

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, UW-MADISON

HISTORY 600 – FALL 2023

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL AND AMERICAN SOCIETY SINCE WORLD WAR II
T 1:20-3:15, CURTI LOUNGE, 5TH FLOOR HUMANITIES

INSTRUCTORS: A. H. SELIG, J. SWEET

Office hours (Sweet): Tuesdays, 8:00-9:15, Thursdays, 11:00-1:00, or by appointment

Contact (Sweet): 5213 Humanities; Email: jhsweet@wisc.edu

Books Recommended for Purchase (any edition acceptable – recommended that students purchase used copies):

Jules Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy*

Jim Bouton, *Ball Four*

Course Overview

This seminar examines the history of Major League Baseball in the context of the successive waves of change that overtook and reshaped American society following World War II. Rather than focusing on the themes that preoccupy traditional histories of professional sport – winners, losers, stars, dynasties, etc. – our seminar will examine and discuss the ways in which major league baseball reflected and often impelled deeper social, political and economic change in postwar America. Perhaps no event exemplified such interactions more profoundly than the topic of our second meeting, the integration of African-American athletes and the breaching of the “color bar” heralded by Jack Robinson’s entry into the National League as a Brooklyn Dodger in 1947; within a decade or so, African-Americans would be joined by a growing cadre of Latino players, most from outside the USA. These once-excluded groups would become fixtures in the major leagues. The same Dodgers, along with their Manhattan rival New York Giants, signaled yet another epochal shift barely a decade after the war’s end when they relocated to California, dramatically altering the geographical balance of professional sport and inaugurating a new era in the business side of baseball, developments we will follow in our third and subsequent meetings. During the semester we will also address such diverse topics as the impact of the Sixties on the sport, shifting media relations, questions of franchise location and the finances of stadium construction, labor relations – especially strikes and free agency-- and the issues that marked the tenure of Commissioner Allan H. “Bud” Selig from the early 1990s until the end of 2014.

Inevitably, given the centrality of baseball, and especially the major leagues, to American culture and identity, but also the limits imposed by thirteen substantive meetings, students will notice that certain important issues go unaddressed to the extent they might deserve. Such issues include questions of gender and/or sexuality as reflected on the field, in management and on the pages of the sporting press. The same applies to persisting tensions related to race, ethnicity and,

more recently, the increasingly international composition of MLB rosters. As a *research* seminar, this course encourages students to identify and explore such issues in their choice of themes or problems in their papers for this course, on which more below.

We have the privilege of working with Commissioner Emeritus Selig as a co-instructor for this course. His participation brings a unique and valuable perspective to our readings and discussion. As Commissioner, he was intimately involved in the stewardship of the game for nearly a quarter-century – the second-longest tenure of any commissioner, but that position only represented the culmination of a lifelong involvement with professional baseball. A native of Milwaukee and a 1956 graduate of the University of Wisconsin, he was an ardent fan of the Milwaukee Braves during their heyday in the 1950s. After their departure to Atlanta for the 1966 season, Selig spearheaded the efforts that finally bore fruit, when he brought the Seattle Pilots to Milwaukee as the Brewers in 1970.

As an owner, Selig experienced the cultural, political and economic upheavals of the 1970's and 1980s, a period of persistent labor conflict, growing disparities among “large” and “small” franchises, and the ultimate recasting of the game's business model. As Commissioner, he led and contended with an increasingly numerous and complex set of constituencies – owners, players and fans, but also agents, and, especially, increasingly specialized and diffuse mass media – through the tumult of strikes and steroids, the introduction of competitive parity, playoff wild-card games, interleague schedules along and, most recently, the advent of the digital revolution, whether in Sabermetrics or the explosive growth of MLBAM, a powerful new media platform. Throughout, the many changes that reshaped Major League baseball reflected in turn the broader currents that transformed American – and global – society, as well as the impact of radically changing national and global economies.

Selig's presence and his perspective offer students of history a rare opportunity to interact with a living “primary source,” a vital witness to all these developments, one informed by his own appreciation of history, his major at UW: indeed, he often credits the historical perspective he developed in college as a key element in dealing with the challenges and opportunities that he encountered as Commissioner. In 2019, he published a memoir, *For the Good of the Game*, dealing with his life and times in Major League Baseball. Students will find it a useful guide to many of the topics we deal with. As you will see, *For the Good of the Game* appears in the list of recommended book purchases for this seminar; its account reinforces and expands on many of the insights and arguments you will hear from Selig in our weekly discussions. Discussion will give you the opportunity to question Selig directly about key moments in the history of MLB since World War II; as he will tell you, he welcomes “hard” questions. At the same time, students are encouraged to engage one another in the course of discussion.

Course Objectives

By the time you have finished your required work for this semester, you should have accomplished the following objectives:

- Learn to synthesize the research, writing, analytic and expressive skills you have developed through your previous classes.
- Produce an in-depth study of a clearly defined historical problem, grounding your conclusions in research encompassing a breadth of sources – primary, memoirs, media – print and electronic/audio-visual, and published secondary
- Learn how to frame and substantiate with appropriate evidence a convincing argument in support of a clear analytic position
- Gain a broad perspective on the interaction of sports and broader social currents
- Gain a contextual understanding of the changes that have occurred – and the contexts that have framed them – in virtually every aspect of modern baseball, from the scouting of talent to labor-management relations, the financing of stadium construction and the reasons for the sport’s enduring attraction to spectators
- Learn to discuss or debate respectfully a variety of contentious or involved topics involving sports and modern society.

Like other senior seminars in History, this 600 course provides students with a “capstone” experience that will require them to synthesize and employ the various skills and methods they have developed in the course of their undergraduate careers, whether in History or allied majors, regardless of their chronological or regional focus. These skills include extensive reading in historical literature, the undertaking of research and the ability to produce a substantial (20-25pp.) paper that makes a clear, persuasive and well-documented argument in relation to a subject of the student’s choosing.

Such skills are the basic equipment for any aspiring historian, but, more important, they also represent the indispensable elements for success in virtually any profession, regardless of focus. Numerous studies, supported by the experience of History alumni who have pursued careers in business, the professions and administration, demonstrate that employers value job candidates who can define key problems, recognize the complexities defining them, conduct research independently and creatively, based on the ability to interpret and explain sources from a variety of formats or disciplines. Using this information, they should then be able to produce analyses through clear, persuasive arguments grounded in authoritative and honestly presented evidence. These skills provide necessary tools for use in all the aspects of one’s life requiring the evaluation of conflicting arguments and evidence. This course has the peculiar advantage of reconsidering something as familiar and seemingly straightforward as Major League Baseball by framing it within contexts that seldom enter popular discussion of the game. As such, it provides a clear demonstration of the complexity and nuance underlying even something as “normal” as the “national pastime,” which we often take for granted. Briefly, then, in addition to concerning ourselves with what happened when and where, or why, we should also ask ourselves not just *how* it took place, but how it had become possible, conceivable or right in the minds of the actors we study. In exploring these relationships or revisiting “conventional wisdom,” students will learn how the encounter with primary sources or hard evidence leads them to rethink what they thought they knew about given topics or issue, a habit of mind that will serve them in other areas their professional and civic lives.

Course Work

Summary description:

The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week), dedicated online time, reading, writing, individual consultations with the instructor, and the requisite research, drafting and revising time for a substantive piece of historical research and argument.

Detailed description:

Work for this seminar work comprises three interrelated parts: weekly discussions based on assigned readings; student research; and a research paper, due one week after our last meeting. To take each in turn:

- a. *Weekly meetings*: Much of the seminar's work will take place in the form of our regularly scheduled class meetings. At these, participants will have familiarized themselves with the readings assigned for that week. These readings will come from two sorts of assigned sources, primary and secondary, posted on the course's Canvas page (with the exception of the Tygiel and Bouton books). As a rule, you should read at least one or two from the "recommended" entries. On the basis of these readings, we will identify and discuss crucial themes and issues in each meeting. These discussions will often involve posing questions to Commissioner Selig about his memory or interpretation of the week's topic. Doing so takes advantage of his value as a primary source. At the same time, students should also engage one another on points of disagreement or when seeking more extensive explanation of a view. The exchange of ideas – and especially the encounter with varying interpretations of diverse sorts of evidence – forms the heart of historical inquiry. This can only take place through active and respectful conversation, whether in person or in print. Given the small size of the course, the instructors expect every student to participate. ***This element of the course will count for 50% of the participant's final grade.***
- b. *The research paper*: In addition to the weekly readings and discussions, the research and writing of a substantial research paper will constitute the chief focus of this seminar. As an aid to the management of students' time and effort, this part of the course will go through several stages. First, early in the semester, we will receive from the bibliographers in the Wisconsin Historical Society Library an online guide to conducting research in one of the best research libraries for the study of American history. As such, the WHS library has excellent holdings in secondary literature on baseball, as well as great collections in print, online and/or on microfiche of the essential newspapers and magazines for studying baseball history. In subsequent weeks, students will meet a series of deadlines as they develop their research papers.

*The first three assignments – initial outline, consultation and expanded outline are **mandatory** for all students, as is the final paper. Students can choose not to submit the draft or similar product. All submissions to be delivered as Word attachments in email to jhsweet@wisc.edu*

i. First, students will submit by **Sunday, October 8**, a three-page proposal for the semester’s research paper. This statement will define the paper’s topic, telling the reader why it is important or merits research, followed by a working thesis, including why the submitter has chosen it. The topic should focus on a specific event or incident, or on a theme that developed over the course of a longer period in the years since World War II. As noted above, this assignment encourages students to explore at greater length historical problems that have not received a full treatment in the assigned readings and discussion. *In addition*, students will attach to this statement a list of five relevant works, none of which will come from the assigned readings. This list will serve as the *entry* to subsequent and wider research

ii. Participants will then schedule an online meeting with Sweet to occur in the following two weeks. That meeting will address the research topic and lead to a refinement of the thesis, in addition to suggesting additional avenues for research. On the basis of this discussion, students should be able to draft a helpful outline to structure their argument; they will also have a clearer plan for their research.

iii. *Next*, on **Sunday, October 22**, students will submit an initial outline for their discussion (understanding that this will likely change in the course of writing the actual paper). This outline will state the thesis, then give a structured overview of the argument, *as well as an indication of its place in historical discussions of the topic*. This outline will also offer a longer version of the working bibliography.

iv. *Then*, on **Tuesday, November 14**, students will submit an “expanded” outline, with a clearly formulated thesis statement, a clearer structure for the argument and an expanded list of sources, building on the original outline and proposal. As with the initial proposal, students will schedule an online meeting with Sweet.

iv. *Finally*, by 5PM on **Thursday, November 30**, students who wish to will send Sweet an email with a complete draft or a draft-like product/outline of their research paper. Please place it in a MS Word attachment, to allow for full and clear in-text edits. As far as possible, this draft should give a clear idea of the argument, its structure, and a concrete indication of the evidence that supports it. Since this is *not* a required element – it intends to expedite students’ attention to time-management – students can submit anything approximating a draft or a detailed outline. Sweet will return these submissions, comments and proposed

revisions within 7-10 days after receiving them. This draft will serve as the basis for the final paper, which falls due by **5PM on Tuesday, December 19**.

All the elements going to create the research paper will account for the other 50% of the participant's final grade. Paper grades will reflect the instructor's assessment of: clarity and importance of the thesis and argument; the quality and rigor of the research used to support it; evidence of improvement or refinement during the course of research and writing; clarity of organization and expression.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

Finally, as most participants are within one or two semesters of graduating, they should be very well acquainted with academic standards regarding academic integrity and such forms of misconduct as plagiarism. To refresh their memories of the university's rules in these matters and the procedures for dealing, participants can use the following link:

<http://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/>.

Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. Indeed, racial inequality and the struggle with racism forms a recurring theme in this seminar from its very first meeting. As such, this seminar offers a variety of perspectives on the benefits from and challenges to diversity in a setting familiar to any observer of modern sport. Accordingly, our discussions welcome and depend on participants' abilities to express freely their perspectives on these events and their implications. At UW-Madison, we commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

History Lab

Those requiring assistance or extra guidance in framing and writing research papers should consult with the department's History Lab. A representative of this valuable resource will visit our class early in the semester. As the Lab's web-site states:

The History Lab is a resource center where experts (PhD students) will assist you with your history papers. No matter what stage you are at in the writing process – choosing a topic, conducting research, composing a thesis, outlining your argument, revising your drafts – the History Lab staff can help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. Drop by Humanities 4255 or schedule a one-on-one consultation at <http://go.wisc.edu/hlab>.

MEETING SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

(Unless required books – e. g. Tygiel and Bouton – or otherwise specified, all readings for each week of class are posted in the modules section of the course’s Canvas site.)

<u>Week/Date</u>	<u>Topic/Title</u>
9/12	<p>INTRODUCTION – Course overview and goals</p> <p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - D. McDonald, “Sport History and the Historical Profession” - Amy Bass, “The State of the Field.”
9/19	<p>JACK ROBINSON AND BREAKING BASEBALL’S COLOR BAR</p> <p>READINGS:</p> <p><i>Required:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - J. Tygiel, <i>Baseball’s Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy</i>. (Focus on background, events associated with his joining the Dodgers and impact through the 1950s) - J. Robinson, <i>I Never Had It Made</i> (excerpts) <p><i>Recommended:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - J. Kelly, “Integrating America.” - Bill L. Weaver, “The Black Press and the Assault on Professional Baseball’s “Color Line,” October, 1945-April, 1947”; OR C. Lamb, “‘I Never Want to Take Another Trip Like This One’: Jackie Robinson’s Journey to Integrate Baseball”; - “A.B. Chandler as Baseball Commissioner, 1945-51: An Overview.” - D. Branson on Satchel Paige - L. Moore, “Doby Does It!” (over) - J. Ingham, “Four Guys from Birmingham.” - R. McCaffrey, “From Baseball Icon to Crusading Journalist.” (over) - J. D. Winneker et al., “Intra-City Rivalries” and desegregation.

- R. McCaffrey, "From Baseball Icon to Crusading Columnist."

9/26 THE MAJOR LEAGUES MOVE WEST: TAKING THE DODGERS AND GIANTS TO CALIFORNIA

Readings:

Required:

- F. Frick, *Games, Asterisks, People* (excerpt).
- R. M. Jarvis, "When the Lawyers Slept," (Review of N. J. Sullivan, *The Dodgers Move West* (1987)).
- H. D. Fetter, "Revising the Revisionists."
- P. Marquis, "Complicating the Blame Game."
- R. Garratt, *Home Team* (excerpt)

Recommended:

- P. Ellsworth, "The Brooklyn Dodgers' Move to L. A.: Was Walter O'Malley Solely Responsible?"
- K. Nelson, "Los Angeles Dodgers vs. San Francisco Giants, April 1958"
- S. Dinces, "Digging Deeper."

10/3 THE FIRST GENERATION OF LATINO PLAYERS

Readings: (read at least Burgos, Regalado, Garratt and the *Sports Illustrated* article, as well as *one* of the profiles of Clemente and Minofo):

- Adrian Burgos, *Playing America's Game*, part II and Chapter 9;
- S. O. Regalado, "Hey Chico!"
- R. Garratt, "Horace Stoneham and the Breaking of Baseball's Second Color Barrier"
- Ingham, "Managing Integration" – Pirates in 1967 (over)

- L. R. Gerlach, "Crime and Punishment: The Marichal-Roseboro Incident." (over)
- *Sports Illustrated* piece on Marichal-Roseboro
- Cowan profile of Minoso
- Symposium on Minoso published by mlb.com
- Garland and Murray on Clemente

***NB: PAPER TOPIC STATEMENTS/BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE BY EMAIL,
SUNDAY, 10/8***

10/10 RESEARCH ORIENTATION VISIT TO WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY WITH CYNTHIA BACHHUBER. MEET IN WHS LOBBY BY 1:15PM.

10/17 FRANCHISE MOVEMENT, LEAGUE EXPANSION AND THE FORCES THAT MADE THEM: THE CASE OF MILWAUKEE, THE BRAVES AND THE PILOTS/BREWERS:

READINGS (All required, except for *either* Quirk or Eisen):

- G. Gendzel, "How Milwaukee Lost the Braves"
- W. Mullins, "Not Quite Big League . . ."
- J. Quirk, "An Economic Analysis of Team Movements . . .";
- J. Eisen, "Franchise Relocation in Major League Baseball."
- A. Selig, "Major League Baseball and Its Antitrust Exemption."
- Justice J. P. Stevens, "A Judge's Use of History," pp. 223-230
- *Sports Illustrated* article on the Braves' move to Atlanta

PAPER OUTLINES DUE BY 10/22

10/24 THE RISE OF THE MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYERS ASSOCIATION AND THE ADVENT OF FREE AGENCY

*Readings**Required:*

- M. Miller, “Reflections on Baseball and the MLBPA.”
- EITHER, Burk, *Much More Than a Game*—Miller and the MLBPA and Flood; OR, C. Schmidt, “Explaining Baseball’s Revolution”
- C. Aikens, “The Struggle of Curt Flood”
- H. D. Fetter, “From Flood to Free Agency”

Optional

- W. Gillis, “Rebellion in the Kingdom of Swat . . .”
- S. Estreicher *et al.*, Round Table of Miller and MLB
- G. Early, “Curt Flood, Gratitude and Image.”

10/31

SELLING BASEBALL IN A CHANGING SOCIETY (1965-75)

*Readings:**Required:*

- John Updike, “Hub Fans Bid Kid Adieu,” *New Yorker*, October 22, 1960, at: <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1960/10/22/hub-fans-bid-kid-adieu>
- G. Talese, “The Silent Season of a Hero.”
- D. Q. Voigt, “From Chadwick to the Chipmunks”;
- J. Bouton, *Ball Four* – ca. 100 pp
- Everbach and Matysiak, “Women Journalists who Broke . . .”

Optional, but recommended:

- Treder, “1972”;
- D. Halberstam, “Who Were You, Joe DiMaggio?”

- R. Telander on player-press relationships

EXPANDED OUTLINES DUE NOVEMBER 14

11/7 THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF STADIUM CONSTRUCTION, THE CASE OF MILLER PARK

Readings: (In addition to required below, articles from *Capital Times* and *Wisconsin State Journal*, posted on Canvas page):

Required:

- S. A. Riess, “Historical Perspectives on Sport and Public Policy”
- V. Matheson, “Is There a Case for Subsidizing Sports Stadiums?”
- A. F. Sanderson, “In Defense of New Sports Stadiums”
- J. Siegfried and A. Zimbalist, “The Economics of Sports Facilities and Their Communities” (over)

Optional:

- R. W. Schwester, “An Examination of the Public Good Externalities of Professional Athletic Venues”
- C. Clapp and J. Hakes, “How Long a Honeymoon [new stadiums and attendance

11/14 “THE STEROIDS ERA”

READINGS:

Required:

- The *Mitchell Report* – Executive Summary (full report optional)
- Transcript of 2005 Congressional hearing on steroid use in MLB (optional): http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/sports/articles/steroidhearing_011508.html
- P. Antinori et al., “Contextualization of a Shifting Perspective on the Steroids Era”

- B. E. Denham, “*Sports Illustrated*, the mainstream press and the enactment of drug policy in Major League Baseball: A study in agenda-building theory”

Recommended:

- A. Blazer, “When Rituals Fail: Confessions of Doping in Elite Sports”
- E. Ham, “Pretext: The Dark Side of Baseball”
- MLB’s Joint Drug Prevention and Treatment Program

11/21 NO MEETING – WORK ON YOUR PAPERS!!

11/28 RACE, ETHNICITY, AND GENDER IN THE MAJOR LEAGUES

Readings (at least two from each section):

Race/Ethnicity:

- Jackie Robinson, *I Never Had It Made* (excerpts)
- J. Juffer on Sammy Sosa and Images of Latinos
- Spearman *et alii*, “The Thrill is Gone” [decline of African-American major league representation]
- R. Lapchick, “Does Baseball Look like America?”
- D. Ogden and M. Hilt, Collective Identity and Basketball vs. Baseball
- L. Newman et al., “Prejudice in Major League Baseball”—double-standards for Black vs. White players.
- J. Moraga, “ESPN Deportes” – Latinos and media visibility

Women and Contemporary Baseball

- R. Green, “The lady is a gem of a G.M.”
- E. Staurowsky et al., “Young Women Discussing Sports and Careers”
- M. Grubb et al., “Female Sportscasters: Navigating a Masculine Domain”

- “Lessons from Claire Smith” [African-American baseball reporter] (over)
- C. Maddox, “Not America’s Game”
- Do-Hyoung Park MLB.com on Kim Ng and Asian-Americans
- Sarah Spain, ESPN.com on Ng’s appointment as Marlins’ GM
- S. Venkatraman, NBC News on Ng and racial harassment

11/30--DRAFTS OR DRAFT-LIKE PRODUCTS [OPTIONAL] DUE VIA EMAIL

12/5 BASEBALL DURING THE “SELIG ERA”—VISIT TO MILWAUKEE: CE SELIG’S OFFICE; AMERICAN FAMILY FIELD (“THE SELIG EXPERIENCE”

NB: ALERT YOUR INSTRUCTORS IN CONFLICTING CLASSES

Reading:

- D. Jacobson, “Why Baseball Is Booming.”
- (optional) A. Zimbalist, *In the Best Interests of Baseball* or reviews of this work

12/12 BASEBALL’S DATA REVOLUTION[S] (Class zoom visit from Mike Shildt, former manager of the St. Louis Cardinals and current consultant and coach for the San Diego Padres)

Readings (at least three):

- R. J. Puerzer, “From Scientific Baseball to Sabermetrics” (over)
- Daniel Okrent, “He Does It by the Numbers”
- G. Wong and C. Schubert, “Major League General Managers: An Analysis”
- Otto, Metz *et alii*, “Sports Fans and their Information-Gathering Habits”
- B. Burroughs, “Statistics and Baseball Fandom: Sabermetric Infrastructure of Expertise”

- J. Kim *et alii*, “Data Analytics and Performance: The Moderating Role of Intuition-Based HR Management in Major League Baseball”
- T. Verducci on data
- ML BAM--<http://www.mlbam.com/>
- Article on Disney acquisition of portion of MLBAM
- Yair Galily, “Artificial Intelligence and Sports Journalism: Is It a Sweeping Change?”
- Hylton, “The MLBPA and the Ownership of Players’ Statistics”

PAPERS DUE TO PROF. SWEET BY 5PM ON TUESDAY, 12/19

SUBMITTED TO SWEET’S MAILBOX OR EMAIL SUBMISSION AS MS WORD ATTACHMENT