

forward from early 2002, this book can continue to provide a solid foundation for discussion of the still very significant issue of terrorism against America.

California State University, Fullerton

Lawrence B. de Graaf

**Edward J. Rielly, ed. *Baseball and American Culture: Across the Diamond*. New York: The Haworth Press, 2003. Pp. xxiii, 289. Cloth, \$59.95; ISBN 0-7890-1484-X. Paper, \$29.95; ISBN 0-7890-1485-8.**

Even the most casual fan of baseball will find essays in this volume to excite, bring back memories, and cause contemplation about the "national pastime." With topics ranging from American fans to baseball's inclusiveness (on the diamond if not in the ranks of management), to the economics of baseball, to management-labor disputes, or to baseball and the arts, the volume includes some twenty-three essays, each of which has accompanying notes. Some of the essays evoke a nostalgia for the game: Derek Catsom's piece, "On Fenway, Faith and Fandom: A Red Sox Fan Reflects," is noteworthy in that respect. Some are attempts at serious scholarship: David C. Ogden's "Baseball and Blacks: A Loss of Affinity, a Loss of Community" is most thoughtful. Some of the essays would have been better left unpublished: Loren Coleman, "Boys of Summer, Suicides of Winter: An Introduction to Baseball Suicides," puts a scientific gloss on the tragedies that have resulted from personal defeat. Some others are so narrowly focused that their contribution to the whole seems limited: Gary Land's "God and the Diamond: The 'Born-Again' Baseball Autobiography" is an example.

Through all of these essays, readers are reminded that baseball is American and democratic in that one doesn't have to be abnormally tall or large or fast to play the game; it is egalitarian in reaching out to all, although the requirements for a playing field, baseball, bats, and gloves have kept the game more middle class and suburban than lower class in its appeal. We are reminded, too, that baseball played an integral role in the desegregation of American life, a role that ironically led to a diminution of interest among African-Americans. Baseball has provided inspiration for poets and humorists (often self-deprecation by players themselves) and has a language of its own. We are reminded that the labor disputes of baseball have an intractability about them because of the complex interplay of business practice, talented athletes with short expectations for years of play, and fan fascination if not fanaticism about fielding the very best team possible each and every year. For all of these reasons, this is a useful collection of essays. For readers of this journal, the book would have only limited use as a text in history classes and would be more appropriately listed as bibliography for a class on popular culture or sports history.

Tennessee Wesleyan College

Thomas F. Armstrong