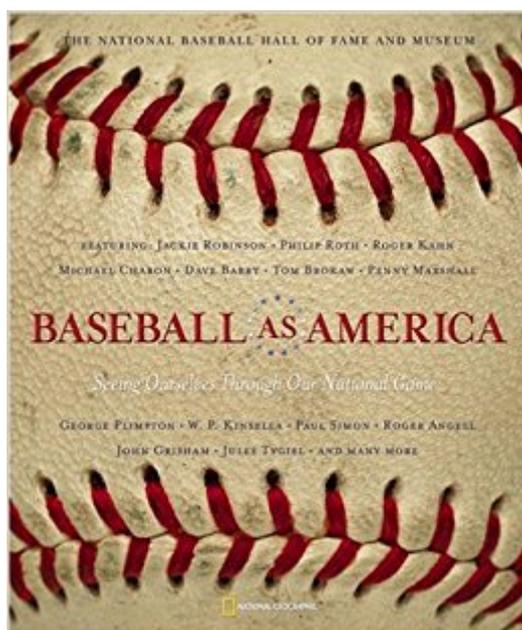


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# Baseball As America : Seeing Ourselves Through Our National Game



## Synopsis

Baseball As America examines how the American landscape, our language, literature, entertainment, food, and summertime living all bear the mark of a 19th-century game that has become intertwined with our nation's values and aspirations. Baseball As America is the official companion volume to the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum's unprecedented national traveling exhibition. Features more than 200 original and archival photographs that bring the game to life on its pages. Perfect for every baseball fan, indeed every American, Baseball As America is a comprehensive panorama of the game America has grown up with.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Packed with over 200 photographs, this companion to the upcoming national tour of pieces from the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum celebrates the sport from its mythical 19th-century beginnings to the 2001 retirement of modern icons Tony Gwynn and Cal Ripken. Familiar images abound (Ty Cobb's slide into third base, children playing sandlot ball, etc.), but the central focus is on artifacts: uniforms, scorecards and boxes of Wheaties, the bats used in record-breaking home runs and the handwritten manuscript of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." FDR's letter urging the resumption of games after Pearl Harbor and a baseball found in the World Trade Center debris poignantly underscore America's consistent salute to and dependence upon its national pastime. But while functioning much like a museum, itself, the volume is more than simply an exhibition catalogue. Essays and stories some newly written for this collection feature dozens of writers,

players and personalities from Walt Whitman to Dave Barry, Jackie Robinson to Paul Simon, and examine the game's cultural and historical significance. Readers won't find here an in-depth exploration as in Geoffrey Ward/ Ken Burns's *Baseball: An Illustrated History*, but the range of topics is exhaustive. The less glamorous aspects of baseball's history such as segregation and the cancellation of the 1994 World Series are given equal playing time alongside the worship of diamond deities and the celebration of the game's historical moments. This entertaining presentation, divided into groupings on baseball as ritual, freedom, opportunity and innovation, is a must for anyone who proudly echoes Tom Brokaw's sentiment as he writes "remember the final two words in our national anthem: `play ball!' " (Mar.) Forecast: Due to appear on shelves in time for baseball season, this PBS companion will sell hugely. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

really nice cocktail table book wonderful pictures

From the eye catching cover to the inspired essays and beautiful photographs inside, this book is a delight. All that was missing was the hot dog and beer. A great gift for fellow baseball fanatics! Go White Sox!

"Baseball as America: Seeing Ourselves Through Our National Game" was the companion volume the landmark traveling exhibition from the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, New York. As its thesis this book takes Jacques Barzun's declaration "Who ever wants to know the heart and mind of American had better learn baseball." Within these 320 pages you will find yourself exploring every aspect of the American pastime lavishly illustrated and even long time baseball fans will be surprised at how much they will read and see that is new to them. After an introduction by Jules Tygiel, which features a 1860 Currier and Ives lithograph showing Lincoln and his opponents for the presidency describing their platforms in baseball terms, "Baseball as America" is divided into seven units: Our National Spirit, Ideals and Injustices, Rooting for the Team, Enterprise and Opportunity, Sharing a Common Culture, Invention and Ingenuity, and Weaving Myths. Within these pages you will find Robert K. Adair explaining the science of the curve ball invented by Candy Cummings but first explained by a 23 year old Isaac Newton and Paul Simon explaining to Joe DiMaggio his use of Joltin' Joe's name as an emblematic icon in the song "Mrs. Robinson." There is Dan Shaughnessy's "Obituary of Elizabeth Dooley" the legendary Boston Red Sox fan and Buck O'Neil explaining how the Chicago Cubs traded away future Hall of Famer

Lou Brock because the team already had three black outfielders. Then there are the letters Curt Flood and Bowie Kuhn exchanged when the outfielder refused to be traded from the Cardinals to the Phillies. You might remember Flood's letter from Ken Burns' documentary "Baseball," but here we have Kuhn's response. Of course Ernest L. Thayer's ballad of the republic "Casey at the Bat" will be found here, along with a Charles Schulz "Peanuts" cartoon of Charlie Brown praying to catch a baseball, Bob Newhart's "Nobody Will Every Play Baseball" routine, and excerpts from W.P. Kinsella's "Shoeless Joe." There are photographs of the famous Honus Wagner T206 1909 baseball card, Eddie Gaedel's 1/8 St. Louis Browns jersey, Shoeless Joe Jackson's shoes, Lou Gehrig on the cover of a program from the American baseball tour of Japan in 1931, "Babe Ruth Underwear," and the patent and model for F.W. Thayer's 1878 catcher's mask. Then there is the poster of the elephants playing baseball for the Barnum & Bailey Circus. Then there is the juxtaposition of words and images: Joe Raposo's lyrics to the Frank Sinatra song "There Used to Be a Ballpark" with a photograph of the demolition of the Polo Grounds. There is an excerpt from Bernard Malamud's "The Natural" with the cowbell Hilda Chester used at Ebbets Field and a photograph of Andre Dawson's final visit to Wrigley Field. A photo of Satchel Paige of the Kansas City Monarchs warming up at Yankee Stadium and Ted Williams' 1966 induction speech at the Hall of Fame where he surprised the crowd with his call to honor the stars of the Negro Leagues. A letter from Fiorello LaGuardia in 1945 about a committee formed to end segregation in baseball opposite a pair of photographs showing black kids and white kids clutching Walter Johnson board games and waiting to meet their favorite baseball star. The back of the book includes a list of the selections from the collection broken down into baseballs (handmade ball made by Babe Ruth at school), baseball cards (1952 Topps Mickey Mantle), bats (George Brett's "pine tar" bat), books, booklets, and periodicals (comic book "Roy Campanella Baseball Hero"), broadsides, handbills, and posters (handbill urging integration of the New York Yankees), caps (Hideo Nomos no-hitter cap), cartoons ("Base Ball as Viewed by a Muffin" from 1867), communications equipment (Red Barber's first microphone), decorative art (theater lobby card for "The Jackie Robinson Story"), fan art and fine art ("Tom Seaver" by Andy Warhol), games and toys ("darktown battery" cast iron mechanical bank from 1888), gloves and mitts (Yogi Berra's mitt from Don Larsen's perfect World Series game), jerseys and uniforms (1976 Chicago White Sox Bermuda shorts), jewelry (charm bracelet made from championship jewelry given by Lou Gehrig to his wife), letters and documents (All-Star ballot filled out by Casel Stengel), medical-related items (ethyl chloride numbing spray), merchandise (Reggie Bar wrapper), miscellaneous equipment (prototype JUGS Speed Gun), programs and scorecards (program for first Colored World Series), sheet music and records (1908 Edison Wax

cylinder record of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" and magic lantern slide), shoes (worn by Ty Cobb), souvenirs (1961 button, "I'm for Maris--60 in '61), stadium equipment/artifacts (turnstile from the Polo Grounds), tickets and season passes (ticket to Lou Gehrig Day), and trophies and awards (Cy Young Award given to Sandy Koufax). So you can get a very good idea of what you missed out from the traveling exhibit. Of course this is a fraction of what was on the tour and while less than half of what is included on these six pages makes its way into "Baseball as America" just looking over the list can be fun. The tour, of course, is long over, but if you have never been to Cooperstown, or if it has been a while since you have been to the Baseball Hall of Fame, then be forewarned because this book will make you want to go and visit all of the baseball treasures on display.

Book is very nicely presented with many great illustrations, pictures, and excerpts from notable authors. Great book for the casual or diehard baseball fan. This book covers the terrific exhibit now showing at New York City's Museum of American History. Check it out. It's very worthwhile.

The book itself is a treasure! The only flaw with the copy I purchased was that several pages were ripped out.

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