

KNICKERBOCKER, WENDY. *Sunday at the Ballpark: Billy Sunday's Professional Baseball Career, 1883-1890*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000. Pp. 192. Notes, bibliography, and index. \$39.50 cb.

Author Wendy Knickerbocker weaves the story of Billy Sunday's baseball career through the general history of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Sunday's baseball days are just a small part of the story she has to tell. Interspersed throughout his ballplaying is the story of Sunday's acceptance of Christ and how that changed his future. Sunday became one of the most effective evangelists this country had ever seen. A good part of his success stemmed from his ability to tell a story in common language, using many of his baseball experiences as the basis for his message. Knickerbocker's title suggests she will focus primarily on Sunday's ballplaying, but the text considers much more than that.

The author begins with his early career. Billy Sunday had a tough start as a ballplayer and struggled through his early years before establishing himself as a solid fielder and decent hitter. The one thing he always had going for him was his excellent speed and his resulting ability to make things happen. Watching Billy Sunday on the ball field and later at his revivals was never dull. He entertained wherever he happened to be. Slowly Billy gained a reputation as a good ballplayer and a decent guy. While baseball was gaining a reputation for gambling, drinking, and womanizing, Sunday brought a much-needed decency to the game.

Part of Sunday's motivation for acting properly seems to have stemmed from his desire to marry Helen "Nell" Thompson, the daughter of a successful Chicago businessman. Nell had been brought up in the Presbyterian Church and her father did not think much of ballplayers, so Sunday had something to prove. This kind of personal detail can be found throughout the text. The author helps make Sunday come alive as a person on and off the ball field.

In addition to the details of Sunday's life the reader also learns about his career, year by year. His records and his failures are woven throughout the larger story of his meetings with Cap Anson and his later involvement with the Players' League. He had success in Chicago, Pittsburgh and even Philadelphia before he gave it all up to become an evangelist. The final chapters of this short text deal with Sunday's slow rise as a preacher. He used his life experiences to his advantage, conveying a message that men everywhere came out to hear. His largest revival took place in New York City in 1917, when 98,000 people went through a conversion experience over a two-month period.

Knickerbocker uses a wide range of sources to put together this story. In addition to news stories from the time, she uses all of Sunday's own writings, as well as many records of the Presbyterian Church and the YMCA. This array of sources makes the story more complete, not just focused on one aspect of Billy Sunday's life.

This text brings to life a popular ball player from the late nineteenth century about whom people know little. It adds a new chapter to baseball history with his career as a ballplayer but also connects baseball to the larger events in American life at the time. This is the book's strength, as it shows how Billy Sunday did not exist only on the diamond; his

life outside the foul lines was also significant. Too often baseball texts focus on the game and ignore the life outside the stadium. Knickerbocker ably weaves the two stories together to create the full life story of Billy Sunday, ballplayer and evangelist.

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KOPPETT, LEONARD. *The Man in the Dugout: Baseball's Top Managers & How They Got That Way* (expanded ed.). Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000. Pp. x + 352. Appendix, index. \$29.50 cb.

In *The New Thinking Fan's Guide to Baseball* (1991), Leonard Koppett wrote that “[e]very player, in his secret heart, wants to manage someday. Every fan, in the privacy of his mind, already does” (102). Private preoccupation becomes public for Koppett through his latest work, *The Man in the Dugout*. In this book, his broadest examination of baseball managers and managing to date, Koppett argues that the varied styles and philosophies of major league managers who were “successful and influential” can be traced to three men: John McGraw, Connie Mack, and Branch Rickey. Using a tree as metaphor, Koppett places McGraw’s authoritarianism, Mack’s quiet, yet effective demeanor and ability to spot talent, and Rickey’s organizational abilities at the base or trunk from which subsequent managerial styles emerge. This book discusses Miller Huggins, Joe McCarthy, Bill McKechnie, Casey Stengel, Leo Durocher, Al Lopez, Frank Frisch, Paul Richards, Walter Alston, Ralph Houk, Alvin Dark, Billy Martin, Dick Williams, Earl Weaver, Sparky Anderson, and Tommy Lasorda, and a number of others more briefly. Koppett is quick to point out that the selection of managers for this text is derived from those he believes fit the “inherited styles” theme woven throughout the book.

In an effort to illuminate similarities and differences among managers, Koppett draws upon his experiences as a sportswriter. In fact, much of the narrative’s richness flows from the personal vignettes Koppett shares from experiences accrued over fifty years as a journalist. Koppett’s lengthy tenure as a writer and subsequent affiliation with managers includes locker room chats, serendipitous encounters, and longtime associations providing a unique and valuable frame, furthering our understanding of those who had influence on the game and subsequently on its history. However, for those interested in the scholarly pursuit of the relationship and significance of sport and culture, this book will prove unsatisfactory.

The author’s refusal to place baseball, and many of the men who managed teams over the last century, within a larger cultural setting is problematic and weakens his arguments. Koppett absolves himself of the responsibility to position this work historically or analytically, leaving that task instead for “serious historians” (xiii). His discussion of Branch Rickey represents one example of an unwillingness to conceptualize baseball within a broader societal context. Despite Koppett’s assessments of Rickey’s innovative farm system model, the overall narrative remains largely descriptive, failing to engage critical and important links between baseball and the wider society. Baseball historian Jules Tygiel, in *Past*