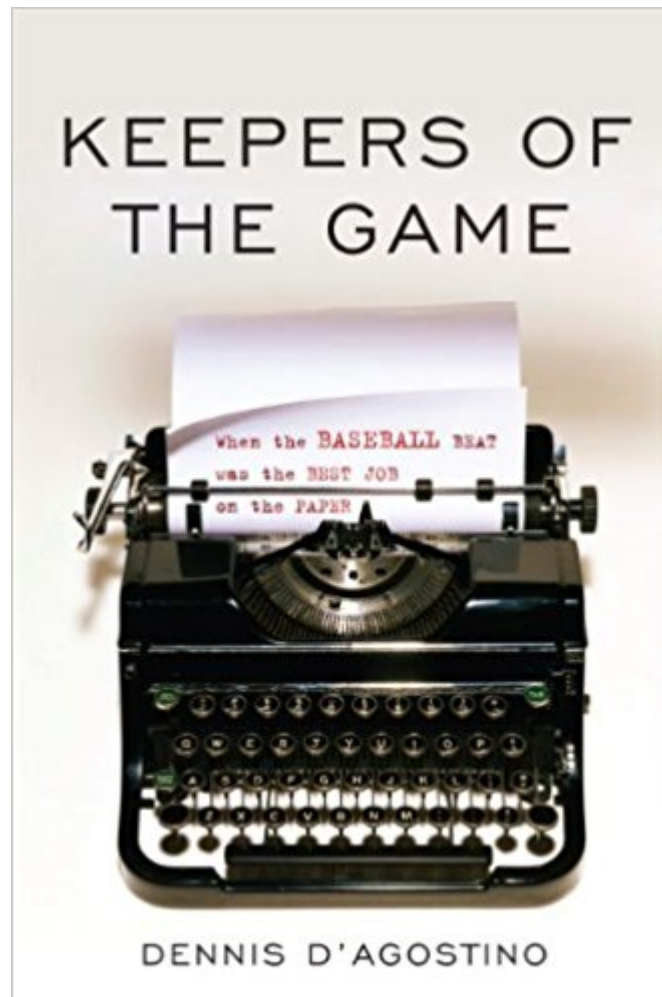


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Keepers Of The Game: When The Baseball Beat Was The Best Job On The Paper



Synopsis

There was a time when the most prestigious job on a major newspaper belonged to the baseball beat writer, who enjoyed unparalleled longevity and influence within his profession. Through a variety of events and circumstances—television, expansion, all-sports radio, lifestyle changes, and the Internet revolution—those days are long gone. The baseball beat writers endure, but jobs change, and they have faced new challenges. *Keepers of the Game* celebrates the last generation of baseball writers whose careers were rooted in Teletype machines, train travel, and ten-team leagues, and who wielded an influence and power within the game that are unimaginable today. Dennis D'Agostino brings together, for the first time, the personal histories of a group of journalists whose influence, power, and dedication to the game of baseball is part of a golden age of sports journalism that is now a thing of the past. Twenty-three vintage beat writers tell their own stories, with an individual chapter devoted to each writer. The interview subjects include nine winners of the Baseball Hall of Fame's J. G. Taylor Spink Award, the baseball writing profession's highest honor: Ross Newhan, Hal McCoy, Murray Chass, Peter Gammons, Bob Elliott, Rick Hummel, Tracy Ringolsby, Nick Peters, and Bill Madden. They and their colleagues were the best of their breed, that last generation of writers who were the unquestioned gatekeepers of the national pastime. For decades, their words shaped the history of the game.

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Customer Reviews

In the preface of *Keepers of the Game*, New York Times columnist and former baseball beat writer

Dave Anderson says that baseball beat writers are "members of a rare and hallowed herd who worked in a rare and hallowed era." Being a baseball beat writer was "the most prestigious, most sought after, most read and most competitive job on a major newspaper." They were the primary source of baseball news, opinion and analysis. But that world no longer exists. Anderson adds, "Men whose careers were rooted in teletype machines and 10-team leagues were the game's last true custodians and guardians, yielding a single influence that would be unthinkable today." Author Dennis D'Agostino interviews 23 long-time baseball beat writers, including nine winners of the Baseball Hall of Fame's J.G. Taylor Spink Award, the baseball writing profession's highest honor. D'Agostino selected the writers based on their longevity on the baseball beat, their historic reach and influence. If you've been a baseball fan anything during the past five decades, many of these writers will be familiar to you--Peter Gammons, Maury Allen, Stan Hochman, Bill Madden, Phil Pepe, Hal Bock among others. While you may not have read them every day, many of them were correspondents for The Sporting News. Here are some of the most interesting observations from the writers: Maury Allen: "It's never going to be like it was in our time--the fun, the entertainment, the joy, the thrill." Hal Bock: "I like to quote Red Smith, who said, 'Baseball is only dull to people with dull minds.'" Tracy Ringolsby: "Newspapers did a poor job of seeing the future and adapting to it." Phil Pepe: "There will never be another Dick Young."

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