

HISTORY 490

Wednesdays, 7:00-9:45

<http://bss.sfsu.edu/tygiel/hist490/>

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THE HISTORY AND LITERATURE OF BASEBALL

TEXTS: William Brashler, *Bingo Long and His Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings*.

Robert Coover, *The Universal Baseball Association*

Eric Rolfe Greenberg, *The Celebrant*

Arnold Hano, *A Day in the Bleachers*

Mark Harris, *Bang the Drum Slowly*

John Helyar, *The Lords of Baseball*

Ring Lardner, *You Know Me Al*

Bernard Malamud, *The Natural*

Robert Peterson, *Only the Ball Was White*

Lawrence Ritter, *The Glory of Their Times*

Jules Tygiel, Past Time: Baseball As History

(These texts are available at the school bookstore and on reserve at the library.)

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Students who wish more background on baseball history should consult David Voigt's three-volume study, *American Baseball* or Harold Seymour's three volumes, *Baseball: The Early Years*; *Baseball: The Golden Age*; and *Baseball: The People's Game*. See also Ben Rader, *Baseball: A History of America's Game*; Charles Alexander, *Our Game*; Bill James, *The Bill James Historical Baseball Abstract*; Joel Zoss and John Bowman, *The Untold Story of Baseball*; John Rossi, *The National Game: Baseball and American Culture*; Geoffrey Ward/ Ken Burns's *Baseball: An Illustrated History*; Allen Schwarz, *The Numbers Game: Baseball's Lifelong Fascination with Statistics*; and the historical sections in John Thorn and Pete Palmer, *Total Baseball*. For the history of baseball in California see, Kevin Nelson, *The Golden Game*. Also check out, *Stephen Jay Gould, Triumph and Tragedy in Mudville*.

For the study of baseball fiction there are useful chapters in Michael Oriard, *Dreaming of Heroes*; Tristram Coffin, *The Old Ball Game*; Leverett Smith, *The American Dream and the National Game*; Wiley Umphlett, *American Sports Fiction*; and Christian Messenger, *Sport and the Spirit of Play in Contemporary American Fiction*. See also Cordelia Candelaria, *Seeking the Perfect Game: Baseball in American Literature*; George Grella, "Baseball and the American Dream," *Massachusetts Review* (Summer, 1975); and Eric Solomon, "Jews, Baseball and the American Novel," *Arete* (Spring, 1984). Two 1996 studies are of interest, partly for their bibliographies: Deeanne Westbrook, *Ground Rules: Baseball and Myth*; Timothy Morris, *Making the Team: The Cultural Work of Baseball Fiction*. See also Jerry Klinkowitz, *Writing Baseball*.

INTERNET AND MULTIMEDIA

This course will use resources on the Internet and other types of media (videos, cd-roms) to enhance our understanding of baseball history. The course will be taught in a "smart classroom," giving us in-room access to the Internet and videos. The online version of this syllabus contains many links to various primary sources: photographs, movies, speeches, songs, advertisements, radio broadcasts, and documents. In addition we will watch film clips from several videos that are not available on the Internet. We will use these materials during the class sessions to give us a broader sense the baseball experience and to stimulate our class discussions. Students will also be able to access these sources via the Internet when studying at home or writing papers. This aspect of the course was made possible by a generous donation from the Society for American Baseball Research and the diligent research performed by Michael Mott.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING: The final grade will be determined by the results of three 1300-1800 word papers. There will be no examinations. All papers must be word-processed and double-spaced. Topics for the papers will be handed out at least one week before the due date. Papers are due March 7, April 18, and May 23. Class discussions are an important part of this course. All students are expected to have finished the reading assignments before each class session and discuss the material at all sessions.

For Your Information: The faculty union is in the midst of contract negotiations and there is the possibility of a work interruption. Updates on this situation will be provided throughout the course.

READING ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASS SCHEDULE

(The date of the Writer Panels is tentative and may be switched to accommodate the speakers.)

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| January 24 | INTRODUCTION: The Origins of Baseball

Guest speaker: David Block |
| January 31 | History: Early Professionalism and Leagues

Readings: Tygiel, Chapters 1-2; Ritter, Chapters 1-4; Start reading Lardner. |
| February 7 | Performance: Charles Chalberg as Branch Rickey

Literature: Ring Lardner, <i>You Know Me Al</i>

Readings: Tygiel, Chapter 5; Helyar, pp. 7-9, 40-50; Peterson, Chapters 14-15; Lardner, (entire book). |
| February 14 | History: The Brotherhood War and the Big League

Readings: Tygiel, Chapter 3; Peterson, Chapters 2-4; Helyar, pp. 1-5. |
| February 21 | History: 1900-1918

Readings: Ritter, Chapters 1-7, 9, 12, 13; Peterson, Chapters 4-6; start reading Malamud. |

February 28

History: The Black Sox Scandal

Literature: Bernard Malamud, *The Natural*

Home Video: Rent and Watch Movie Version of *The Natural*

Readings: Tygiel, Chapter 3; Ritter, Chapters 11, 16, 21; Helyar, pp. 7-9, 540-43. Malamud, (entire book).

March 7

History: The 1920s

Readings: Tygiel, Chapter 4; Ritter, Chapters 15-21, 24; Start Reading Harris.

FIRST PAPER DUE

March 14

History: The Landis Years

Readings: Tygiel, Chapter 5; Ritter, Chapters 18, 19, 21-23, 25, 26; Helyar, 40-50; Continue Reading Harris.

March 21

History: The Negro Leagues

Literature: Mark Harris, *Bang The Drum Slowly*

Home Video: Rent and watch film version of *Bang The Drum Slowly*

Readings: Tygiel, Chapter 6; Peterson, Chapters 1, 7-12, 16; Harris (entire book).

March 28

History: The integration Era

Readings: Tygiel, Chapter 7; Peterson, Chapters 13-15.

SECOND PAPER DUE

April 4

History: Expansion, Relocation, and the Second Deadball Era (1950s and 1960s)

Literature: Arnold Hano, *A Day in the Bleachers*

Readings: Tygiel, Chapters 7-8; Helyar, pp. 1-83, 247-50, 388-91.

- April 11 **Spring Break**
- April 18 **Sportswriters and Other Writers: A Panel Discussion.**
Literature: Robert Coover, *The Universal Baseball Association*
Readings: Coover (entire book).
- April 25 **History: 1965-1975 (The Fight for Free Agency)**
Readings: Helyar, pp. 15-39, 66-180.
- May 2 **History: 1975-1985 (Labor Wars)**
Readings: Helyar, pp. 181-244, 274-307, 330-353 (pp. 244-73, 308-29 optional); Start Reading Greenberg.
- May 9 **History: 1980s (The Age of Romance and Competition)**
Literature: Eric Rolfe Greenberg, *The Celebrant*
Readings: Helyar, pp. 354-87, 415-53, 472-93 (388-414, 454-471 optional); Tygiel, Chapter 9; Greenberg (entire book).
- May 16 **History: 1990s-Present**
Readings: Helyar, pp. 494-514, 553-604 (515-552 optional).
- May 23 **THIRD PAPER DUE**
MEET AT SBC PARK: GIANTS VS. HOUSTON