. To preview the book, check out its Website (http://www.reelbaseball.net), complete with a sweeping baseball filmography.

Reel Baseball is divided into four sections, quaintly dubbed “reels,” each with its own introduction. A list of relevant films with their respective directors, production houses, and release years follows each essay. Reference notes are also included. The first reel offers six essays minimally themed “Baseball in Baseball Films.” Reel two, “Babe Ruth and the Silver Screen,” features three essays covering societal and dramatic images of The Babe. Five essays in reel three, “Baseball in Non-Baseball Films,” pick up on even passing references to the game. Reel four presents interviews with directors, producers, actors, and critics from James Earl Jones to Kevin Costner to Penny Marshall. Wood’s and Pincus’ well-written conclusion outlines baseball’s appeal to filmmakers and moviemakers. The editors even dare to ask if “baseball film” is a misnomer. Actor caricatures, promotional posters, and studio stills fill the pages and allow readers to recall pivotal scenes, strong swings, amazing catches, and actors’ remarkable expressions.

All but three of the contributors hold Ph.Ds in their fields, ranging from communications to media studies to history to English to strategic marketing. It is interesting to note that not all of the authors are academics, but each of them regularly publishes in the sports arena. Several of them are also affiliated with The Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture. Pincus authored the book Newspaper Editors’ Perceptions of Public Relations: How Business, News and Sports Editors Differ (1991), as well as a number of papers at several Cooperstown Symposium. Wood is a professor and chair of the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Rhode Island. According to his Website, he “has an entire line of research on the rhetorical dimensions of baseball as a cultural phenomenon.” These folks are well versed in an array of multi-disciplinary approaches to America’s favorite pastime.

I wholeheartedly recommend that you purchase Reel Baseball for your public, academic, high school, and personal collections. The essays and interviews will enthral students of film, history, popular culture, and/or American culture. Even moviemakers who simply enjoyed The Natural or A League of Their Own will find at least a few of these pieces interesting. Reel Baseball provides an opportunity for enthusiasts from a variety of fields to come together and learn in a cross-discipline fashion.


Reviewed by Sheila Seaman (Public Services, Robert Scott Small Library, College of Charleston) <seamans@cofc.edu>

This work may be purchased as a set or by the volume. Irving Weiner is well qualified as the editor in chief. He is the author, co-author, or compiler of more than ten books, has served as an editor on two other Wiley Series—"Wiley Series on Psychological Disorders," and "Wiley Series on Personality Processes." His most current endeavor, The Handbook of Psychology, includes twelve volumes; each volume has its own editor or editors. Overall, twenty-five editors participated in this large scale project. Author and subject indexes are included at the end of each volume. Regrettably, there is no comprehensive subject index for the entire set. This deficit might have been partially addressed with a detailed table of contents, but this is lacking as well. The absence of a comprehensive index is a major oversight, and for this reason it cannot be recommended for use as a resource for reference collection in a library setting. According to library conventions, a twelve-volume set such as The Handbook of Psychology would be cataloged under the set title and call number. Library users would find it under the subjects, "Psychology," or "Psychology—Handbooks, Manuals, etc." The NetLibrary collection attempts to solve this access problem by creating a cataloging record for each volume, but even in these entries the subject headings remain general and not specific to the volume contents—"Psychology," or "Psychology—Handbooks, Manuals, etc." The user would need to look up keywords coming from the title or the content note field to locate the individual subject volumes.

According to the author's preface the goals of the set are to unify the thread of the history of psychology in terms of conceptual and empirical approaches to the nature of behavior and commitment to the development and utilization of research methods. The volumes cover broad categories as follows:


continued on page 70
The subject volumes, arranged in chapters, cover a wide array of topics. Each chapter provides compact, informative discussions and offers detailed information on key concepts and many chapters include illustrative charts, diagrams, and tables. Chapters include an extensive bibliography (100+ entries) containing both books and scholarly journal articles. Bibliographic references to World Wide Web resources are noticeably absent. Individual volumes contain author and subject indexes; the indexes, however, are far from comprehensive. Curiously, a number of the chapter division headings are not included in the indexes. In some cases, tests or theories named after a person, such as “Fiedler’s Contingency Theory,” the only access point is in the “Author” index under the personal name, Fiedler, F. E. Interestingly, there is also a misspelling on the name—the chapter title is listed as “Fiedler’s Contingency Theory” instead of correctly as “Fiedler’s Contingency Theory.” This is illustrated more clearly when one searches for C. J. Jung in the volume, “History of Psychology.” His name is not listed in the subject index. However, on closer examination, one finds eleven references in the author index under Jung, C. G. But there is no bias, Freud is not listed either. There are numerous entries to his name in the author index. Gordon Allport suffers a similar fate. “Author Index” is a misnomer, it would be correct to call it a “Name Index.”

The organization of this series makes it complicated to look up a topic like “Motivation.” Motivation is covered in no less than nine volumes and there are entire chapters in two of the volumes as follows: volume 1 (history of motivation); volume 2 (motivation—extrinsic/intrinsic); volume 3 (motivated behavior); volume 4 (entire chapter—main entry); volume 5 (motivation, social); volume 7 (motivation, education); volume 9 (MET motivational enhancement therapy); volume 10 (motivation, intrinsic; motivational assessment scale); volume 12 (chapter—organizational, MTQ motivational trait questionnaire).

In terms of the intended audience, the author’s preface includes three groups as follows:

[1] First, for graduate students in behavioral science the volumes provide advance instruction in the basic concepts and methods in the fields they cover, together with a review of current knowledge, core literature, and likely future developments.

[2] Second, in addition to serving as graduate textbooks, the volumes offer professional psychologists an opportunity to read and contemplate the views of distinguished colleagues concerning the central thrusts or research and leading edges of practice in their fields.

[3] Third, for psychologists seeking to become conversant with fields outside their own specialty and for persons outside of psychology seeking information about psychological matters” (I, ix).

Its use as a background source for undergraduate students is not mentioned as a goal.

Overall, the editor has correctly identified this work as a handbook and not an encyclopedia. One could even seriously consider cataloging/purchasing each title separately so it would be found with the other titles in the subject area; however, this would obviate the massive effort to organize the entire field in a logical framework of twelve subject divisions, and it would violate the principles of library cataloging. It seems odd that having made the effort to pull the entire discipline into organized categories the editor did not take the final step to create an integrated index for all twelve volumes. It negates the value of the collection as a cohesive reference resource. Reference librarians should look to other works such as Encyclopedia of Psychology (Kazdin, 2000) or Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology and Behavioral Science (Craighead, 2001). As stated in the preface, the individual volumes would be useful as textbooks or as core literature for graduate students. The set would be highly beneficial for practitioners’ personal libraries or in the circulating collections of academic or medical libraries that serve upper-level undergraduates or graduate students.

Books Are Us

by Anne Robichaux (Professor Emerita, Medical University of South Carolina; Consultant, Majors Scientific Books) <awkr772@charleston.net>

Column Editor’s Note: This column covers fictitious accounts of people in our industry — librarians, publishers, vendors, booksellers, etc. — people like us. All contributions, comments, suggestions are welcome. — AR

I was delighted to read the new column introduced in the February issue of ATG — Books That Matter by Ellen Finnie Duransoe. The column brought to mind a novel I recently read and enjoyed, a book that “deserves to be devoured and discussed.” The Lovely Bones, written by Alice Sebold (Little Brown, June 2002) the story is told by a young fourteen year old, Susie Salmon, from heaven. A victim of a brutal and senseless murder, Susie observes her family and friends as they continue their lives without her. In spite of the grim setting and beginning, this bittersweet story is told with humor, and a librarian is mentioned, not once, but twice! In one scene the librarian is depicted as an authoritative and censuring figure who “overtakes” a boy at the card catalog and takes from him a drawing that had been passed around the library. Drawn by one of the students in art class, it appeared to be a Lewd and leering depiction of a middle-aged model. In the second reference, Susie’s younger brother, Buck, now in the seventh grade, has a crush on the school librarian: “His favorite teacher was not really a teacher at all but the school librarian, a tall, frail woman with wavy hair who drank tea from her thermos and talked about having lived in England when she was young.” As a result of his infatuation, “Buck affected an English accent for a few months and showed a heightened interest in Masterpiece Theater.”

Tamar Myers (www.tamarayres.com), the author of two mystery series, briefly mentions a librarian who is easily intimidated in No Use Dying Over Spilled Milk (Signet, 1997), the third book in her Pennsylvania Dutch Mystery Series. The proprietress of the PennDutch Inn, Magdalena Yoder, an Amish-Mennonite, solves murders with humor, cunning, and common sense, mixed with a lot of self righteousness, and a few recipes to tantalize the reader. In this particular story she is visiting her Amish kin out of town. They have no telephone (and she has no cell) so she goes to the local public library to use the pay phone when she needs to call the Inn. The call was lengthy and she interrupted the librarian three times for change: “If the librarian had been helping patrons, or had been a woman less easy to intimidate,” she would not have been able to complete her call to her satisfaction. Incidentally, Tamar Myers currently lives in the Charleston area. She sets a couple of the recent books in her Den of Antiquity Mystery series in Charleston.

Thanks to Karen Roth, Manager, Medical Libraries, Morton Plant Mease Health Care in Clearwater, FL, for referring me to Open Season by Linda Howard (Pocket Books, 2001). Open Season features a “thirty-four year old, small-town, barreled, wisecracking spinster librarian” who decides it’s time to make a change in her life if she can ever achieve a “normal, traditional life” of a husband, baby, and house of her own! Daisy Ann Minor wears lipstick in an almost invisible shade of Blush, has mousy, straight mud-brown hair, wears boring clothes with no style, and has always thought of herself as a loser: drab and boring. She hasn’t had a date in over a decade. She lives at home with her mother and aunt, and has never been late to work. She is the director — which only meant that she was able to choose the books purchased — of a small public library in a small town in rural Alabama. On the positive side she was a “champion researcher,” smart about investing her inadequate salary, and proud of the state’s virtual library. She felt that her best librarian’s voice was both brusque and friendly, and that “working with the public was a science, especially in a library.” She felt it her duty to encourage people, not only to read, but also to impart a sense of respect for the library. The mayor of the town, Daisy’s immediate boss, considered her a “starchy old maid” but also one of his “favorite characters in a small...