

league that remained regional in scope (Northeastern U.S.) and semi-professional in economics until its demise in 1946. The Midwest League, on the other hand, was a mixture of company teams, teams operated by a businessman who saw advertising potential (and was usually a basketball “junkie”) and a couple independent teams. The league was a loose coalition of teams who were to play a certain number of games against their league foes in home and home series with a playoff session at the end of the year. Owners seemed to structure the league’s bylaws as they went along;

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Looking in the Closet: An Examination of the Rhetorical Dimensions of Sport History

For much of the development of the sub-discipline of sport history over the last three decades, the heroic scientific model of history that prioritizes the meticulous, detailed and critical examination of documentary evidence by an objective, disinterested and impartial observer has prevailed. This approach has produced some wonderful individual historical accounts and has done a great deal to generate respectability for sport history within the historical profession and academia more generally. The heroic scientific model of history has, however, been critiqued on a number of fronts, and one aspect of that critique has been its denial of the rhetorical dimensions of the historical process. This paper will examine the rhetorical aspects evident in the production of sport history primarily through the lens provided by Hayden White who has been credited with being instrumental in the “linguistic turn” in history. White’s analysis will be used to encourage sport historians to at least engage with their historical texts as aesthetic objects.

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The Power of Pluto Water: The Chicago Cubs, West Baden, and French Lick Springs

The area of southern Indiana, known as the Springs Valley, encompasses two towns – West Baden and French Lick Springs. Resort hotels in those towns have long been a haven for visitors,

who flocked to the area because of its mineral-water springs. Throughout much of the twentieth century, water from those springs was distributed nationally under the trade name “Pluto Water.”

The Chicago Cubs baseball team was among the early visitors to the West Baden Springs Hotel. Each year from 1906 to 1911 the Cubs sojourned there for a week or so before moving on to their regular spring training site. The Cubs won pennants in 1906, 1907, 1908, and 1910. They won the championship—their only World Series victories—in 1907 and 1908. After discontinuing their visits to the Springs Valley, the Cubs did manage to win the pennant in 1918, 1929, 1932, 1935, and 1938, but they never tapped the true source of victory. Ironically, it was the exigencies of war that forced them back to their wellspring of power. When major league baseball club owners met in special session on January 5, 1943, they voted unanimously to confine spring training to an area bounded by the Ohio and Potomac rivers on the south and the Mississippi River on the west. The action came in response to a request by the U.S. government that major league baseball support the war effort by curtailing unnecessary travel.



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