Baseball's manifest destiny: The good, the bad, and the ugly

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BASEBALL'S MANIFEST DESTINY: THE GOOD.

THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

by

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Bachelor of Arts
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1994

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1996

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Master of Arts Degree
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ABSTRACT

Baseball’s Manifest Destiny: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

by

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Brooklyn Dodgers fans blame Walter O’Malley for destroying a way of life and tarnishing the golden image of the postwar years when, in 1957, he relocated their beloved baseball team to the West. The relocation finds its impetus in American adherence to nineteenth-century Manifest Destiny and a major demographic shift following a post-World War II economic and technological boom.

For the first half of the twentieth century, baseball transcended a mere rooting for a collection of superb athletes: civic identity rested in one’s baseball team. Losing a team to another city was devastating. For some cities baseball provided the affirmation of civic status, which provides part of the impetus for team relocations. Baseball can provide a portal to the past, bring communities together, and revitalize cities but owners can also bare their teeth, exploiting and dominating cherished traditions in order to protect their delicate prosperity from the scrutiny of lawmakers.
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touch for such a long time.
PREFACE

The 1999 season is the last for Tiger Stadium in Detroit, Michigan. In the year 2000 the Tigers will move into their new Comerica Park to play major league baseball—critics call it Con America Park, reflecting the feeling that baseball’s owners are exploiting America’s love with baseball for public subsidies of their stadiums. Afraid that I might miss out on a part of American history I plan to see a Tigers game before the end of the season. It will not matter who they are playing, what place either team is in, or which baseball stars will be visible; I want a Tiger Stadium experience. Call it heritage tourism or baseball tourism or just a reach for nostalgia, seeing a major league baseball game in an old, leaky, uncomfortable stadium that opened the same week the Titanic sank is important to me. It represents a natural nostalgia, one that stadium planners and civic leaders are trying to reproduce and manufacture for easy consumption. Its presence evokes memories of other ballparks that are uncomfortable as well, like 3Com Park née Candlestick Park in San Francisco, which will also be replaced by a new, admittedly exciting downtown stadium. Tiger Stadium represents baseball played in stadiums that are and were quirky because they had to be, not because marketers believe it will help to sell popcorn, peanuts, and Crackerjack®.

The recent spate of stadium construction and the nature of their appearance is difficult
for me to come to terms with. It is obvious that architects and marketers have identified what will appeal to baseball fans and are trying to exploit it. As one who enjoys watching a baseball game for its sheer athleticism, subtle nuances, and contradictions of precision and power, the outside efforts swirling about the game are distractions. Labor strife, realignment, playoff expansion and wild cards, and the obtrusion that is inter-league play give cause to legitimate complaints, but the storied basics of baseball remain in place.

The difficulty for the quasi-purists lies in the acceptance of nostalgia-pandering. I am aware that extraneous forces are shaping the direction of baseball, that sportsmen owners never really existed, and taxpayers are subsidizing private enterprises. I also know that nostalgia is being manufactured and scientifically produced for our consumption. The rub is that the nostalgia angle is working, however bald-faced its mass produced character may be. Communities across the country see the use of public funds as worth what they are paying. The postmodern stadiums, slathered with the patina of a bygone urban era, are beautiful and are redefining the purpose of sports arenas. They highlight and celebrate the character of a city and they have everything a fan could want, making attendance at a major league baseball game an experience. They also offer mothers and fathers the opportunity to remember the place baseball had in their own childhoods. They induce them to remember their neighborhoods, their circle of friends as they grew up, and playing baseball as youngsters.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Baseball represents a contradiction found in much of American history. Rural and Romantic in its origins, its development and expansion depended on the urban setting. It served as a recoil—and still does—to the complexities of living in an urban age, inviting us to recall a time and place that was better than the times we live in now. Because baseball, like western literature or cinema, serves as a portal to a different time and place it maintains a special hold on the American psyche. It also represents a contradiction in terms of its relocation teams and its expansion of the number of cities hosting major league teams, its Manifest Destiny. One facet of the relocation was the elation that a city experienced when its civic leaders succeeded in securing a team, making it national in scope and generating civic pride that would help to define its ethos. On the other side was the realization that teams, as former integral members of communities, left behind wounds that fester to the present. In the middle of this are the owners who play one community against another to get the best deal for themselves. This is an examination of
the way major league baseball expanded and moved west and the results of that relocation and expansion.¹

The 1950s, a time of latent and emerging tumult for America, holds a special place in the hearts of middle class Americans who are asked to remember the decade. Tranquility, the golden age of television, a powerful sense of community even in urban areas, and a general affluence characterize the memories that people are likely to cite.² Yet a series of baseball team relocations, which have foundations in nineteenth-century migration, changed the game and the way people viewed it. Baseball, once apart from the dominant trends in American society, became a manifestation of the nation’s transformation when teams picked up and moved from communities that loved them to places that paid them. In effect, baseball became Manifest Destiny.

Baseball’s relocation and expansion follows a pattern that has been in place since colonial times. Americans, especially in the mid-nineteenth century, expropriated the

¹References to Major League Baseball in upper case denotes the corporate entity that presides over major league baseball. Major league baseball in lower case letters denotes the game in general, played at the highest level.

continent by making it their own, first in their minds and then with their deeds. Teams that moved appropriated new regions with minimal regard to the economic and cultural activity that preceded them just as expansionist Americans did in the nineteenth century. Residents of cities who lost baseball teams saw the relocation and expansion of baseball as manifestations of greed that destroyed communities. Baseball team owners, who are, after all, businessmen, were keenly aware of the changing demographics of the United States and made business decisions accordingly.

The first chapter establishes the restless nature and temper of Americans, their tendency to move west, and the way they went about it. They went because they felt, right or wrong, that they could rejuvenate or regenerate themselves or save others from certain damnation. When they arrived in the “west” that was relevant to them they established themselves as the dominant culture. Major league baseball’s relocation and expansion has the same history.

The second chapter presents a pattern of migration that occurred in after World War II and several factors that encouraged American westward movement. After the war the West was accessible to more and more people and the days requiring a pioneering or especially hardy spirit were gone. New jobs, new freeways, and new cities sprung up nearly as quickly as the mining towns in the nineteenth century. This pattern of migration, which is similar to American migration in the nineteenth century, sets up an environment that encouraged baseball owners to move their teams west. The eastern

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cities were losing their appeal to the middle classes, causing them to seek refuge in the suburbs. Businesses relocated, following their customers and taking advantage of tax breaks and the lack of space constraints found in the west. Middle class flight, and the response of many businesses, provided the impetus some major league baseball team owners needed to do the same.

The third chapter examines the role of myth and nostalgia with respect to baseball’s history. Americans love their myths; they define who we think we are and color how we see events in a historical context. If something happens that does not fit into our framework of American character, it causes us to either redefine that framework or adjust the perception of the event, making it fit into that with which we are comfortable. Nostalgia does the same.

After World War II, baseball began to respond to the emerging suburban nature of America, yet millions of Americans seem to remember the urban era as a better time. They celebrate the urban charm of cities that were then becoming obsolete. The explosion in popularity of television gave Americans the self-images, however inaccurate, with which they were satisfied, spinning the self-perpetuating circle of a specious reality and the attempts to attain it.

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The fourth and fifth chapters place the results of baseball teams' movements within the construct of nineteenth and twentieth-century migration in America by presenting the good that major league baseball brings to a community, the ill feelings that fans experience when major league teams move, and that which prompts the movement. Owners' avarice. Nineteenth-century Manifest Destiny was good for some and bad for others. White America benefitted while Indians and Mexicans suffered. Similarly, baseball's Manifest Destiny (expansion, relocation, and betterment and marring of communities) in the twentieth century was good for Major League Baseball and bad for minor league teams and their fans. No minor league team in a city where a major league team relocated or expanded escaped the effects of baseball's Manifest Destiny. This study will examine the effects of baseball's Manifest Destiny after World War II. It will place baseball's Manifest Destiny within the context of postwar suburbanization and a westward population shift in the United States after World War II.

As Americans became increasingly suburban in nature during the postwar period, major league baseball reflected that suburbanization movement by relocating and expanding into the new suburbs. The process by which baseball moved and expanded, however, is nothing new. Americans cemented their tendency to move west in the nineteenth century and the pattern they followed in the nineteenth century was similar to the pattern in the twentieth century. Americans established their nineteenth-century

dominance without respect to preceding economic and cultural activity." Major league baseball’s relocation and expansion in the twentieth century reflects the preponderance, the sheer numbers of Americans who picked up and headed for the Sunbelt during and after World War II. American arrogance and the expectation that they could set up wherever they wanted to stems from the expansionist orientation of Manifest Destiny. This explains how major league baseball owners feel they can set up their baseball operations wherever they want to, irrespective of whatever minor league teams may have existed in their desired markets. This study will elucidate the links between nineteenth- and twentieth-century western migration.

Baseball’s relocation and expansion, operating within the construct of Manifest Destiny, have their effects on those who lose teams and those who get teams. The Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Giants serve as specific case studies that illustrate the effect of westward movement and suburbanization in the United States. Baseball’s relocation and expansion is both good and bad, just like Manifest Destiny in the nineteenth century. Starting in 1953, when the Boston Braves became the Milwaukee Braves, moving through when the Dodgers and Giants moved to the coast, to when the Arizona Diamondbacks started play in 1998 in the latest major league expansion, major league baseball effects beneficial change for communities but also effects deleterious results. It can bring community pride and rejuvenate cities but can push aside minor league teams or uproot beloved teams that define a civic character. If one is to

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understand the ill feelings deracination generates, one must understand the interplay
between national mythology, nostalgia, an overwhelming sense of national identity, and
the realities of baseball's business side. Nostalgia and identity explains the residual
animosity that persists in places such as Brooklyn, long after the white ethnic
neighborhoods have been replaced by blacks, Puerto Ricans, and other immigrant groups.

Many books on baseball cover the lives of individual men or the statistics of players
or teams. Other books discuss the economics of baseball. Autobiographies are
entertaining and rundowns on successes and failures make for good reference, but no
compendium of baseball's effect on communities, businesses, and teams as it expanded
exists. This project will tally the good and bad effects of baseball moving west and the
impact that relocation and expansion have on communities, leagues, and teams. It will
align itself with works that illustrate the business aspects of major league baseball and

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take into account the aspects of American cultural tendencies. It will also place baseball within the study of suburbanization and movement west.'

Historians spend careers debating the definition of "the West." The question of whether the West is a place marked by geographical features or a process of movement and a cultural phenomenon transcending political boundaries has shaped the debate for a generation. Some base their definition in a strictly geographical and physical orientation: they often point to aridity as the salient feature of their region with the Mississippi River often serving as a general delineation between East and West. Others ground their definition within cultural and social constructs. For them cowboy boots, pickup trucks, and an individualistic style of living characterize the West. It can be a process and a way of life." For the purpose of this study the West is defined as both place and process. The


West has been, since colonial times, a place to which one relocates when natural resources dry up or when spacial constraints become too much to bear. While there are exceptions to the trans-Mississippi orientation in this study, for the most part references to "the West" refer to the lands west of the Mississippi River.

As this work puts major league baseball in the context of some of the tremendous changes that occurred in the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it assumes a basic knowledge of the power and influence of Manifest Destiny. It also assumes a fundamental understanding of the rapid growth of suburbia, and the economic boom and explosion of technology in the 1950s. It examines the middles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries because these eras respectively saw the most profound changes in demographics and technological advances of the times.

Nineteenth-Century Foundations

It is our Manifest Destiny to overspread the continent. Providence allotted for our yearly multiplying millions and to possess the whole of the continent.

—John L. O'Sullivan, Democratic Review

Mark Twain found it irresistible. Harvard-trained author Richard Henry Dana failed to resist. Theodore Roosevelt saw it as a way of bootstrapping himself free of asthma and fecklessness. The magnetism of adventure, rejuvenation, or regeneration tugged at them and they, like hundreds of thousands of other Americans, heeded the call. They went west. For reasons as varied as the people who went, they uprooted and made new lives for themselves, taking part in the most profound migration in United States history. Groups of Americans and immigrants from around the world, acting individually and collectively, helped shape a national ethos, the westering spirit that lies at the core of the American character. To feel free, making one's own way, to start anew, and bend the land to the will of man is part of the essence of the United States of America. To embrace this feeling, becoming part of something larger than themselves, however, Americans had to force their values and mores on existing populations. Americans have demonstrated they are unwilling to take into account the economic activities and cultural traditions of people existing in an area before their arrival. The nature of expansion, especially American expansion, inevitably impacted other people's lives.

Nineteenth- and twentieth-century Manifest Destiny in the United States has both beneficial and insidious elements. Whether it was a success or a land grab depends on who gives the account. Certainly white America benefitted from this doctrine as the country expanded and new business opportunities abounded. It spurred the growth of

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exciting new technologies and encouraged Americans to see and take pride in the
physical beauty of American geography. It gave Americans a sense of who they were,
who they strove to be, and how they wanted the world to view them. Others, however,
found themselves in the way of inexorable American expansion and realized they either
had to yield or become victims of American subjugation.

Americans' arrogance and expectation that they could set up wherever they wanted to
stems from the expansionist orientation of Manifest Destiny—which explains how major
league baseball owners feel they can set up their baseball operations wherever they want
to, irrespective of whatever minor league teams may exist in their desired markets. Two
essential parts of the doctrine, technology and newspapers, played large roles in the
proliferation of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Manifest Destiny in the United States.
One aspect of new technology, electricity, which powered a burgeoning telegraph system,
brought the country closer together through communication. Information that previously
took days or even weeks to filter across the country could be sent in a matter of seconds
or minutes. The steam engine and railroads increased mobility and further opened the
West, making it accessible to millions of people. These developments played significant
roles in the spread of United States expansion but the amplification of expansion came
from the press.

Propaganda played a large role in the perpetuation of expansionist feelings and
newspapers were the outlets for that propaganda. Manifest Destiny sold newspapers and
its enthusiasts were found in all levels of intellect and background. The intensity of
expansionists' calls varied generally by region. People in the Northeast preferred slow.
diplomatic means of expansion while those in the Northwestern sections of the country preferred aggressive, assured expansion. The Northeast, however, where the penny press flourished, called for the taking of "All Mexico" while newspapers in the Trans-Allegheny West, with softer-spoken editors, issued a caveat: there are blacks and Mexicans in Mexico.¹⁰

The populations of conquered lands posed a series of problems the United States was ill-prepared to solve. While some wanted America to extend into Canada and South America, from the north pole to the south pole the reality of logistical problems and governing the whole Western Hemisphere cooled that debate. Proponents of "All Mexico," however, still had the ear of policy makers. Eventually the question of what would be done with the Indians, blacks, and mestizos of Mexico caused a mellowing of rabid calls for taking all of Mexico. Whether or not Americans could or would integrate Mexicans and blacks or regenerate them into American society and how much time it would take presented stumbling blocks, but land rights and ownership for Mexican citizens would provide a maze of bureaucratic and legalistic complexities with which few were prepared to deal. The few answers presented were sectional or split according to partisanship and caused dissension. For these reasons and others, Manifest Destiny lost the momentum it needed to garner the mandate or justification for taking the entire continent. It created more questions than it answered.¹¹


¹¹Merk, Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History, 217; see also Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." [From
From Manifest Destiny to Mission

The movement to occupy the whole of the continent lost favor after the Mexican War but the majority of Americans still expected the country to extend from coast to coast. Pride in American fortitude and ingenuity in the mid- and late-nineteenth century was high and the feeling that Americans were “God’s chosen people” underpinned the justification, initiating a shift in ideology. They felt they had God’s guidance and direction, in their minds, to efficiently utilize the land. Americans, however, were to make the land useful in their terms, regardless of what cultural norms and economic activity existed before their arrival. They would also bring stability to the political condition of the people with whom they were intermixing. America’s Mission, a corollary to Manifest Destiny, would be to improve the state of the world by modeling liberty to the tyrannical regimes of Europe. The United States would be the exemplar for the world.

Many nineteenth-century Americans, based on the preponderance of the Protestant ethic, believed they had a mission. Noble aims such as bringing God to heathen savages, cultivating lands that original inhabitants left fallow, and providing the shelter of liberty against a gale of tyranny have justified their expansionist goals. Adherents to the Mission-version of Manifest Destiny believe God chooses a nation and encourages it to bestow His gifts on others. The argument went: “We are God’s chosen people. If the

indolent savages in California shirk their responsibility and fail to utilize God's special countenance then we must make the land flower. We will make the best of God's benevolence, work the land, and make it useful. It is our destiny." This philosophy extended into environmental practices as well as labor and cultural relations. Herein the United States, as a whole, had a providential duty to teach democracy to the backward people of the continent and use the land as proper Christians should.

According to the Mission argument, liberty and democracy are temples into which other territories should be welcomed in their due time. Manifest Destiny historian Frederick Merk outlines the process areas must follow. Emigration from the dominant country or area must occur in sufficient numbers. The newcomers, believing they are bringing culture and civilization, will attempt democracy by installing suffrage, demonstrating land ownership, and cultivating natural resources. Charges of perfidy or tyranny will generate a "revolution" and the United States will sweep in and save the wretched, oppressed masses with annexation. A compact will be drawn up and freedom rings. Through this process Merk illustrates the sham of the Mexican War.

There For the Taking?

James Polk's administration attempted to purchase California and the territory to later become New Mexico and upon finding them not for sale, chose to attain it by occupation. His justification for war centered on disputed ground in Texas and dubious legal goodwill. Those in the minority, such as Henry David Thoreau, who objected to the war

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made little or no difference. The kindling had been lit and, with the help of newspapers, the bonfire of Manifest Destiny ignited almost immediately.\textsuperscript{13} Polk's Secretary of State, James Buchanan, considered sending declarations to other countries explaining that the battle was in self-defense, not expansionist, but Polk rebuffed him, announcing the acquisition of California would help compensate California's citizens who lost financially as a result of constant revolution in Mexico. Polk, trying to prevent the world from viewing the United States as imperialistic, presented the annexation of California as delivering political stability to Californios.

When Polk's maladroit envoy blundered by inadvertently agreeing with Mexico's version of the border, he was summarily fired. Nicholas Trist, Polk's chief negotiator in Mexico, presented a proposal to make the area between the Nueces and Rio Grande rivers a buffer zone between the United States and Mexico. Polk thought it invalidated the United States claim that Mexico had invaded American soil past the boundary of the Rio Grande and removed Trist as negotiator. Maintaining the original goals of land acquisition, the United States had forcibly confirmed land claims in Texas and garnered California, but an indefensible border between the new territory and the United States was intolerable. American negotiators, therefore, included New Mexico and the area to become Arizona in the treaty ending the war.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., 89-106.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., 180-184.
Mexicans Not Welcome Here

History has shown that a dominant culture that fails to understand the culture that it
conquers will often define it in its own terms with dubious scientific justification,
religious imperatives, or florid rhetoric, repeated over and over. One of the vehicles that
would serve to facilitate such definition in the nineteenth century was the newspaper, and
negative stereotypes of the Spanish speaking population of California before the
onslaught of Anglo-Saxons illustrate the power of the newspaperman's ability to shape
readers' opinions. In a time when readers had to take authors at their word. Easterners
had a bleak picture of Mexicans in California. Instead of extolling Mexican closeness to
the land, their lack of avarice, and their close familial ties. Yankee observers painted them
as indolent, deathly jealous, and proud without merit. This inaccurate picture led to racial
tension and cultural misunderstanding that caused heartbreak and injustice. Fights,
retaliatory murders, and legal chicanery set the tone for Mexican-American relations in
California.14

14Leonard Pitt, The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish­
speaking Californians, 1846-1890 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 167-
180; see also David Weber, ed., Foreigners in Their Native Land: Historical Roots of the
Mexican Americans (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1973); Ronald
Takaki, A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America (Boston: Little, Brown
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Mexico Press, 1993); Robert Heizer and Alan Almquist, The Other Californians:
Prejudice and Discrimination Under Spain, Mexico and the United States to 1920
(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); Albert Camarillo, Chicanos in a
Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and
After the dust of the Mexican War settled and the rush for gold began in earnest, Americans and Mexicans mined together in increasing numbers. Race relations between Californios and the newcomers were strained at best, further demonstrating American conceit and the destructive nature of Manifest Destiny.\textsuperscript{16} In nineteenth-century Los Angeles two classes of people in either culture existed, respectable and evil. The well-adjusted people of both cultures enjoyed each other’s company and many Americans sampled Californios’ good-natured hospitality, some marrying into local families.\textsuperscript{17} The criminal element of both people, however, did much to fan the flames of racial tension.

The greed that accompanies the get-rich-quick atmosphere of mining exacerbated the friction that racial strain causes. Banditry and other crimes threatened to topple an uneasy peace that decent people had enjoyed. Rumors of a race war abounded and increased in intensity with every well-publicized incident. Both Mexicans and Americans were involved in rampant crime and American newspapers took the opportunity to play up Mexican misdeeds, escalating the cultural chafing and precipitating the vigilante justice that naturally followed.\textsuperscript{18} Access to gold and what was done with it after mining would drive the final wedges that assured animosity between the Americans streaming into the area and those who were in the newly acquired lands before them.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{16}Californios are generally defined as Spanish-speaking people born in California.

\textsuperscript{17}Pitt, The Decline of the Californios, 124-127.

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., 148-166.

\textsuperscript{19}Richard Peterson, Manifest Destiny in the Mines (San Francisco: R and E Research Associates, 1975), 41-44.
Mexicans were in the way of American fortune and since they were now considered foreigners they were encouraged, often violently, to leave the land. Those who stayed and invoked their legal claim to do so were saddled with the Foreign Miner’s Tax, in addition to the physical violence that still shadowed their efforts. The ostensible reason for the tax was to prevent migrant Mexicans miners taking “American” gold to Mexico. The Foreign Miner’s Tax stripped Mexicans of any profit they may have earned and reduced their livelihood to subsistence mining.\(^{20}\)

Not until later did some see the destructive nature of Manifest Destiny. While the concept justified the expansion of the United States, the parents and spouses of soldiers who died in the Mexican and Spanish-American Wars may have thought it too exacting a cost. Those who had a border wash over them and became second-class citizens also have legitimate objections. Efforts at preservation and conservation of natural resources also show how damaging westward expansion was. Both beneficial and perfidious characteristics of Manifest Destiny apply to Major League Baseball as it moved west when placed against the background of the effects of United States expansion. Its relocation and expansion mirrors nineteenth- and twentieth-century American expansion. Baseball’s Manifest Destiny stems from a single move that had tremendous ramifications on the geography of the game and the psyches of millions of fans.

\(^{20}\)Ibid., 48-55.
The Boulder Gets Rolling

The 1950s, which saw one of the most profound population shifts in American history, prove to be one of the major watersheds in the history of baseball. Before 1953 baseball was an eastern matter. Teams were located in Boston, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Washington, D.C. Trains, the dominant conveyance since the early 1800s, provided the transportation for away games. After 1953 major league baseball begins to resemble the emerging suburban nature of the United States. After 1957 the newly relocated Los Angeles Dodgers and San Francisco Giants ushered baseball into the era of airline travel, reflecting the fermenting shift in American business and leisure travel.

Saying the unsaid, Lou Perini, owner of the Boston Braves, forced baseball fans into realizing that baseball is a business. On March 18, 1953 Perini announced the Braves would relocate to Milwaukee.\(^{21}\) They received a generous package from Wisconsin politicians, including a tax-free home stadium and ample parking facilities. It was a tremendous shock to baseball fans, tantamount to telling Virginia that there is no Santa Claus or Tooth Fairy. Perini could not justify the existence of two major league baseball teams in Boston when his team was losing money. Perini's problems would become many owners' problems—causing some to wonder for whom the national pastime is intended. For the first time parking and attendance manifested themselves as issues in the development of a home field. Henceforth stadiums needed to provide adequate parking and owners would no longer tolerate a lack of attendance. For Perini and city officials in

Milwaukee. the gamble paid off. The Braves drew 1,826,397, setting a new attendance
mark, and in the process established new requirements for baseball teams. Fan loyalty
was no longer enough. City identity was no longer enough, nor were time-honored
traditions and venerable ballparks. In the 1950s vast numbers of eastern Americans were
moving west to start over and take advantage of wide open spaces. Fans had to come to
the ballpark in sufficient numbers or lose their team.

Baseball is a child’s game, a diversion, and the virtues associated with participation—
teamwork, discipline, and the acceptance of failure and hardship—and
watching—noticing a shortstop’s graceful pivot at second base or a subtle shift in his
weight that can tip off what a forthcoming pitch might be—are well-known and oft-
repeated to those who follow the game. Yet if baseball were merely a game. Sal
Maglie, a pitcher who had success for the New York Giants, would have never played for
the Brooklyn Dodgers. Leo Durocher would have never managed both the Giants and the
Dodgers. Jackie Robinson would have never been sold to the Giants and Dusty Baker,
left fielder for the Los Angeles Dodgers, would certainly not manage the San Francisco

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22Gary Alan Fine, With the Boys: Little League Baseball and Preadolescent
Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); see also Bernard Suits, "The
Elements of Sport," 48-64. William Morgan, "An Existential Phenomenological Analysis
of Sport as a Religious Experience," 78-107. Warren Fraleigh, "Some Meanings of the
Human Experience of Freedom and Necessity in Sport." 130-141. James Keating, "The
Jan Broekhoff, "Sport and Ethics in the Context of Culture." 219-221. Robert Osterhoudt,
ed. The Philosophy of Sport (Springfield: Charles C Thomas Publisher, 1973); Roger
(Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988). Late Innings: A Baseball Companion (New York:
Giants. George Brett, Kirby Puckett, Alan Trammell, Tony Gwynn and Robin Yount, players who have spent their entire careers with one club, would be the norm rather than the exception. Alas, professionals play this child’s game at the top levels for incredible amounts of money, selling their services to the highest bidder. Owners process the entity we know as Major League Baseball, making even more money. They buy and sell teams for vast sums and internationally market the game, reaping further profits. The pastoral sport, played by gentlemen’s clubs in the mid and late nineteenth century has become a machine, inexorable in its growth and indelible in its aftermath.

Since baseball has such a tremendous effect on the United States and other parts of the world, owners’ actions affect a great many people. Their decisions are sometimes matters of public policy, almost always matters of public debate. Whom they hire to be their general manager and field manager, what players they agree to sign, and prices they decide to charge for admission to their games, or peanuts and Crackerjack® will always be grist for radio and television talk shows, national magazines, and local newspapers. Other major decisions, such as where to headquarter teams, affect millions of people. Relocation and expansion bring joy to the cities who are awarded new teams and break the hearts of those left behind or passed over.

Analysis of baseball’s relocation and expansion can be broken into three categories: good, bad, and ugly. The good represents the benefits baseball brings. Major league baseball can rejuvenate an entire city like Cleveland and bring economic prosperity and civic pride. The bad denotes the deleterious results of relocation and expansion as baseball pushed aside existing teams and leagues. The ugly represents owner avarice, the
exploitation of baseball's special antitrust exemption, and owners holding teams for ransom in exchange for new stadiums. The analysis of this good, bad, and ugly scenario will comprise the focus of this study.

The Hurt Is Still There

Some people still refuse to watch Los Angeles Dodgers baseball, some refuse to watch National League baseball, some even refuse to watch major league baseball at all. Owner Walter O'Malley broke Brooklyn Dodgers fans' hearts in late 1957 when he decided to give up on his customers in Brooklyn and cultivate new ones in the West. New York Giants owner Horace Stoneham did the same. While Stoneham suffers much less vilification, their decision to relocate their clubs to the West had a devastating effect on those who grew up rooting for, suffering with, and celebrating long-awaited victories of the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Giants. The profound emotional grip these clubs had on their fans, especially Dodger fans, stems from the earliest days of organized professional baseball.

Brooklyn, because of its open spaces and bucolic feel in the mid-nineteenth century offered one of the stages on which baseball could flourish. Before the city became a borough Brooklyn had marketed itself as separate from New York City but close enough for people to still be able to work in the city. Three regular ferries, and later, in 1883, the Brooklyn Bridge enabled thousands of Brooklynnites to work in the hustle and bustle of New York City while enjoying the easy pace of their tranquil neighborhoods. Many
writers, including Walt Whitman, commented on the natural beauty and quiet of one of the first suburbs of New York City.  

Baseball emerged in the open fields of America and therefore was a big hit in Brooklyn. An abundance of diamonds and open spaces offered the sandlot, amateur, and professional ballplayers of Brooklyn—and other boroughs—plenty of opportunity to play as seriously as they wanted within various age groups. This made Brooklyn one of the first baseball towns. Its residents' attachment to its first successful major league team is testament to the hold baseball had on Americans but also provides clues to the source of baseball's origin myth.

The ineptitude of the pre-1940s Dodgers—the same style of incompetence and slapstick that would endear the New York Mets to their fans later—and their inability to push over the top and win a World Championship until the 1950s made them lovable. When they finally won it, victory was all the sweeter because of the wait. The intimacy of Ebbets Field added to the Dodger charm. Fans could see their team's players. They could hear them. They could talk to them and players would answer back. This gave the Brooklyn Dodgers a unique camaraderie with their fans that would garner affection for generations.

Folklore and community go hand-in-glove. The Curse of the Bambino, the Bleacher Bums, and fans of the Brooklyn Dodgers all have a place in the hearts and minds of those who follow baseball. Baseball evokes images of neighborhoods, of fathers playing catch

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23Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 25-30.

with their children, of living and "dying" with the fortunes of one's team. A community's identity with a team can characterize its nature.

The extent to which Brooklyn loved its team is also legendary. Brooklyn Dodger fans were different than any other teams' fans. Their brand of rooting was much different than that of the staid Yankee faithful. They went to the games and became part of the show. active participants in the event that was a Dodgers game. Brooklyn rooters could be seen snaking a conga line around the ballpark, leading raucous cheers with cowbells, and wildly waving pennants. That sort of behavior was unacceptable in decorous Yankee Stadium; people afterall wore ties to Yankee games and watched as if they were attending an opera.  

Brooklyn grade school children would skip school, with the tacit approval of their parents, and go "catch a game." Soldiers coming home from the war would readjust to civilian life by making a Dodger game one of their first priorities. Accounts of a person being able to walk the streets of Brooklyn and not miss a single pitch because the radios were all tuned to the game and one could hear them through open windows add to the lore of Brooklyn's brand of love for its baseball. Still, as fans witnessed in Boston, this affection alone fails to pay the bills.

Several factors influenced O'Malley's and Stoneham's decision that the grass was greener west of the Mississippi. Lagging attendance, outdated facilities, lost income resulting from rainouts, and people moving to the suburbs were major considerations. These moves, the first major relocations, had a costly effect on the psyches of thousands of Brooklyn baseball fans but also affected the only regular season high caliber baseball

on the West Coast, the Pacific Coast League (PCL). Teams had to relocate, while others had to shut down operations entirely and fans had to reconcile the loss of tradition and history. The pattern continues with the expansion Arizona Diamondbacks in 1998 and may continue when Major League Baseball decides to expand again. Some argue, however, the economic boom that follows these teams makes up for the deracination and displacement.
CHAPTER II

NATIONAL WESTWARD MOVEMENT

This chapter will illustrate that people moved west after World War II with a fervor rivaled only by nineteenth-century migration. Automobiles played a significant role in that migration just as trains played a role in nineteenth-century migration. They allowed people to reach areas that were being developed to suit their needs rather than the dictates of urban constraint. The appeal of the suburbs changed the consumer who, in turn, changed the nature of retail. Store owners had to respond to the changing demographics.

This chapter will also explore the nature of urban planning and explosive growth of the phenomenon known as suburbanization and how it relates to baseball. Baseball changed in response to the upheavals in heretofore stable patterns of life. As people moved out of the urban cities it changed their outlook on attending baseball games. Urban ballparks became increasingly difficult to get to because of poor traffic handling capabilities and became increasingly unappealing because of a decline—both perceived and real—of neighborhoods. Poor attendance at baseball games caused owners to consider relocation to more lucrative markets for the first time because of the nature of the split receipts. A team that failed to draw adequate number of fans would hurt the
visiting teams’ profits as well. It was in other owners’ interest that poorly attended teams relocate to cities that demonstrated a desire to host baseball.

This chapter will also examine what led up to and what happened after one of the most notorious baseball team relocations in baseball history. In 1957 the owner of one of the most beloved teams in America, the Brooklyn Dodgers, announced he would relocate the team in Los Angeles. A general western migration, like the one in the nineteenth century, suburbanization, and baseball’s response to these factors determined the fate of major league baseball in New York City.

The mayors and other politicians make speeches, the crowds cheer. They shake hands, congratulate one another and throw ceremonial first pitches. The parades welcoming the newcomers and honoring the mayors responsible for bringing major league baseball to the West Coast attest to the hunger for big league baseball but also demonstrate the results of a national trend. After World War II people moved west and as more and more people relocated the region’s importance grew. Favorable economic factors, achievements in infrastructure, and tremendous population growth contributed to the emergence of the West as a region unto its own, but many civic leaders felt that hosting a major league sports team would serve as the capstone that would elevate a city to national standing. In the 1940s and 1950s baseball was the sport that could do it. Elected leaders, like San Francisco Mayor George Christopher and Los Angeles Mayor Norris Poulson, had been trying for a long time to garner big league teams. The

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27 Ibid., April 16, 1958, 43.
realization of their efforts meant a great deal to the residents of Los Angeles and San Francisco because baseball provides a part of the solid base on which a community can stand; it can be an important stabilizing force in an uproarious environment. Stable entities such as major league baseball teams, religious institutions, and shopping centers attenuated the explosive growth and concomitant growing pains of the West and while some of these institutions were more spread out in the West than in the East, they provided landmarks that translated to what would serve as a center for westerners. This chapter will elucidate the relationship of an American tendency to move west, especially after World War II, and baseball’s response to it.

A Surfer’s Ride on a Westward Wave

Because of the rapid suburbanization and increasing infatuation with and dependence on the automobile most Brooklyn Dodger fans would rather stay at home and watch the game on television than go into a what many saw as a bad neighborhood, search for extremely scarce parking, and get caught in very real traffic congestion. Suburbanization and technological advances were encouraging people west. As the suburbs increased in popularity so did the technology that got people into the suburbs. The automobile, the jet airplane, coupled with wide open spaces in the West led to an increase in the popularity of the region. Walter O’Malley’s move west was just one of many.

Western developers employed specific strategies designed to attract business and industrial development, which would increase residential attraction and desirability.
further increasing business growth. Attracting the Dodgers was just part of a larger plan. It was also Los Angeles's way of breaking, once and for all, the colonial attachments, both perceived and real, to the East. With a big league team Los Angeles would become "major league" and come into its own. Mayor Norris Poulson, like many other politicos, wanted his city to become national in scope. He offered O'Malley Los Angeles's version of the Homestead Act of 1862; free land if O'Malley would work it.

Los Angeles leaders had been pushing to become a major league host city since the early 1940s. The hapless St. Louis Browns were the first target, followed by the struggling Washington Senators. The Browns were unavailable in the 1940s because of World War II. Browns owner Donald Barnes had made arrangements to shift the franchise because of dismal attendance. He had American League approval and calculated travel costs for each team but the exigencies of war tabled the move. Los Angeles had a second glimmer of hope in getting the St. Louis franchise in the early 1950s but the move died because of the power struggle American League owners waged against their maverick colleague, Bill Veeck.

When Veeck was the owner of the St. Louis Browns he wanted to move to Baltimore. The team was drawing poorly and because owners share gate receipts teams that fail to draw sufficient attendance garner consideration of relocation. Poor attendance hurts the

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host team but also hurts the teams that travel to that city. When the numbers are especially bad owners allow, and even encourage relocation. Veeck, however, would not enjoy such consideration and assistance. August Busch's brewing company bought the Cardinals and Veeck knew he would not be able to compete with the suddenly wealthy team. He tried to relocate his financially destitute club to Baltimore, but in retribution for propounding changes that would challenge their hegemony, such as sharing television revenue, American League owners twice refused to sanction the move. He eventually sold to Baltimore interests, but American League owners accepted an eleventh hour second offer from a Los Angeles group, further stalling the sale and aggravating Veeck.

After Bill Veeck convinced other owners of the illegality of accepting the second offer, American League owners allowed the sale and the Browns became the Baltimore Orioles.\(^{31}\)

The Washington franchise suffered nearly identical problems as Brooklyn—poor attendance, an outdated playing facility, and a lack of parking for an increasingly auto-dependent fan base—but two factors worked against their moving to Los Angeles. Los Angeles civic leaders were determined to host a team but because major league baseball was played east of the Mississippi River, the National League had a stricture that two teams would have to go west. The long distance would cause logistical problems and financial pressures. No other club was interested in going when the Senators were considering relocation. The second problem stemmed from an assessment of the political

climate. If the Senators were to leave the Capital, many owners feared congressional investigations into the antitrust exemption. In 1957 the Supreme Court had declared it a poorly interpreted use of the special status but left the matter of remedy to Congress. Major League Baseball recognized that if relocation raised Congress's ire, baseball could face the loss of its delicate prosperity. So the Washington Senators stayed put, for a while.

The Little Engines That Did

Since the turn of the twentieth century, urbanization, advances in technology, labor relations, and economic prosperity have gradually afforded Americans more leisure time, which equates to an increase in interest in baseball at the same time Americans became interested in suburban housing. The postwar years serve as a marker for an increase in leisure time. The average work week was finally at forty hours and affluence was in evidence in the living rooms, kitchens, and driveways of a new suburban lifestyle. Most Americans established their preferred mode of living during this time. Mass production dictated the tastes and conspicuous consumption evinced the desires of the new middle class.32

Americans became increasingly fascinated with technology that produced such things as the air conditioner, television, and expanded commercial use of airplanes. These advances made living in the West more feasible—just as electricity and the railroads did in the nineteenth century. The automobile, however, exerted the most influence on how

32Halberstam, preface to The Fifties.
people would live their lives. The automobile enabled people to move about on their own terms and released Americans from the stranglehold of rail schedules and having to live close to train stations or within walking distance to work. This development, and technological advances in building techniques, led to the spread of suburbs and the mass production of housing. The proliferation of tract homes stems from people being able to get to them via the automobile. This meant they could enjoy dual benefits: they could live in the country and work in the city. As more and more people moved out of the crowded cities farmland became more valuable as subdivisions than food producers.\textsuperscript{33}

The first major housing subdivision, Levittown, established a pattern for suburban living. Winding roads, planned economic and infrastructure development, and single, detached, affordable homes dominated design of the subdivisions that would become so prevalent in American society. The entire arrangement was planned and packaged as countryside living. Interconnected mortgaging kept costs down and those who could afford it found it quite appealing. Critics blasted the monotony and the lack of creativity but the postwar housing shortage made residents in these neighborhoods happy to have obtained their own homes.\textsuperscript{34} Certainly they were glad to be free of the encumbrances of living with in-laws or doubled-up with friends and had to be especially glad to be rid of waiting lists offering tiny apartments.

The postwar economic boom resulted in more people either being able to afford the automobile or wanting the automobile and stretching their budgets beyond their means to

\textsuperscript{33}Jackson, \textit{Crabgrass Frontier}, 284.

\textsuperscript{34}William Whyte, \textit{The Organization Man} (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1956).

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meet that desire. The other gadget attracting attention from consumers willing to exercise their credit was the television set. The effect of the advance of television was profound. It changed the way Americans structured their social lives. It dictated what they should be using in the kitchen and laundry rooms. The automobile, along with the television, became the new status symbols of the era and as more and more people chose the automobile as their primary means of conveyance, businesses had to respond.

The urban downtown is a relic of the rail age. The centralized shopping and business districts were the result of businesses setting up where people without private transportation had to make the effort to come to them. There was little choice offered shoppers; they had to go where the railroads went. The emancipation from that hegemony, with the help of the automobile, forced businesses to recognize what their customers wanted in a shopping experience. Businesses had to rise to a new level of customer satisfaction, offering a more complete package, not just stock on the shelves. This upset the security of retail operations because before the automobile an entrepreneur could open a store on the railroad line and could expect a certain amount of business traffic by merely existing. The automobile changed this philosophy; merely existing no longer assured traffic. The businessman had to employ marketing and advertising techniques and even still, profits became uncertain.35

Downtown businesses depended on rail, bus, and streetcar traffic going through the area and savvy businessmen and women, recognizing the ever increasing popularity of the automobile, ushered a new phase of expansion. The mechanism for getting shoppers

and home buyers into the countryside was burgeoning and as they established new places
to shop and reside, travelers responded, increasing the pace of suburban relocation.
Consumers relished the quiet and the countryside style, the lack of congestion and the
convenience of shopping on their schedules, exacerbating the decline of downtown
businesses.

While the automobile freed Americans from schedules and the hegemony of the rail, it
presented a whole host of other problems, giving ammunition to dissidents and
coaagulating opponents of growth. Smog, congestion, traffic safety, a perceived lack of
stability, a decline in tradition, and shrinking moral imperatives were seen as the side
effects of the embrace of the automobile. Western planners saw additional freeway
construction as one of the ways to ease these problems. This strategy would give more
people access to outlying areas, which would diffuse smog and ease congestion. More
freeways would give commuters more choices and less congested roadways would
increase safety. Uncontrolled growth seemed to fuel critics' negative assessment of the
urban expansion in the West.

Some western urban planners only now recognize and acknowledge that more
freeways added to their problems. Streetcars, buses, and electric trolleys were attempts
at solving the congestion of the inner-city at the turn of the century until the postwar
years but they never measured up to the power of freedom and anonymity of the

37 Findlay, Magic Lands, 39.
38 Ibid.
automobile. As more western cities are turning toward a centered urban cultural experience urban planners are returning to these alternatives. They ease congestion and mitigate environmental problems. As a response to the problems of western cities, urban planners are moving toward a return to eastern-style downtowns.

The Growth of Suburbia

Nobody goes there anymore, it's too crowded.

— Yogi Berra

In line with the westering nature of the American experience, developers in the West found a tabula rasa with which to work and because of the rapid growth, that tabula rasa was wiped clean again and again. With the help of federal highway funding most subdivisions were becoming accessible. Western cities, unlike their eastern counterparts, had their histories washed over with each successive wave of newcomers. What promised to be a retreat from the steaming, dirty cities in the East turned into a maze of confusing freeways and communities without a concentrated center. Critics of all strains blasted western cities for their lack of community and civic cohesion yet millions of Americans uprooted their families and moved west.

Critics fail to understand that something was wrong with the places all those newcomers were leaving. Millions were moving west, suggesting that life in the eastern cities was losing appeal. The reason lies in the choices found in the West. Many eastern cities were generally made up of ethnic islands where families resided for generations. A resident might move out of his or her parents’ house but would stay in the area. People knew one another, knew about one another’s lives, and dealt with expectations about how
to grow up and how others would grow up. Along with the automobile the West offered a break from those traditions and a chance to become one's own person.

The western urban center is inherently more widespread, a result of planners and developers being able to move in an outward direction, rather than being forced to build in an upward direction, as they do in the East. Those who blast the western urban style underestimate the choices that newcomers had. Those who went west wanted things spread out. They wanted to be farther away from their neighbors than they were in the East and because of the landscape and the newness of the areas, developers were able to suit their needs and tastes.

Baseball, Land, and Politics

At the midpoint of the twentieth century southern California had sixty percent of the West's population making it the third largest city in the United States, was a leader in technological and defense industries, and, because of its pleasant climate and geography, a major draw for people looking to relocate or start a family. Walter O'Malley recognized that his customers in Brooklyn were leaving the urban setting and settling in a new suburban environment. Suburbanization started benignly. Many moved to new neighborhoods on Long Island, which was shedding its exclusivity with new road construction. O'Malley wanted to stay in Brooklyn and was willing to pay for a

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39Hal Rothman, Pariah to Paradigm: How Las Vegas Shed Its Stigma and Became the First City of the Twenty-First Century, manuscript. 1999.

40Jackson, Crabgrass Frontier, 88-89.
stadium but he needed land, which meant he needed cooperation from city politicians. He needed the city to condemn buildings on the land he wanted to put his stadium.

Even if the city allowed him to buy the land in the neighborhood he wanted for a Brooklyn stadium landowners would hear of the purchase and hold out for the highest price. Charlie Ebbets, owner of the Brooklyn Dodgers, for whom Ebbets Field is named, suffered from exactly this problem. He was, however, able to execute the deals because he bought land under an assumed name and only a few owners caught wind of the transactions and held out for high prices. By the time most land owners realized what was happening, Ebbets had purchased their parcels.

New York politicians acknowledged the quandary of land acquisition and offered the use of the Flushing Meadows complex. Besides it being in Queens and not Brooklyn, losing control of parking, concessions, and advertising was something the hubristic O'Malley could not tolerate. The final issue that sealed the end of negotiations was the politicians' refusal to yield on the type of stadium. New York City Mayor Robert Wagner and powerful city bureaucrat Robert Moses favored a multi-purpose facility and O'Malley wanted a baseball-only facility. Los Angeles officials offered him the land that New York politicians were unwilling to provide. Los Angeles also offered other inducements, such as land preparation and road construction. Wagner and Moses could have saved baseball in Brooklyn but were unwilling to do so on O'Malley's terms.

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They wanted baseball to fit within their plans of a sports complex and when they realized O’Malley would not relinquish the aforementioned control, they turned away and let Brooklyn baseball expire. On October 8, 1957, a day that will live in infamy for Brooklyn fans, Walter O’Malley announced the Dodgers would relocate in Los Angeles. They were “going Hollywood.”

From Bums to Celebrities

The Dodgers’ move westward electrified the people of Los Angeles and captured the attention of Hollywood celebrities. The Associated Press asked Bob Hope for comment on the announcement of the Dodgers’ move. In typical Hope fashion he said he was “looking forward to seeing Pee Wee Reese in a bare midriff uniform.” O’Malley had realized a tremendous, unexpected asset for the legal battles that would vex him for the next year. The nation’s social elites had embraced the Dodgers. These luminaries who took a shine to the newcomers were partly responsible for pushing public opinion over the top in support of a land grant to allow a stadium in Los Angeles. Capitalizing on the endorsement, O’Malley and his supporters organized a “Dodgerthon,” a televised public appeal replete with celebrity appearances, as a last push to get opponents of the Chavez Ravine land grant, on which the Dodgers would build their stadium, to vote in favor of the city’s plans.

45 Roger Kahn, The Era (Ticknor and Fields, 1993), 337.
When the Dodgers moved west they were no longer the "bums" or the "Boys of Summer." They became glamorous Hollywood favorites rubbing elbows with such luminaries as Bing Crosby, Dean Martin, and Nat King Cole. Celebrities were excited about the arrival and most of the Dodgers were glad to have moved west as well, but the people of Los Angeles were happiest about the move. Los Angeles rolled out the red carpet and gave its new ballclub a hero's welcome. Parades for the mayor and city councilmen exhibited appreciation for the new clubs, but it was the players who garnered most of the limelight. They rode in high on the back seats of convertible automobiles in parades that heralded their names. While some players worried about whether or not their new city would accept them, most were glad to escape the tough neighborhood in Brooklyn and the traffic congestion of New York. They, like other Americans attracted to southern California, appreciated the freeway system that would make getting around the area much easier.*

Should O'Malley Really Shoulder the Blame?

Heck. in Los Angeles twenty thousand people will show up at the park, accidentally, just to see what the lights were about.
—Buzzy Bavasi, former Dodgers general manager and Padres president

A phone call from Walter O'Malley to Horace Stoneham asking if he wanted to maintain their rivalry on the West Coast was all it took to convince him that relocation to the West coast would be a good idea. Stoneham had considered moving the team to

Minneapolis when he presented the idea to his board of directors. He obtained a majority vote of approval for relocation to the West, enabling O’Malley to satisfy the National League stipulation that two teams had to relocate to attenuate transportation problems. The Giants were suffering the same problems as the Dodgers and while the rumblings of a move were much quieter than Walter O’Malley’s threats, it was no secret Horace Stoneham was unhappy in the decrepit Polo Grounds. By July 1957 Stoneham made his intentions explicit: the Giants would not play the 1958 season in the Polo Grounds. While fans speak fondly of Coogan’s Bluff and of the unique advertising on the outfield walls, the significant lack of parking, traffic jams, and the threat of bad neighborhood in Harlem played a large role in keeping fans away. The Giants were losing money and the final attempt to draw fans to the games was thwarted by a famous retirement. Jackie Robinson, after hearing of his sale to the Giants decided to call it a career. On August 19, 1957 Horace Stoneham announced the Giants would be moving to the West Coast. He was suffering through another season that would eventually draw only 653,923 fans and he had enough.

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Accepting the terms Moses and Wagner presented him would have meant relinquishing total control over parking, gate receipt, concessions, and television and radio revenue, and advertising. Wanting to maintain that control marks O’Malley as a shrewd businessman with an eye on profits and disqualifies him as a sportsman owner but it fails to qualify him as a heartless demon who willingly stole childhood memories and silenced the laughter of Brooklyn Dodger fans in pursuit of the maximized dollar. Yet, in many fans’ estimation, O’Malley ranks just behind the cruelest men of the twentieth century.\(^5\)

The capacity of thirty-two thousand at Ebbets Field served as one of Walter O’Malley’s justifications that the Dodgers would no longer be able to compete with the Milwaukee Braves.\(^4\) O’Malley paid close attention to the Braves’ attendance figures and worried that because they were outdrawing the Dodgers they would be able to afford the higher priced talent and shut the them out of the pennant races. The new attendance mark the Braves set in the first year of their residence in Milwaukee shook O’Malley. The following year’s attendance figures rocked him. Over two million fans would fund the Braves’ run at the Dodgers in 1954.\(^5\) O’Malley figured that if the Braves continually outdrew the Dodgers, they could afford to put a winner on the field and the if Dodgers could not keep up with them. Brooklyn attendance would suffer. In 1957 O’Malley’s

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\(^5\)Peter Golenbock. *Bums*. 448.


fears materialized; the Braves won a World Series, cementing his feelings about the role of attendance in fielding a quality team. So he moved out of Ebbets Field, out of Brooklyn, and into a political quagmire in Los Angeles that forced him to house his team in a football stadium while waiting for his own baseball-only stadium to be built.

While O’Malley wanted to house the Dodgers somewhere other than the Los Angeles Coliseum, and did so as a last resort, the capacity of 93,103 eased the pain. Purists bristled at the thought of a major league baseball team playing in a stadium with unorthodox dimensions, prompting one wag to note, “the Coliseum could hold ninety-three thousand people but only two outfielders.” Left field was a mere 250 feet away while right center was 440 feet away. Even though the Dodgers played baseball on diamond squeezed into football field they drew sixteen percent of the previous season’s attendance total in the first series and had drawn one million people by the All-Star break, nearly exceeding the total attendance of 1,026,158 in 1957. When the totals for the 1958 season came in O’Malley realized the numbers for which he had hoped. Los Angeles citizens had consummated the embrace of their new team by demonstrating they were willing to go to games, even if that first year was a failure in the win-loss column. A total of 1,845,556 was nearly an eighty percent increase over the previous season in

57Sullivan, Dodgers Move West, 139-142.
59Ibid., 284.
Brooklyn, surpassing the best attendance mark of 1,807,526 set in 1947. The Dodgers did better the following year, aided by much improved performance on the field, topping the two million mark by 71,045. They drew even better in 1960, finishing with 2,253,887. Virtually free of rain-outs in Los Angeles, O’Malley could count on healthy crowds for almost all the home dates.

O’Malley anticipated healthy attendance when the team moved into its permanent home, Dodger Stadium, as well. His optimism stemmed from his attention to sight lines and stadium aesthetics. It was the first of the new generation stadiums and because it was his project, as opposed to the situation New York officials offered him, O’Malley achieved most of his design goals. O’Malley knew what he wanted and what would not work. He used the plans for Candlestick Park as an example of what not to do. He instructed architects to provide no more than fifty-two thousand seats: any more, O’Malley insisted, would compromise the view from the stands. There was a specific reason for O’Malley being concerned with fans’ views. Being closer to the action, while incorporating the decidedly western feel of a wide open environment would encourage people to come to Dodger Stadium because, unlike Ebbets Field, it would be a comfortable place to watch baseball. This would increase demand for tickets and increase the number of sold-out games. As more games sold out, demand would further

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increase, selling out even more games. In 1962 52,564 attended the opening of Dodger Stadium, the first new, privately funded stadium since Yankee Stadium.\(^{65}\) Candlestick Park, on the other hand, was a municipal stadium, giving Horace Stoneham almost no input on the design or placement, circumstances that would prove to be serious sticking points later.\(^{66}\) This is the situation O’Malley left behind in New York. O’Malley would have his stadium the way he wanted it. So would New York officials.

Robert Moses wanted a major league baseball team in New York on his terms. It would be another four seasons before he would get what he wanted and before the efforts of Mayor Robert Wagner and other key baseball men would be able to rekindle that which made the Dodgers and Giants special in New York. Almost immediately after the announcement of the departure Wagner formed a group that would eventually bring National League baseball, in the form of the Mets, back to New York.\(^{67}\)

The Mets were not supposed to win; they were supposed to be a salve to the departure of the Giants and Dodgers. Their draft strategy and first home field demonstrate that the goal was to provide nostalgia and reawaken National League fan interest. The 1962 roster included New York favorites and former Brooklyn Dodgers Gil Hodges, Clem Labine, and Don Zimmer.\(^{68}\) They played in the Polo Grounds while their stadium was being built and the team colors of blue and orange memorialized the departed Dodgers

\(^{65}\)Ibid., Aug. 25, 1963, C3.


\(^{67}\)New York Times, Oct. 9, 1958, 1.

\(^{68}\)Neft. The Sports Encyclopedia: Baseball, 369.
and Giants. Their initial appeal lay in the same style of play that endeared the “Bums” and the “Daffiness Boys” to their Brooklyn fans and because they were an expansion team expectations were low. The pre-1969 Mets were bad, but like their National League predecessors in Brooklyn, they were lovable. More importantly, they reminded New Yorkers of their former National League teams.
CHAPTER III

AULD LANG SYNE: THE ROLE OF MYTH AND

NOSTALGIA IN BASEBALL'S HISTORY

The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.
—L. P. Hartley, The Go-Between

During a broadcast of a Seattle Mariners game during the first weekend of their new home, Safeco Field, in the summer of 1999, television play-by-play announcer Josh Lewin asked his partner, Hall of Famer Frank Robinson, which he preferred: the scream of the jets flying overhead at Shea Stadium in New York or the whistle of the trains that roll just past right field at Safeco. Unequivocally Robinson said he preferred the whistle in Seattle. Trains and railroads enjoy a celebrated memory in America, evoking a time that was simpler and slower paced, freer, and more romantic than the times we occupy now. The past has a way of looking better when juxtaposed with change, unfamiliarity, and uncertainty. The reach for nostalgia demonstrates the feeling that all is not right with the present and the prospects for the future fail to encourage and instill confidence.

This chapter will explain the effects of the permanence and currency of nostalgia and its relation to baseball. It will explain how nostalgia and myth, which explain the animus that Walter O’Malley experiences and the heartache fans experience when thinking of teams that left them behind, have effected a shift in thinking about stadiums and their
roles in the communities that host major league baseball teams. This chapter will also explain what was happening to force baseball’s fraternity of owners to think about relocation and how so many people forget what was happening because of the way nostalgia and myth have colored the way they think. It will examine the mythic sportsman owner, who never really existed and the role of myth and nostalgia in the present trends in baseball stadium construction.

Walter O’Malley’s demonization stems from Americans—and especially Brooklynites—holding on to the past that they remember, not the one that influenced businessmen of the time to make difficult decisions. American cities suffered a hemorrhage of its middle classes and businesses in the postwar years. Forced to follow the money, many businesses relocated, leaving behind urban shells. The traditional, urban, eastern city was becoming obsolete, but because people hung on to memories of a great lifestyle that may or may not have existed, someone had to shoulder the blame of the demise of an urban way of life.

Some writers claim the best thing baseball has going for it is its past. Baseball fans are infatuated with the game’s history in the same way western history buffs are infatuated with the cowboy. The cowboy is an ephemeral abstraction whose real persona is obscured by shadows of myth, yet few are willing to shed light on heroes and contradict what has become a national symbol of American character. This adherence to myth, stemming from the popularity of the cowboy, helps to explain how myth colors fans’ assessment of baseball’s relocation and expansion.

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69Sullivan. Dodgers Move West. 95-96.
The Cowboy in Art, Literature, and Cinema

"The West" evokes images of beautiful vistas, dusty men in cowboy hats, Indian wars, simplistic mountain trappers, and dangerous gun battles won by righteous men. Furthermore it conjures a state of mind that celebrates the pioneering spirit, individualism, and independence. Physically it has always been a place that promised limitless opportunities and an environment that sanctions the reinvention of oneself.  

The popularity of the West and the Western genre is directly related to its being a good story rather than it being a truthful, all encompassing account of a bygone era. Historian Brian Dippie suggests that Western art is based more on societal expectations than fact-based truth. At the beginning of its popularity a hungry public wanted to see "the West" and many painters and authors were willing to satisfy its appetite. Western art has imprinted on the nation's memory a time and place far more romantic than our own.

The Louisiana Purchase ignited a yearning for visual depictions of a new and exotic land and artists did their best to satisfy a hungry public. That many artists rarely or never saw the subjects of their artistry was not important; they turned out what the public wanted. The appetite proved to be insatiable. Consequently the images we see when we think of Western art have remained with us.

The reading public's fascination with "the West" stems from Thomas Jefferson's commission of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore the fruits of the

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Louisiana Purchase. This offered Americans one of the first opportunities to break from Washington's allegiance to British custom and stiff formality with information that aroused their curiosity and ignited their imaginations. Lewis and Clark's observations and writings offered the first uniquely "American" experience with respect to their identification with the land and their accounts engendered even more trans-Mississippi exploration. Descriptions heralding the clarity of air and water, the salubrious effect of the climate and the charm of adventure played their part in developing the fascination and even drawing people west.

Dime novels gave Americans the first wave of archetypal Western fantasyland. An unwavering adherence to right and wrong in the face of any situation by a remarkably individualistic—and therefore free—hero provides qualities readers admired. The surrounding landscape and the hero's respect for it also appealed to an audience with an already established affinity for Romanticism. It was a natural fit. The marriage of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show with Ned Buntline's weekly installments in the New York Weekly also helped solidify the glamour and glory of Western myth. An eastern public soaked up both. The generation of the western cowboy myth in the nineteenth century stems for the literature and art of the period. The generation of the western cowboy myth in the twentieth century, on the other hand, comes from American fascination with movies.  

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The western movie is a direct descendant of western art and literature. The western movie genre capitalized on factors that contributed to the success of art and literature as most of the foundational work in the form of art and literature had been done. The Western cinematic genre eventually took on a larger national significance. The industry recognized the potential for educating a huge number of people and assumed the responsibility democratizing the masses, defining a core of common beliefs and a national identity, irrespective of where the truth fit in.

Myth, Nostalgia, and the Baseball Fan

The literature and history of baseball suffers from the same myth-as-fact acceptance as the western. The origins of the game itself, for example, is shrouded in shadows, bearing significant errors when exposed to the light. The alleged founder of baseball, Abner Doubleday, is supposed to have invented the version of baseball with which we are most familiar. The cadet at West Point was confined to his post when he was supposed to have written the rules and promulgated baseball in Cooperstown, New York. This and other evidence has done little to discredit the myth. Abner Doubleday is still considered the father of the game and the town in which he was supposed to have drawn up the rules of the game, Cooperstown, New York, hosts the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.\(^7\)

Peter Golenbock’s oral history *Bums* illustrates the extent myth has grasped fans’ memories. His book details how the citizens of Brooklyn loved their team. The Dodgers were part of their lives and when the team left for the West Coast the move signaled an

end of a way of life. Most of the interviewees neglected to mention that thousands upon thousands were moving out of Brooklyn and stopped going to games; they neglected the fact that New York is the most heterogenous city in America; and they neglected the fact that the New York City populace represents the entire world and that few outside the United States shared American passion for baseball in the 1950s. Those who moved in from places outside United States borders cared less about baseball than those who devoutly followed the Brooklyn Dodgers. The newcomers came from different cultures and did so at a time that no longer required assimilation. The "melting pot" theory of the early part of the century dictated they drop their cultural identity and become "Americans." Societal norms and pressures encouraged, even forced, the immigrants and their children to learn English and adopt an "American" way of life, but a "mixed salad" movement in the 1950s meant they could maintain their language, customs, and traditions and still be Americans. Contrary to what some of Golenbock's interviewees might believe, immigrants' moving in was not part of a devious plot to destroy the

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American way of life. Their lack of attention to baseball simply means they had other diversions and interests. Baseball was low on their lists of priorities.

It is certainly popular and may even be hackneyed to claim such an firm affinity for Ebbets Field and maintain such strident affirmation regarding membership to the subculture of Brooklyn Dodger fans. but American affinity for the past has engendered the wave of nostalgia regarding the two and that in itself has meaning. For Dodger fans the team’s move west serves as a landmark delineating a passing of a golden era in the American urban experience and American sport. Nostalgia is most useful in times of transition and the tumult of the late 1950s steer people to favorable assessments of the past. The memory of relative tranquility and stability of Brooklyn before the urban exodus would bookmark the “good old days” that Dodger fans would point to and remember for generations.

**Hanging on to Part of a Non-Existent Past**

I’m a write-off.

—Mike Pagliarulo, former major league third baseman

The mythic sportsman owner, most commonly considered a figure of the past after the 1950s, was a man who, in the minds of the fans, owned a team because he enjoyed baseball and wanted his teams to “just win, baby.” There were two types of mythic sportsmen owners: the men who had other businesses and were owners just for the sport of it, as though owning was a diversion like sportfishing or hunting and then there were

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"This is a famous quote attributed to Al Davis, owner of the National Football League’s Oakland Raiders."
the men whose only income came from owning a team. They had “dedication and expertise” and were concerned with the state of the game. They had to be concerned with the direction of baseball lest they injure the institution that brings them their wealth and status. They may have been concerned with making money but their primary goal was the advancement of baseball. Their fortunes depended on the fortunes of baseball which made them baseball men first and businessmen second.

The bane of the baseball fan was the owner who recognized baseball as a business and a means to make profits. To the nostalgic baseball fan this owner saw players as commodities and assets to be cultivated, exploited, depreciated as a tax benefit, and then cast off when they were no longer productive. According to this point of view players were cogs, just like part of the machinery of any other factory. Worse yet to the wistful fan was the owner who bought a baseball team to advance or advertise his primary industry.

In the eyes of the nostalgic August Busch was one of the worst offenders because, some charge, he bought the St. Louis Cardinals in order to sell beer. This was doubly egregious because of the self-imposed ban on selling and advertising beer at baseball games. Not only did he sell and advertise his beer at games but did so exclusively. He allowed no competitors access at his stadium and established control of beer sales at other stadiums as well. Busch’s entry into baseball provided him a means to increasing profits


Zimbalist, *Baseball and Billions*, 32.
of his primary endeavor and in the process, became one of the best known brewers in the world, spinning the circle even farther.

The nostalgic fan sees the owners with little baseball savvy as men who are leading baseball down a path to ruin. They fail to see the value of a team to a community and are in the game only to make profits. If those profits slow or dry up they will look for ways to increase revenue or relocate. They see owners like Walter O’Malley and Horace Stoneham as avaricious and caring little about their customers. They chase profits and are concerned with little else. In truth Walter O’Malley did recognize the value of the Brooklyn Dodgers to the borough and made significant efforts to maintain the tie. He struggled with New York City Mayor Robert Wagner and New York City planner Robert Moses, who claimed to be hamstrung by city codes and regulations, to keep the Dodgers in Brooklyn.\(^{60}\) O’Malley merely needed land at different site within Brooklyn and fans would still have their team. Baseball had simply outgrown Ebbets Field and white America felt it had outgrown Brooklyn. Both were no longer feasible in the eyes of the principal tenants.

With a nod to baseball being a child’s game played by men, owners and marketers have changed the nomenclature of the home field. Teams no longer play in stadiums because the word *stadium* is too impersonal. The movement stems from people playing in parks, fields, and yards when they were little: no one played in a stadium. In a direct attempt to reach people’s nostalgic side marketers and owners recognize that people miss the old days and if, for even three hours they can provide that which they are lacking,

\(^{60}\)Sullivan, *Dodgers Move West*, 132-135.
people will come to the games and root for their teams. If they root for their teams they will buy their T-shirts and caps while enjoying peanuts, Crackerjack®, and beer bought at their concession stands. Nostalgia has become useful to marketers.

Stadia as Marketing Tools

People in the 1990s are concerned with explosive growth, congestion, environmental problems, crime, crooked politicians, decreased family time, the impersonal nature of urban cities, racial tensions, and the impoverished condition of slums. The westering nature of Americans leads them to start from scratch, rather than fix problems where they are. This disposition can lead to some striking results. The fact that ninety percent of major league teams have agreements to build new stadiums or have moved into new venues is testament to a desire to take all things related to a stadium into consideration and do them well. O’Malley started the trend of taking all factors, such as access and aesthetics into consideration when he built Dodger Stadium. City leaders have recognized the unique ability that ballparks, when done right from the beginning, have to revitalize an area and serve as another economic engine. Baseball fans are pining for days gone by and stadium planners are factoring in designs that speak to that yearning into their projects. Observers consider Camden Yards at Oriole Park, home of the Baltimore Orioles, Coors Field, home of the Colorado Rockies, and Jacobs Field, home of the Cleveland Indians successes that strike chords in fans’ reach for the good old days in baseball. Just as tourists expect to see residents of a quaint town act a certain way.

81Findlay, Magic Lands, 106.
baseball fans have come to expect quaint, retro parks that blend with the surrounding community and baseball’s past.\textsuperscript{82}

The multi-purpose, artificially turfed stadiums that house three National League teams are obsolete as drawing cards. These “cookie cutter” stadiums parks fail to generate the rejuvenating excitement that the Orioles, Indians, and Rockies experienced after the openings of their new home fields. Veterans Stadium, Synergy Field, formerly Riverfront Stadium, and Three Rivers Stadium will soon fall by the wayside as more civic officials try to duplicate the magic and enthusiasm the new ballparks are generating.

An exception to the antipathy of uniform venues is Dodger Stadium. It has a similar bowl and a symmetrical outfield as the “cookie cutter” stadiums, but its wide open foul territory and great view of the hills in the background corresponds with both the pastoral beginnings of the game and the spread out, suburban nature of the Los Angeles area. Dodger Stadium, like Wrigley Field in Chicago, and Fenway Park in Boston, fits well in its city.

Camden Yards, home of the Baltimore Orioles and first of the retro parks, ushered in a new paradigm of stadium construction. An asymmetrical outfield and the warehouse beyond the right field fence highlighting the quirkiness of old ballparks, in addition to the view of downtown Baltimore, gives fans interesting vistas, but the importance of the architecture and playing field lies in their ability to induce people to remember stadiums like Ebbets Field and Polo Grounds. According to one former Brooklyn Dodger, the right field corner will cause the same quirky caroms of batted balls that Ebbets Field

\textsuperscript{82}Rothman, \textit{Devils Bargains}, 12.
caused. Memorial Stadium, the Orioles former home, was the stadium equivalent of vanilla ice cream. It served its purpose but lacked style and nostalgic appeal. Stadiums henceforth would have to fit a certain mold. Nostalgia and reminiscence were to be key ingredients in the new stadium movement.

Jacobs Field, a contemporary of Camden Yards with slightly more modern touches, provide fans with a healthy dose of nostalgia while blending with the architectural spirit of Cleveland. Planners built on and refined the efforts of Camden Yards by providing esplanades that allow fans to take in the city skyline and reconfiguring the seating arrangement so that fans are angled toward the pitcher and batter. The Ballpark at Arlington, home of the Texas Rangers, added another wrinkle in the construction paradigm. Architects maintained the nostalgia with asymmetric outfield dimensions and old-time grandstands in right field but an office complex, team related shopping opportunities, and restaurants, all on the property, reversed the roles of neighborhood and stadium. With nearly every amenity accounted for, stadiums now become their own neighborhoods.

Coors Field, home of the Colorado Rockies, established the some of the essential ingredients of successful stadium construction. Shopping and entertainment were some of the major considerations, making a trip to the baseball game an outing. The electric feel at the ballgames, in which nearly every game being a sellout plays a key role, and the

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"USA Today, April 7, 1992, 3C.

"Ibid., April 7, 1994, 4C.
high-scoring brand of baseball teams play as a result of the thin air in Denver draw people to games for the experience itself.

Safeco Field's canopy will capture part of the Seattle spirit. It will protect fans and the field from Seattle's rains but because it will not seal the stadium from the elements the capricious essence of the Northwest will be on display. What planners are calling "A Ballpark for San Diego" will perform the same function. The Padres' new home will reflect San Diego's heritage with mission-style architecture and incorporate the city's present-day garden feel with palm trees, waterfalls, and a grassy hill inside the park on which fans can lay down a picnic blanket and watch the game.

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87 Oral interview of Tim Greene by author, June 11, 1999.
CHAPTER IV

BASEBALL'S MANIFEST DESTINY: THE GOOD

This chapter will examine the benefits of hosting a major league baseball team. It will examine present urban trends as they relate to baseball. From the middle of the twentieth century people were moving out of the cities and into the suburbs. Now they are moving back. This has effected another major response of baseball people. The first response came from owners: this response comes from marketers.

Baseball's Manifest Destiny evokes negative emotions because in the equation, cities are going to face the prospect of losing baseball teams or paying huge public subsidies to private companies to keep them happy. If a bad side exists, it follows that beneficial aspects of baseball must also exist. The pride a team—and even a municipal stadium—generates goes well beyond what an economist can calculate on a balance sheet. Citizens love hosting major league baseball. This chapter will also show how baseball teams can serve as the impetus for downtown redevelopment. wherein stadiums play a large role, and bring a city back from stagnation. Major league baseball has become a tourist attraction; it is not just for baseball fans anymore. the experience of going to the game attracts non-baseball fans as well as the purist. This chapter will
additionally take into account how baseball players, coaches, organization personnel, and teams as a whole provide many benefits to its host community.

The City of Los Angeles erected billboards, welcoming their new club in 1958. The Dodgers paraded through downtown Los Angeles in full uniform and thousands of fans lined the streets to catch a glimpse of their new heroes. Hollywood celebrities became Dodger fans.

The Dodgers' experience was not unique. When the Braves arrived in Milwaukee from their previous home in Boston the businesses in the area treated the players to everything from the free use of automobiles, to pounds and pounds of free food, to free dry cleaning. The same year the Dodgers arrived, San Francisco feted their new team and honored their mayor with parades, ceremonies, and balloon bouquets. When National League President Warren Giles toured tiny Jarry Park in Montreal in 1968, trying to determine if it would be acceptable to host a major league team, the fans exhibited their enthusiasm and gratitude for having a team by chanting "Le grand patron! Le grand patron!"

The denizens of major league cities, especially those of newly acquired franchises, are ecstatic to host "big league" baseball. The excitement generated goes past just baseball

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88Whittingham, The Los Angeles Dodgers: An Illustrated History, 70.

89Ibid., 73.


91New York Times, April 15, 1958, 34.


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fans. Politicians and civic boosters recognize the value of a major league team in their
city. They remember how the people of Wisconsin in general embraced the Braves upon
their arrival from Boston. New baseball fans sprouted from all corners of the state.93
They may not have been conscious of, or even interested in, the attendant issues of
hosting a major league team, but the roles of building civic pride, providing a civic
identity, allowing citizens to engage in a common struggle, offering entertainment for
residents, and providing a tourist attraction cannot be underestimated.

Conspicuous in its absence and palpable in its presence, pride in and connection to
one's community plays an important role in the health of a society. When present, it
suggests stability, attention to the heritage of the community, and concern for the future.
Citizens with civic pride make decisions with respect to others. The decision to run a red
light, illegally park in a handicap spot, or cut someone off in traffic can stem from a
citizen's connectedness and civic pride.94

The definition of community can be elusive, as it depends on what set of
circumstances one is discussing. In general terms, and for the purpose of this study, it
entails a "delimited geographical area, patterns of social interaction, and group psycho-
cultural ties offering a sense of belonging via interdependence and loyalty."95 The
community of baseball fans, together with the community of doctors, factory workers,

93Buege, Milwaukee Braves, 14-16.

94Mark Homan, Promoting Community Change: Making it Happen in the Real

95Jack Kinton, introduction to The American Community: Creation and Revival
(Social Science and Sociological Resources, 1975).
academics, etcetera, form gradually widening circles that overlap and piece together the picture of a community as a whole.

When discussing the community of baseball fans, the geography aspect is the most obvious of the three; fans in a major league baseball city generally root for their home team. How they root for their home team, the passions, frustrations, and joy aroused by the home team's performance, and how they root against the opposition relate to the social interaction aspect of community. Their identification with a team, along with other fans in the same area, constitutes their sense of belonging.

Major league baseball brings national prestige and attention to a city, which in turn increases civic pride. The polity in Milwaukee was willing to pay public subsidies to a private enterprise because of what a team does for a city. Community cohesion may resist measurement in terms of dollars and cents but it advances a feeling of belonging and pride in where one lives. Major League baseball has been one of the anchors of many communities. It has served as a means to provide stability and community. Baseball's palliative nature soothes the spirit and brings people together, giving them something in common to root for and a chance be a part of something larger than themselves.

The futility of the Brooklyn Dodgers, causing the citizens to rally behind the team, brought the community together more than any other baseball team. Baseball in the forties and fifties enjoyed an incredible following and was part of many Americans' lives but Dodger fans were an all together different breed. Brooklynnites shared a distaste for an amorphous New York City lifestyle, but it was opposing baseball teams that provided
a common, tangible foe. The separate nature of the five boroughs in New York did much to cohere Dodger fans. The Yankees and Giants represented the whole New York metropolitan area but the Dodgers were from Brooklyn alone. Stemming from New York City’s annexation of their city, residents of Brooklyn harbored an acute animosity toward other New York teams. While every opposing team was the enemy, the New York Giants were most hated. The hatred was evident in battles on the field, in quotes and descriptions found in the newspapers, and in the folklorish everyday encounters of the respective fans. Chicago baseball fans experience the same style of demarcation. Chicago’s Southsiders generally identify with the White Sox, while fans of the Cubs hail from the north side of Chicago.

The Pendulum Swings Back

As the century ends and tradition turns in on itself: as Boulez screams and yells his music is put on the shelf / repetition is back, a rose is a rose, said herself. Bill Gates has won. I’ve got the postmodern blues

—Patricia Barber. The Postmodern Blues

Some people who originally ran for suburbs searching for safety and quiet are returning to the vibrance and energy of the city. They recognize the efforts city leadership are making and are rediscovering the value of the urban setting. They are attracted to the improving schools, rebuilt museums and libraries, and improved mass transit systems. More and more cities are reestablishing themselves as attractive residential and business districts, largely because they are shunning the explosive growth. Municipalities offer tax breaks to developers who build up older, deteriorated areas.
thereby moving towards sustainable growth." Attention to quality of life issues and aesthetics are playing larger roles as cities find themselves in competition with other urban areas and the "sterile environment of the malls."

It is an obvious truth that where lots of people congregate there will always be efforts to sell them something. A traditional downtown business district has long served that purpose. Cities with a traditional downtown have investments in infrastructure and business that call for attention when or if the downtown deteriorates.

Centralized financial districts, government facilities, and office complexes result in high customer traffic during normal business hours. While people are working they will pay little attention to other economic activities, with the exception of lunchtime accommodations. The challenge lies in developing and directing them to off-hour attractions. Many city planners see downtown stadium projects as part of an equation designed to prime the pump of economic regeneration and growth. Stadiums, however, are not the only option cities have at their disposal. Downtown Phoenix was a "ghost town" after 5:30 p.m. in the late 1980s. The convergence of revitalization projects, in which the Bank One Ballpark was one of the last to come into being, has the downtown humming with activity on weekday evenings. People are congregating to enjoy the sports events, but they are also coming for the restaurants, shopping opportunities, and cultural activities.


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Vibrant downtown centers are remnants of eastern rootedness, and as Americans come
to realize that individuality and anonymity are not always in their best interests, efforts
aimed at recapturing civic cohesion begin to gain increased attention. As Americans
started to move to the periphery of cities in the 1950s and 1960s, stadium designers
located their projects away from the centers of town to enjoy easy access and plentiful
land for parking. Stadiums like Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles, Candlestick Park in San
Francisco, and County Stadium in Milwaukee are all suburban venues. More and more
civic leaders, however, are realizing the potential of stadium locations within close
proximity of downtown areas. Leaders recognize that people will spend time in an area
that has shops and restaurants before and after a game. Some will have dinner before
going to a game, follow that with a stroll and a little window shopping, and perhaps
partake in some of the micro-breweries that have come into vogue. After the game fans
may “get a little something to eat” or enjoy a promenade through a historical area before
going home. Many baseball fans see going to a game as part of an entertainment evening.

Experience as Commodity

The descriptions of going to see a big league ballgame in its most pure form—that is,
without the non-baseball entertainment—may sound saccharine and mawkish to the new
generation of baseball fans, but to millions of baseball fans who enjoy the game for what
it is, it helps to explain the reasons for baseball’s popularity in the first half of the
twentieth century. Major league baseball provides spectacle. The majesty and enormity
of the arena, the greenness of the field, the whiteness of the uniforms, the palpable
electricity of the crowd, and the smell of everything from the traditional popcorn to the aroma of beer all serve to excite the senses. Sunshine seems brighter in the open stadiums—there seems to be no smog in Dodger Stadium—and even against the sheer size of the stadium, the players all seem so big, making one wonder how men of such size can do something that requires such precision. Few people in the 1990s, however, are willing to go to a baseball game just for the baseball. Following the minor leagues’ formula for success, major league teams have to provide customers with a “baseball experience.”

Many touring Americans in the 1990s are searching for memorable experiences rather than material gains. As more and more people come to afford the BMWs and trips to Aspen, the status symbols lose their sheen. The status comes from the exclusivity of experience and following the nature of the masses to emulate the upper class tastes they want experiences too. Tourism, therefore, becomes a collection of experiences and memories wherein a community will service the desires of its constituents. Materialism has lost its luster and experience is in vogue. Recognizing the shift, baseball now provides its customers with a multimedia experience. Baseball in “The Show” has indeed become a full member in the entertainment business. Fans can now partake in a full service salon, swimming pool, barbeque restaurants, and a “baseball experience.” wherein they can test their throwing strength on a radar gun or have at-bats against virtual major league pitchers.

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98 Rothman, Devil’s Bargains, 17-21.
City task forces have long-recognized the value of baseball stadiums as tourist attractions, which form the national appeal of Major League Baseball as a destination and experience. The tourism of major league baseball stadiums and cities has garnered significant attention of late. For the same reasons that bar patrons get T-shirts and the honor of writing their names with a message on the wall for sampling an entire offering of beers from around the world, fans who visited every park in all major league cities became quasi-celebrities. Their touring sparked the creation of books about traveling to all the ballparks, detailing which parks to linger at and which deserved only a perfunctory visit, the best concession stands, the most efficient driving routes, and the best accommodations along the way. Americans liked the idea of combining two pastimes, motor touring and baseball and while most cannot spend the time traveling across the country taking in baseball games, they wanted to hear their stories. Tourism is playing a significant role in the economic recovery of several cities and downtown areas. Using tourism and downtown redevelopment projects that include sports complexes, some cities, like the mythic phoenix rising from the ashes, have made remarkable returns to economic viability. Stadiums like Camden Yards, Jacobs Field, and Coors Field figure prominently in the revival.

The new ballparks generate excitement among the players as well. Charles Nagy, long-time Cleveland Indians pitcher, explained that he had to drag himself to the ballpark everyday before Jacobs Field was built. "With the new place," he noted, "everyone [on the team] was really excited."99 The new generation of ballparks take into account the

99USA Today, April 4, 1994, 4C.
accoutrements that might attract free agents. State-of-the art batting facilities and weight rooms might push a decision to sign with one club over another. Civic leaders know that the average major league salary is hundreds of times over the average workingman's salary and if they attract a major free agent they will have a "gentleman of resources" who will live in their cities for at least half the year. With the extras incorporated into the stadiums they might be able to induce their team's players to live in their cities during the off-season. They take delight in the idea that some players will reinvest their money in their cities, establishing bars, car dealerships, and restaurants.

New stadiums represent the effort to do things right and a willingness to learn from the experiences of other stadium efforts. Planners promise to "get it right this time around." Jacobs Field was the first to angle seats toward pitcher's mound, and all new stadiums incorporate the same design configurations. Employing an incredible drainage system. Seattle's Safeco Field can soak up two-and-one-half inches of rain and have it ready for play in forty-five minutes. The new stadiums also reflect an atmosphere conducive to meeting and spending time with friends or family. They have common viewing area where fans can get up and mingle while enjoying various food and beverages. A multi-purpose function of baseball-only stadiums is gaining currency. The more the stadiums will serve baseball related and non-baseball related activities, like shopping, restaurants, and brew pubs one finds at Coors Field, or the entertainment centers, office complexes, and convention facilities one finds at The Ballpark at

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Arlington, the more the public will be willing to help finance them. The ownership of the San Diego Padres has effected a paradigm shift recognizing that outlook and feels it has remedied the negative aspects of new stadium construction. The creation of a “Ballpark District,” wherein the stadium will be just a part of a revitalization project, is projected to compliment the business and tourism atmosphere of San Diego. When done right a new baseball stadium can bring a city back from economic despair or capitalize on municipal redevelopment efforts.

Regrowth and Rejuvenation

*The Drew Carey Show,* a successful situation comedy based in Cleveland on the American Broadcasting Corporation, opens with its main characters running and dancing in the streets of Carey’s hometown, bounding past famous sites such as the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and ending up in front of Jacobs Field, home of the Cleveland Indians, tailgating before an Indians game. Each of the characters, most notably its star, prominently wear Cleveland Indians jerseys. The show’s theme song exclaims “Cleveland rocks!” The negative connotation of conformity, of “stucco farms,” and of the “carpet of suburbs” has people interested in the vitality of downtown centers. With the right combination of an attractive stadium, freeway and public transit access, a winning team, and a history of civic identity, a major league team can help bring back the vitality of a downtown, which can turn out to be a savior of an entire city. It can prompt regrowth and rejuvenation and return a city to national prominence.
The opening of *The Drew Carey Show* serves three purposes: it showcases citizens' pride in their community, it demonstrates how far the city of Cleveland has come as a revitalized city, and it attempts to maintain and capitalize on the momentum the city has attained. Downtown revitalization, in which Jacobs Field has played an important part, is mostly responsible for Cleveland's return to national prominence. Public relations, heralding downtown Cleveland's improved business atmosphere, is attracting national attention and other downtown leadership coalitions, such as the Mayor's Task Force on Padres Planning in San Diego, are watching with piqued interest.

Before Jacobs Field Cleveland was generally accepted as a depressed manufacturing city. Cleveland Municipal Stadium, dubbed "The Mistake By the Lake" had a capacity of seventy-four thousand, but rarely filled all those seats. Even with forty to fifty thousand fans at a game it could still feel empty. The drab stadium added to the depressed nature of Cleveland itself. After the completion of Jacobs Field at least nine new restaurants opened in the vicinity of the stadium before the Indians started playing there. The downtown area Cleveland also boasts the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, a nationally recognized orchestra, a distinguished museum of art, and the Great Lake Science Center. This has been a large, coordinated redevelopment project, designed to get people interested in Cleveland again. It has worked. One estimate calculated 4.5 to 5.5 million people going into the area for sports alone. The same style of rejuvenation occurred in another city that built a baseball-only stadium as well.

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103 *USA Today*, April 6, 1994, 4C.
Formerly a run-down, oft-avoided area of town, Lower Downtown in Denver, or "LoDo," has been revitalized by the addition of Coors Field. The metro area has benefitted from the stadium's presence as housing sales in Denver rose nearly twenty percent the year following its completion, but LoDo is the prime beneficiary of the new stadium.104 New businesses are up, crime is down, and the business owners and residents of the area feel much better about doing business and living there. Investment has followed the installation of Coors Field and the area is prospering, and many proprietors and residents are enthusiastic about the turnaround. Many residents of Denver and the outlying areas consider LoDo the hot new district as exciting new nightclubs and bars ring the area. A wide variety of diversions can be found during the night time hours. Martini bars, jazz clubs, steakhouses, cigar bars, sports bars, dance clubs, and patio dining help to create whatever atmosphere one may be looking for. An electric party atmosphere or a subdued evening are easily found as LoDo has so many entertainment avenues. Before, during, and after Rockies games, or on days when the Rockies are not playing, the area hums with activity; it is always "packed."105 Upscale brew pubs and restaurants are the obvious beneficiaries, but other businesses, such as bookstores and art galleries are also benefiting from the increased traffic.106

105Interview of Greene, June 11, 1999.
In the Community

Comedians who look to promote their hometowns are rare. Athletes who become fixtures in a community, such as John Elway in Denver, are only slightly more common. Yet, those who make a home in the city they play for or play a majority of their career for one team can prove to be quite the civic asset. Civic leaders all across the country would love to have the situation Denver has, a national sports hero who plays and lives in their community. His business acumen, which helped him build an automobile dealership empire that generated three hundred million dollars worth of annual sales, and attachment to Denver are leading people to think he will become a part-owner of the Denver Broncos and will attach himself to Coors Brewing, another nationally recognized Colorado-based business. Local businesspeople in San Diego are certainly glad to have someone like Tony Gwynn playing for their home team. His willingness to stay in the San Diego, despite offers of more lucrative contracts elsewhere, is well-known and lends credibility to the companies that he endorses, making him an asset to the business community. Dave Winfield, when he played for the San Diego Padres, also made a positive impact within the community. He was one of the first players to provide tickets, nutritional education, computer literacy, scholarships, and drug awareness programs for underprivileged children. His "Winfield Pavilion" in San Diego gave many children.


who would not otherwise have the chance to watch major league baseball in person, the
opportunity to cheer and pull for their heroes and become part of something larger than
themselves. Sports stars "giving back" to the community by prompting job growth or
establishing community resources, such as Boy's Club facilities, are any civic leader's
desideratum. Teams too recognize their unique ability to make a positive impact in the
communities where they play.

Major league teams provide many social benefits to their host communities. More
than mere public relations, these teams are working for the betterment of the communities
in which they play. By supporting community and charitable causes they are
acknowledging their position in the community and are working toward being
responsible, civic-minded businesses. They also work toward attracting attention to
national causes, and, in some instances, provide international aid to natural disaster
victims. Teams recognize their special position within the community and utilize their
celebrity to lead other corporations and groups in a positive direction. The majority of
teams participating in community outreach programs state their primary goal is to help
children. Most teams provide tickets for underprivileged children but programs such as


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Major League Baseball's "Reviving Baseball in the Inner Cities" (RBI) support of youth leagues and educational promotions serve to enhance children's lives by building self-esteem and improving their outlook on life.\textsuperscript{111}

RBI is focused on improving baseball facilities within the urban areas, encouraging kids to participate in baseball-related activities, promoting educational achievement and social responsibility, while cultivating a new generation of fans and players. This program was the result of the observation that children between the ages of thirteen and sixteen quit playing baseball. A lack of money and a hostile environment, as well as the attraction to street gangs was causing the decline of baseball in many urban neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{112} The program got increased momentum after the discovery that as of 1997 the percentage of African-American players on major league rosters was lower than it was in 1959, the year the Boston Red Sox became the last team to integrate.\textsuperscript{113} RBI funds urban youth baseball and softball leagues that give many the opportunity to play baseball and travel to tournaments when they might not otherwise have the chance.

\begin{flushright}
San Diego Padres. "Our Commitment...Now and Forever." \\
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\textsuperscript{111}Major League Baseball Enterprises, Inc. "Reviving Baseball In Inner Cities." \\

\textsuperscript{112}Ibid.

some players the RBI leagues are the only ones offered in their age range. The RBI season is capped by championship games in major league ballparks, which, as any person who has played baseball or softball knows, is quite a thrill.

The Atlanta Braves participate in a similar program that revitalizes neighborhoods in their area. The Atlanta Olympic committee initiated the program to present its best face for the world to see during the Olympics. The Braves organization, coupled with other community service agencies, continues to support the program after the Games, bringing baseball parks and playgrounds back to life in the inner city. A chain of hardware stores teams with other local businesses to rehabilitate more old or run-down youth baseball facilities in the “True Value Field of Dreams” program.

Major League Baseball also exerts its influence in the area of medical and educational services for disadvantaged groups and those with special needs. Some team’s community relations department form a “Care” branch that supports needy individuals, groups and institutions. Striving to improve the quality of life for children and the underprivileged and to strengthen the social and economic conditions of their respective communities Seattle has its Mariners Care, St. Louis has its Cardinals Care. Detroit has its Tigers Care, and Anaheim has its Angels Care. Tigers Care, for example, provides vital medical and

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114 Ibid. C3.
115 Ibid. C2.
therapeutic services, recreational facilities, and educational opportunities to children with
special needs.117

Reading encouragement and academic achievement programs also benefit the children
who live within the area of a major league baseball team. In addition to receiving free
tickets to ballgames when they reach defined reading or academic goals, they get
scoreboard or public address recognition at the games they attend.118 Most major league
teams additionally support education by offering team-generated scholarships or access to
national scholarships like the Jackie Robinson Foundation.

Many teams employ standard fundraisers, such as celebrity golf tournaments, benefit
auctions, and entertainers performances, but many more are employing some innovative
ways to get other organizations involved and bring attention to causes. Farming their
players, coaches, and other team staff, teams encourage their personnel to donate their
time to make speeches, engage in question-and-answer sessions, or participate in food
and clothing collection.119 This direct access to representatives of a team leads to a
positive assessment of its presence.


118The Houston Astros Baseball Club. “Houston Astros/Houston Chronicle

119Colorado Rockies. “Rockies In The Community.”
<http://www.coloradorockies.com/rockies/community/charities.html>. 1999; The
Arizona Diamondbacks. “In The Community.”
<http://www.azdiamondbacks.com/community/index.html>. 1997; Detroit Tigers &
Cybernet International Corporation. “Tigers Care Activities.”
Many players tie their performance on the field to the amount they will donate to a given cause or charity, usually with a minimum amount specified, but Garth Brooks has developed an interesting arrangement that ties baseball players with celebrities and members of the business community. Ken Griffey, Jr., center fielder for the Seattle Mariners, for example, donates one thousand dollars for every home run he hits. His donation is linked with two others who donate the same amount. His “teammates,” a member from the business community and a celebrity who have signed up with Garth Brooks’ “Touch ‘Em All” foundation, make every Griffey home run worth three thousand dollars to children’s charities.\textsuperscript{120} Players choose from several different performance categories like stolen bases, strikeouts, and hits, combining their name and status with the resources of the business community and celebrities who recognize their unique ability to initiate action on issues that require more than the veneer of rhetoric.

The McGwire Foundation, an organization that Cardinals slugger Mark McGwire formed, is dedicated to preventing child and spousal abuse and helping those who are victims cope with the trauma.\textsuperscript{121} Launched with the combined announcement of a long-term contract and one million dollar donation to initiate the foundation’s activities, it gained additional attention with nationally televised commercials aired amid McGwire’s chase of Roger Maris’s single-season home run record in the summer of 1998.\textsuperscript{122}


\textsuperscript{122}Public Service Announcements aired nationally during the 1998 major league baseball season.
Few economists are willing to take into account the intangibles a major league team brings to its host communities. They can quantify dollars generated from tourism and business activity associated with teams but fail to put a number on the excitement one feels about having a major league club in his hometown or how a young person might feel after she attends a baseball clinic her team puts together. Numbers in economic terms fall short of explaining the pride one feels about his new team or his new stadium and how it helped to rejuvenate his city.
CHAPTER V

BASEBALL'S MANIFEST DESTINY:

THE BAD AND THE UGLY

Let 'Em Drop Dead. —A Brooklyn Dodgers fan

This chapter will establish the game's relationship with the fans of a host city and why the hurt of losing a team can scar a community for generations. The bad and the ugly aspects of baseball's Manifest Destiny will include a treatment of the stadium debate and community's place in it. It will also establish owner greed and the lengths the owners will take to protect the established way they earn their profits, illustrating the ugly part of baseball's Manifest Destiny. Exploitation, bullying, or outright deception characterize their methods. The chapter then demonstrates the results of relocation and expansion on minor league teams and their fans.

The roar of Los Angeles crowds mutes the sobs of heartsick Brooklyn fans.

Attendance was up eight hundred thousand the first year in Los Angeles from total attendance the last year in Brooklyn. This increase was in spite of a terrible record by Dodger standards. Fans on the West Coast wanted Major League Baseball and most were able to easily forget about the PCL franchises in their midst. the Los Angeles Angels and the Hollywood Stars.
The Effect on Fans

College or minor league players leave indelible marks on the community for which they play, especially if they make it to the major leagues. Fans love their teams but take particular pride in claiming players that have done well in their town and gone on to achieve success at the top levels of the game. Joe DiMaggio transformed many San Franciscans into Yankee fans when he left their PCL team, the Seals, for New York. Mickey Mantle did the same for the citizens of Oklahoma.

Fans’ recognition and acceptance can go the opposite direction as well. Stars that made their marks for other cities’ teams had trouble winning new fans when their teams came from a different town. Willie Mays, one of baseball’s all-time greatest players, failed to measure up to San Francisco’s own homegrown star, Joe DiMaggio, until late in his career. Players like Willie McCovey, Juan Marichal, and Orlando Cepeda, however, who came up with the San Francisco edition of the Giants and became stars were treated to the fan’s affection. Pee Wee Reese, Duke Snider and other “Boys of Summer” received lukewarm admiration because they represented a Brooklyn heritage. Sandy Koufax’s finally breaking through and fulfilling the expected greatness in Los Angeles, rather than Brooklyn, accounts for his acceptance.

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123This comes from personal experience in talking with other baseball fans about particular people in baseball. If the person in question played college or minor league baseball or hails from the same area as the person with whom am I speaking, the conversation will usually include a statement that starts with “He played his college (or minor league) ball at...” or “You know he’s from...”

124Dallas Morning News, April 12, 1998, 33A.

125Dewey and Acocella, Encyclopedia, 529.
Don Drysdale, a southern Californian, won over the Los Angeles fans because of his hometown connection but West Coast Dodgers Maury Wills and Tommy Davis became fan favorites because Angelenos could call them their own. Suffering from both racism and the ignominy of being part of the Milwaukee connection Henry Aaron found it acutely difficult to win over Atlanta fans. They knew their slugger was a superstar, but initially rejected embracing him because he was a link to their new love’s past. He was Milwaukee’s affinity and enjoyed overwhelming support again when he was traded to the Brewers. Even though he shined for fifteen seasons in San Francisco, Mays was still referred to as the “Prince of the Polo Grounds” at the 1980 All Star Game. His connection with New York was punctuated when he wore a New York Mets uniform at the Old Timers Game that is part of the All Star festivities. A school that now stands where center field in the Polo Grounds used to be is named after him. The cities where Aaron and Mays made their initial indelible marks, Milwaukee and New York respectively, affectionately and whole-heartedly welcomed them back. They basked in the warmth of their former territories, evincing the power of fan attachment and the hurt they feel when a team leaves their city.

12b Wills and Davis came up to the majors through the Los Angeles Dodgers’ farm system.

12c Dewey and Acocella, Encyclopedia, 3.

12d Ibid., 311.


Stadiums and the Community

The calls for new stadia can demonstrate and engender civic disquietude or they can solidify a community. The destructive nature of the debate, critics charge, causes owners to turn the fans on themselves with the threat of relocation, which forces members of the community to take sides: groups that either want to keep the team at all costs and are willing to pay for a new stadium with public funds and those that refuse to pass bonds to subsidize wealthy owners. San Francisco Giants very nearly experienced the same feelings New York Giants fans suffered in 1992. They survived a close call when the ownership threatened to move their team to Tampa Bay, Florida. The citizenry voted down another public funding of a downtown stadium and Giants ownership had sold to a Tampa Bay group who planned to move the team. A last minute National League-imposed injunction enabled a San Francisco based group to put together a package that kept the Giants in the Bay Area.¹³¹

Herein the push for new stadia serve as a barometer of the public mood, cohesion, transient nature, and the level of connectedness in a community. Evincing the health of their community, San Diego politicians recognize the value of including the community in the design and function of a new ballpark. With particular attention paid to the public relations impact of a publicly financed stadium, San Diego officials formed a task force to examine all angles of the installation of a new baseball-only stadium. This task force actively sought input from the people of San Diego by announcing public forums and town hall-style meetings and encouraging participation. The task force is also soliciting

opinions from the business community.\textsuperscript{132} The San Diego group is sensitive to the sometimes overbearing nature of stadium placement and is taking cautious, prudent steps to ensure they satisfy as many groups as possible. They are trying to establish the same ballpark magic that Cubs and Red Sox fans enjoy.

The community of baseball fans surrounding Wrigley Field, home of the Chicago Cubs, tolerates none of the nonsense owners force on other major league cities. Transportation to the field is not a problem, neutralizing many owners complaints about their stadiums, and fans have cultivated inviolable traditions which the current ownership generally accepts. The Tribune Company, which acquired the team from the Wrigley family in the 1980s, recognizes both the Cubs and Wrigley Field as a important part of the Chicago ethos. They recognize the fans’ refusal of the invasion of corporate presence. Wrigley Field is the only major league stadium not subject to the talks of major renovation or demolition. The last major change at Wrigley was the addition of stadium lights to enable night games.\textsuperscript{132} The Chicago Cubs are one of the few teams that have not sold naming rights to its home stadium. Tradition is alive and well on the north side of Chicago. In Boston tradition is alive but will soon take on a different look.

Fenway Park, home of the Boston Red Sox, has the smallest seating capacity in baseball and renovation and expansion have proven infeasible. Red Sox officials recognize the value of tradition and the emotional ties fans have with “The Fens” and


\textsuperscript{133}Dewey and Acocella, Encyclopedia, 140.
"The Green Monster" and feel they have reached a compromise. Plans for a new stadium, replete with the owners' new cash cow, luxury boxes, include a new "Green Monster" and an in-stadium view of the old "Green Monster." The general, asymmetrical layout of the original Fenway will remain an important part of the design.\textsuperscript{134}

Owner Avarice and the Business of Baseball

For at least another hundred years we must pretend to ourselves and to every one that fair is foul and foul is fair; for foul is useful and fair is not. Avarice and usury and precaution must be our gods for a little longer still.

—John Maynard Keynes, \textit{Essays in Persuasion}

The wish to acquire more is admittedly a very natural and common thing; and when men succeed in this they are always praised rather than condemned. But when they lack the ability to do so and yet want to acquire more at all costs, they deserve condemnation for their mistakes.

—Niccolò Machiavelli, \textit{The Prince}

Greed, exploitation and domination characterize major league baseball owners and an inventory of miserly owners includes some of baseball's most famous names: Yawkey, Comiskey, MacPhail, McGraw, Rickey, O'Malley, Finley. These owners were tightfisted, some to the point of obsessive greediness, and they were forthright and candid about it, as were many captains in industry who "built this country." They were, above all, businessmen and greed is the common ingredient in many successful businessmen. Greed may be unpleasant, it may be unjust, but the American system is set up to allow it; greed is part of the "American Way." It is, therefore, part of the American Pastime and is one of the basic elements that compels owners to protect their bonanza.

The Sherman Antitrust Act, designed to prevent restraints on trade by making monopolies illegal, does not apply to Major League Baseball. The U.S. Supreme Court considered baseball outside the purview of interstate commerce in the Holmes decision of 1922, and at present Congress refuses to remove the antitrust exemption, thereby providing a legally-ensured monopoly. The arrangement has been jealously guarded and protected and anything that threatens to upset it prompts owners into conciliatory action.

Major League Baseball’s unique antitrust exemption allows major league owners to dictate who gets franchise awards and where franchises can be located. Although the Supreme Court deemed the exemption “unreasonable, illogical, and inconsistent,” it has been unwilling to change the sport’s status. It has left that task to Congress, which looked into the matter with the Cellar and Kefauver Committees. As of 1994, Major League Baseball survived seven investigations without losing its status. Eager to fly under the radar of congressional action, major league owners of the late 1950s and 1960s complied with owners who wanted to relocate their teams, or pacified concerted, serious efforts of those cities that want to host major league teams. The expansion New York Mets, Houston Astros, Los Angeles (later California, then Anaheim) Angels, the second version of the Washington Senators, Kansas City Royals, Seattle Pilots and Mariners, Toronto Blue Jays, Montreal Expos, and San Diego Padres all owe their existence to owners’ fear of reopening Congress’s antitrust investigations. The relocations of the first

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135 Zimbalist, Baseball and Billions, 15.

edition Senators to Minnesota and the A's to Oakland stemmed from the threat of reopening antitrust hearings in Congress.\footnote{Dewey and Acocella, Encyclopedia, 580-581. 275.}

Major League baseball, before the Dodgers and Giants bolted, was an eastern affair. All major league clubs before their relocation was played east of the Mississippi River and Pacific Coast League fans were so far removed they had no other serious, high quality baseball to follow. They were treated to major league baseball when teams took their spring training or made exhibition swings in the West but as any baseball fan knows, they did not see the best major leaguers had to offer. For fierce competition the PCL was the only option for baseball fans and because only one club had an affiliation with a major league club, there was no shuttling of players between the leagues. Most players would spend an entire season with their Coast League team, enabling players to develop followings among fans.

Few can argue that the move that Los Angeles Dodgers' and San Francisco Giants' ownerships were unsuccessful. The O'Malley family had escaped the frozen fields of early spring and late fall to the sun-baked glow of southern California and while cold almost all the time in Candlestick, the Giants have enjoyed prosperity as well. The cross-country moves brought economic well-being to the involved teams and brought major league baseball to the starved fans of the Pacific Coast. The moves, however, changed the baseball landscape for the teams that had been there for as long as many could remember.
Be Careful What You Wish For

The Pacific Coast League suffered frustration after frustration in trying to become a third major league. Clarence Rowland, PCL president from 1944 to 1955, recognized the potential for attendance increases after World War II and wanted to protect what had made the Coast League a success. Fans knew their teams' players and if the major league teams were to allowed to continue their player ingress the quality of baseball would diminish and fans would lose the player attachments. Rowland wanted Coast League players exempted from the "Eastern League's" draft. He first appealed to major league owners, trying to obtain major league status, in 1945. Major League Baseball promised studies to determine if the league was major league quality, capable of reaching big league standards for playing fields, stadiums, clubhouses, and attendance.

Meantime Rowland and San Francisco Seals owner Paul Fagan encouraged other owners to increase expenditures and improve their facilities. Little did Rowland and Fagan know, major league owners were only trying to avoid the Congressional scrutiny of hearings regarding its antitrust exemption by granting the PCL a unique "open classification." This would allow Coast League players five years exemption from the major league draft and establish concrete attendance watermarks that, if met, could lead to major league status. While the play and even the fans' support may have justified major league status, most Coast League owners lacked the financial resources to be part of a third big league.\textsuperscript{138}

\textsuperscript{138}O'Neal. The Pacific Coast League, 89-100.
The PCL lost its two largest markets in Los Angeles and San Francisco when the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Giants came west but the moves affected other Coast League cities as well. Only Portland and Vancouver were unaffected by the major league shift; all other teams acutely felt the effects of the migration. Some franchises were casualties of decreased attendance, some were forced to move because of territorial preeminence, and others were granted major league status.

Attendance and Territory Casualties

The Sacramento Solons were casualties of the Giants' move west. Sacramento fans indicated they were partial to major league baseball and the Solons lacked the appeal to keep them coming to the park. Poor attendance forced the owners to sell the franchise to Hawaiian interests in 1960. While some PCL owners suffered attendance woes after the entrance, at least one is guilty of major league-style relocation as a result of a better stadium offer. Brick Laws, the owner of the Oaks, had no desire to refurbish an aging Oaks Ball Park, nor suffer through another dismal season at the turnstiles. Accepting a better stadium deal, he moved the franchise to Vancouver where the Oaks became the Mounties in 1956. Oakland fans had to visit Candlestick Park to sate their baseball cravings until 1968, when the A's arrived after Charlie O. Finley's successful Kansas City gambit.

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139 Ibid., 260.
140 Ibid., 238.
Recognizing that they would not be able to survive in a market that featured major
dleague baseball, the Hollywood Stars ownership sold to Utah owners, who reprised the
Salt Lake City Bees.\textsuperscript{141} The San Francisco Seals experienced the same fate as the PCL
moved the franchise to south to Arizona, where the team became the Phoenix Giants.\textsuperscript{142}
In 1959 the franchise shifted to Tacoma then back to Phoenix in 1966.\textsuperscript{143} Walter
O'Malley transferred his Los Angeles Angels franchise to Washington, where they
became the Dodgers' AAA affiliate, the Spokane Indians.\textsuperscript{144}

The buffer of 120 miles enabled the San Diego Padres to operate unaffected by the
major league relocation. The Padres played as a PCL team through the 1968 season when
the National League awarded the city an expansion team.\textsuperscript{145} The franchise was a result of
retribution for the American League unilaterally deciding to expand its number of teams
from ten to twelve, wherein Padres owner, C. Arnholt Smith got a taste of the difficulties
of running a major league club.\textsuperscript{146} The birth of the Seattle Mariners and the Kansas City
Royals prompted the National League to award San Diego and Montreal the opportunity
to ply their trade in the "big leagues." Poor attendance in San Diego, a result of poor play
on the field, almost led to a third attempt at Washington Senator baseball. Smith, who

\textsuperscript{141}Neil Sullivan. \textit{The Minors: The Struggles and the Triumph of Baseball's Poor
Relation from 1876 to the Present} (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 227.

\textsuperscript{142}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{143}O'Neal, \textit{Pacific Coast League}, 244.

\textsuperscript{144}Ibid., 289.


\textsuperscript{146}Dewey and Acocella, \textit{Encyclopedia}, 326.
had ties in Washington, had grown impatient with the oft-empty stadium—evidently he was ignorant of the effect of his inability to pay quality players—and announced he was putting the team up for sale. The Ray Kroc purchase of the team prevented a Washington move.147

American League expansion has landed a one-two punch to minor league fans in Seattle. The American League expanded in 1969 and the Coast League Angels were pushed aside by the major league Pilots. Lacking attendance the franchise went bankrupt and was sold to Wisconsin interests to become the Milwaukee Brewers in 1971. The Brewers replaced the Braves who moved to Atlanta in 1966.148 When the Pilots left Seattle officials established a Class A affiliate that would be snuffed out in 1977, when the American League again tested Seattle’s market, giving rise to the Mariners.149

A Legacy of Exploitation

If a team exists in, or near the market where another team wants to relocate, the team with the higher classification can “draft” the market and pay the original organization “fair and reasonable” compensation.150 Major League Baseball set this system up in what is known as the Professional Baseball Agreement to ensure viable markets for its product. In 1956, Walter O’Malley took full advantage of the system, acquiring the PCL Los

147Ibid., 523.


149Dewey and Acocella, Encyclopedia, 537.

Angeles Angels in a trade of minor league franchises with Phil Wrigley, enabling him to
draft the territory without having to make reparation payments and allowing him to trade
Wrigley Field in Los Angeles for Chavez Ravine when land negotiations started.¹⁵¹
Owners ratified the trade because O’Malley was a powerful member of the
establishment.¹⁵² Other owners fared less well.

Eccentric owners like the aforementioned Bill Veeck and Charlie O. Finley,
departures from the conservative orthodoxy, bucked the system and drew the scorn and
contempt of their fellow owners. The outlandish manner in which Finley and Veeck ran
their clubs made them outcasts and they ran into opposition for many of the ideas they
tried to incorporate into baseball.¹⁵³ Charlie Finley’s well-known escapades in Kansas
City and especially Oakland irked fellow owners but because of their disdain for his
willingness to sue, they tolerated and appeased him.¹⁵⁴ Finley was well aware of major
league owners’ fear of sunlight and when he wanted to move his team out of Kansas City
he called in their debts. The new owners of the Milwaukee Braves were able to move the
club to Atlanta in 1966, and that presented a problem for American League owners. They

¹⁵¹Sullivan. Dodgers Move West. 95.
¹⁵³Charlie Finley wanted to change the color of the baseball from white to
fluorescent orange at about the same time tennis was experimenting with the same notion
of change. Although most players and fans liked the new color, baseball owners rejected
the change, while professional tennis incorporated the idea and players no longer use
white tennis balls.
¹⁵⁴Dewey and Acocella. Encyclopedia. 400.
promised Finley he would get the market. A threatened lawsuit prompted owners to allow Finley to move to Oakland for the 1968 season.\textsuperscript{155}

A Legacy of Domination

Major league owners have shown they will “play ball” with other owners, however reluctantly, but regarding other leagues Major League Baseball exhibits a legacy of domination. Dating back to the well-publicized battles with and eventual defeat of the Players League and Federal League and the co-option of the American Association, the National and American Leagues, in a separate but equal alliance, have shown they will fight to maintain their preeminence. Upstart league presidents vying for major league status have always been met with sharp resistance, empty promises, or, armed with the threat of legal action, co-option.

The Mexican league of 1946-53 was another casualty of Major League Baseball’s dominance. Mexican millionaire Jorge Pascal tried to mount an assault on Major League Baseball’s two league system by offering big contracts to victims of baseball’s color line or players who were toiling under the reserve clause. When name players like Sal Maglie and Max Lanier jumped, Major League Baseball took the threat seriously and played the only card in its deck, promising to blacklist any player who went south. While this tactic discouraged more defections the Mexican League proved to be its own worst enemy.

\textsuperscript{155}ibid., 2.
undoing itself with shoddy playing conditions, underfinanced teams, and mismanagement.  

Throwing a Bone

The Continental League experienced the brunt of Major League Baseball machinations and even though it never got off the ground, it made its presence felt by forcing the National and American Leagues into action. New York City Mayor Robert Wagner, upon hearing of the official announcement of the Dodgers move West, immediately announced that he would form a committee consisting of private citizens to get another National League team for New York. He had already come to terms with the Dodgers' leaving and had begun negotiations with prominent people to bring National League baseball back to New York. The Flushing Meadows proposition was a take-it-or-leave-it offer that would house the Dodgers or another major league team. New York City Planner Robert Moses cared little if the Dodgers took the offer, he knew he would eventually house a team in his idea of a major league sporting complex.

In 1958 the New York Metropolitans began to take form. Wagner and Moses tried unsuccessfully to lure another National League team to New York. They called on attorney William Shea to investigate the possibility of forming another major league. Shea was well aware of major league owners' uneasiness about their antitrust status and

he. and others such as Branch Rickey, unveiled their plans for the Continental League. Major League Baseball assured Shea and Rickey that it would integrate the Continental League, inducing Shea to pull strings that would call off the opening of new congressional investigations. This upstart league would field franchises in cities that were clamoring for major league ballclubs. Cities such as Denver, Dallas, New York, Houston, Toronto, and Atlanta were anxiously awaiting their opportunities to field major league teams when National and American League owners agreed to expand their numbers of teams, dissipating the Continental League's relevance. Major League Baseball's stall tactics and legal maneuvering paid off as civic leaders in these cities cared little which rubric their major league teams played under, as long as they had major league baseball. Those cities that were awarded franchises were content to have major league baseball and the cities passed over were promised first consideration in the next round of expansion.

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159Zimbalist. Baseball and Billions, 16-17.
The Beat Goes On

Many owners expect citizens of host communities to fund new stadiums which generates animosity because owners engage in a private, for-profit enterprise and should therefore finance their own stadiums.\textsuperscript{160} The current state of economics make that a virtual impossibility. Plans that include the amenities designed to attract fans and corporate customers make the price tags too much to bear individually. Most new stadiums receive between sixty-five to seventy-five percent funding from municipal sources such as hotel taxes or a \frac{1}{4} cent sales tax increase.\textsuperscript{161} Naming rights and Personal Seat Licenses (PSLs) are other revenue options to which many public and private stadium committees are turning. PSLs, licenses that give the owner the right to buy or sell his options on a seat, are supposed to be one of the only ways to secure financing for the Montreal Expos new stadium.\textsuperscript{162} The city is in dire financial straits and has publicly announced that no municipal funds will be available.\textsuperscript{163} In light of an economist's


projection of ten million dollars in annual tourism, however. Quebec's Premier Lucien Bouchard announced he would initiate a plan that would explore helping the Expos cover the interest on the loan financing a new stadium.\textsuperscript{164}

Selling naming rights to their stadiums, while offensive to the purist, has enabled many teams to tap a wellspring of money that corporations are willing to spend in the sports market. The teams that are moving into new stadiums and are contributing a portion of the stadium construction costs are generating the money from the sale of naming rights.\textsuperscript{165} 3Com Corporation, a computer networking company, started the trend with a four year naming deal of San Francisco's Candlestick Park. The move was controversial at first, but exposure far exceeded company expectations and the deal has turned out to be quite a bargain for the networking company.\textsuperscript{166} Now corporations spend tens of millions of dollars to have their names affixed to stadiums, seeing the visibility that major league baseball gives as well worth the expenditure. Companies will hear their names on radio and television, see their names on freeway exit signs, and watch players give interviews or sign autographs in front of a backdrop bearing "their" stadiums' names. Fans bristle at the naming practice because it removes the community connection from their team's home field. Phoenix's Bank One Ballpark, San Francisco's Pacific Bell

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Park. Seattle’s Safeco Field. Pittsburgh’s PNC Park. and Milwaukee’s Miller Field bear
no indication of which team plays in the stadium, where they are located, or whether they
honor a famous owner. They only serve as very large, expensive billboards.
Manifest Destiny provided the impetus for vigorous nineteenth- and twentieth-century American expansion to the West. It was the preponderant doctrine that gave Americans the confidence and justification for going where they wanted to and pushing aside anything or anyone that stood in their way. The nineteenth century saw hundreds of thousands go west in search of something, to escape something, or to start over and once they arrived they established themselves as the dominant group and paid little heed to who or what was there before them. While many braved the harsh conditions and survived the difficulties of a trans-continental migration shored up by the confidence and vitality that the rhetoric of Manifest Destiny engendered, they went without the aid of the technology that would figure so predominantly in the western expansion of the mid-twentieth century.

Electricity gave rise to forces like the telegraph and newspaper, changing the way information moved across the country and imposing a significant effect on the psyche of Americans. Words could traverse what used to be an inconceivable expanse between the coasts in seconds. Trains likewise transformed the West, allowing Americans to physically reach the region and making it available for a wide variety of activities. They
changed the way Americans thought about shipping freight, business travel, and tourism. They spawned an entire folklore Americans celebrated as entirely their own. It was the automobile nearly a century later, however, that solidified the transformation of the West, making it attractive, liveable, and independent of the East.

The substantial wave of immigrants came after technological innovations of the times made the living in the West practical. The post-World War II economic boom and mind-boggling technological advances spurred a western growth similar in importance to the growth the telegraph and trains effected. A different set of wheels and a different track characterized the process that tempered the West's standing as an independent region.

The railroads in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries enabled millions to move to areas previously unaccessible but the automobile enabled millions to enjoy the West on their terms. Previously attached to urban cities Americans found that with the automobile they were free to live outside the city limits. Herein lies the impetus for the meteoric rise of the suburbs. The federal government induced people west with its funding of the trans-continental telegraph and railroad and the Homestead Act in the nineteenth century. In the 1950s the federal government responded to the shift in lifestyles with the funding of a national highway system and the creation of the Federal Housing Administration, thereby inducing people west again. Federal defense spending in the region assured the growth and proliferation of the West.

Los Angeles was establishing itself as the premier city on the West Coast after World War II. Business leaders in and around the city were offering incentives and trying to cultivate a favorable business climate in order to attract enterprises of all varieties.
Several businesses in particular were especially attractive to civic leaders. They saw pursuits that provided stability as vitally important because of the tempestuous quality of western growth. Baseball, because of its serene nature, was a good fit. It provided a psychic center to a region that lacked physical centrality. With a major league baseball team. Los Angeles became a “major league city.”

Can the Owners Be Blamed?

Some argue that Walter O’Malley is the rightful owner of blame concerning the decline of Brooklyn, charging he was a racist, greedy, and heartless. As increasingly more Brooklymites left, more minorities moved into the city in their place. Critics charge that he was unhappy with the changing demographics and relocated because he did not want to see blacks and Puerto Ricans at his ballpark. He has been blamed for destroying a community and expediting the exodus of Brooklyn residents. Many say that when the Dodgers left it destroyed the makeup and character of the city, making it uninhabitable. O’Malley also bears the blame for sullying the childhood dreams and memories of two million Brooklymites by demanding that New York City officials build and give him a new stadium a deal he knew they would refuse. In their minds, he forsook them for the golden potential offered in Los Angeles. When viewed within the context of the larger picture, however, he moved his team in conjunction with the general decline of the urban city. The exodus of city dwellers, the changing nature of America, and the

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16”Golenbock, Bums, 432."
realities of television forced his hand. O’Malley went west with the rest of the country after World War II.

Baseball did what many people were doing in the postwar years. Customers were moving to the suburbs and because the urban setting was too congested, baseball had to follow. Baseball in Brooklyn served as a source of congestion. It could no longer continue as it existed; there was no parking at Ebbets Field. The residents of Brooklyn were leaving in droves, and a decline in the vitality of the city, in some cases, led to the development of a bad neighborhood. and in other cases, led to the development of the perceived bad neighborhood. The combination of congestion and a feeling of danger kept fans away from Ebbets Field.

Fans in Dodger Stadium could stretch out while fans in Ebbets Field were cramped. The juxtaposition is similar to the one comparing eastern and western lifestyles during the spread of suburbs. The West offered the ability to stretch out, have a yard, and live in a cleaner, safer environment. The urban environment was becoming increasingly cramped, dangerous, and expensive.

Pride and Greed

Depending on who gives the account, major league baseball’s relocations and expansion have been good for the cities that have teams, painful for those that have lost teams, and a manifestation of greed. Major league baseball teams mean more to the residents of host cities than what can be measured in dollars. When a city loses a team it
breaks the residents' hearts. Despite whatever human emotions relocation and expansion may engender, the steamroller that is the business of baseball rolls on.

Beginning in 1953, owners shocked fans into the realization of what has been a truth since the beginning of the game. Baseball shed its image that owners were in it for the love of the game and revealed, for all to see, its true mission; profit maximization. Still baseball fans around the country made—and still make—strident calls for expansion or relocation to their cities. When the floodgates opened in the mid- and late-1950s, civic leaders made attempts in earnest to garner a major league club. They realized what a team can do for a city in terms of a tourist attraction, status and job growth, and contributions to social capital.

Major league baseball teams engender civic pride and provide an additional source of social capital. Most denizens of major league cities want baseball. The Arizona Diamondbacks experienced the frenetic embrace of their club three years before they started to play or before fans even knew in which league the Diamondbacks would be playing. Bank One Ballpark has a seating capacity of more than 48,500 and team officials had to cut off the number of non-refundable season ticket deposits at 40,000.168 Most baseball teams take into consideration their special status and make significant contributions to their host communities. Many players, coaches, and other team personnel get involved in local charities and take part in clinics and other outreach programs. They lend their celebrity to causes that might otherwise fail to get attention. Major league baseball teams also recognize the value of cultivating youth baseball and

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sports programs. Most teams make large donations to public schools and youth sports
leagues so that they can afford the expense of providing sports equipment. In addition to
providing a stage on which a potential talent pool can develop, the support of these
programs helps build an expanded fan base.

The spectacle of public sporting events has a long history and because of the benefits
to society providing those events fall under the "public good" rubric. Citizens of a
community deserve this form of entertainment. They deserve to release tension: they
deserve to be in a place that allows them to yell and scream and whistle for their team;
and they deserve to engage in a common, good-natured, bloodless struggle. Many
consider the outlay of public money to house private teams dubious at best and nefarious
at worst. Many economists and public watchdog groups fail to take into account what it
means to a citizenry to have a major league baseball team in their hometown. Coors
Field costs the citizens of Denver eleven dollars per year since the inception of the bond
that financed its construction and will be retired in late October of 2000, nine years
early.\textsuperscript{169} Bank One Ballpark costs Arizona taxpayers twenty-five dollars per year for
three and one-half years.\textsuperscript{170} Fathers who have taken their sons and daughters to a clinic
the Rockies or Diamondbacks have given may say the smiles and good will the teams
generated was well worth outlay of public money.

Public works do not always pay off in economic terms. Museums, bridges, civic-
sponsored orchestras and ballets rarely bear the scrutiny that the recent downtown

\textsuperscript{169}Ibid., March 3, 1996, B-1.

\textsuperscript{170}Arizona Republic, June 2, 1994, A1.
Avenues endure. Economists who are critical of the public expenditure of taxes for baseball stadiums fail to take into account what a major league team means to the citizens of a major league city. This outlook, however, fails to fully acquit the businessmen who happen to hold title to baseball teams.

Owners of major league baseball teams run their businesses in the same manner as many other "captains of industry." They make decisions that will best suit their interests, rarely taking into consideration what impact their decisions outside the community of owners may have. Those who play by the establishment's rules can get the cooperation needed to effectively run their businesses but those who buck the system or challenge the hegemony of the owners find themselves on the short end of many deals, as principals in St. Louis and Kansas City experienced. They dominate and bully opposition to their plans or, if that proves intractable, they make false promises or exploit their special antitrust exemption.

Anytime a serious, concerted effort to lure a team away from another city becomes apparent major league owners pacify that effort by allowing relocation of financially struggling clubs or awarding a franchise via expansion. The Tampa, Florida area provided the most recent example. Tampa was jilted time and again with promised relocations. The San Francisco Giants' saga was the closest the city came to getting a team. Only a last minute municipal injunction prevented the Giants from leaving the city, giving the owners time to find a suitable buyer. Major league baseball owners finally awarded Tampa its own team via their most recent expansion in 1998.
For as Long as the Grass Shall Grow, and the Rivers Run

Just as expansion into the West moved aside entire groups of people in the nineteenth century, major league expansion into the West meant almost entirely pushing aside the Pacific Coast League in the mid-nineteenth century. The questions Manifest Destiny raised with respect to existing peoples apply to the Pacific Coast League. Before the major league incursion the community of baseball fans in San Francisco and Los Angeles enjoyed close proximity to the field, cheap prices, and a nice place to spend a warm summer evening. But just as American Indians had to move as soon as whites found something useful on their lands, PCL teams were relegated to a new version of the reservation system. Teams had to move to outermost territories when the oncoming major league juggernaut saw a market it liked. The PCL received the equivalent of allotments in one-time indemnifications, uniforms, and agreements of player development but its modus operandi and the role it played in its fans' lives was forever altered.

O'Malley Redux

When the Colorado Rockies came into the National League in 1993 as a result of the first expansion in the major leagues since 1977, they did the same thing the Dodgers and Giants did to the Los Angeles Angels, Hollywood Stars, and San Francisco Seals. While they had to follow the O'Malley paradigm—playing in a football stadium while waiting

for the completion of the baseball-only stadium and displacing local AAA baseball, the Rockies emergence differs from the East Coast relocations. Baseball fans consider the result worth the trade-off. They got major league baseball and an exciting downtown park that has rejuvenated an entire region. Just as the Angels, Stars, and Seals had to relocate, the Denver Zephyrs were a territorial casualty; they moved to New Orleans and eventually became the Houston Astros’ AAA affiliate. But the Rockies were able to attenuate the loss of AAA baseball in Denver. They placed their top-level farm club in Colorado Springs, fifty-five minutes down the road.

The Arizona Diamondbacks emergence in 1998 more resembles the Dodgers’ and Giants’ move to the West coast. The Phoenix Firebirds, who were originally displaced from San Francisco when the Giants came to town, had to pack up again and move to Fresno, California when the Diamondbacks drafted their territory. Triple A baseball fans in Phoenix have to travel two hours south by car in Tucson if they want to see Pacific Coast League action. In an intricate deal that required the cooperation of the Houston Astros, who had a Player Development Contract with the Tucson entry, the Toros changed their name to the Sidewinders and became the AAA affiliate of the Diamondbacks.

It is ironic that the supposed origin of the game of baseball comes from the hometown of an author who is partly responsible for many American myths. James Fenimore Cooper’s writing gave rise to an infatuation with frontier adventures and that baseball’s first true mecca, the Hall of Fame, is situated in Cooperstown completes the circle of myth development and consumption. The myth and nostalgia related to baseball and its fans
goes beyond an attempt to hold on to the good old days or lionizing fond memories. It goes beyond coloring the past with a hue that does not exist. Identity with a major league team is a mucilage to people's childhood and where they grew up. It also creates a psyche and a civic character. The Boston Red Sox's long-suffering fans, for example, define the city. The misfortunes and failures of their team reflect the ethos of their community, demonstrating a certain brand of fatalism, which stems from nearly realizing a baseball pinnacle, only to watch it sail into the gloaming off an opposing shortstop's bat or flutter past a first baseman's mitt.  

Whatever one may feel about Walter O'Malley or Horace Stoneham, the Los Angeles Dodgers and San Francisco Giants have been tremendous successes among the fans in their new cities. The Dodgers attracted twenty-five percent more season tickets orders the first year in Los Angeles than the best year of orders in Brooklyn. The attendance increase of almost one hundred percent the first year in San Francisco, nearly reaching their own attendance record with a total of 1,272,625, makes it difficult to blame Stoneham for relocating. They, like many other developers, entrepreneurs, and businessmen in the postwar era, realized the western market was wide open and followed the line of many enterprises that exploited a lack of competition and a tabula rasa to construct what they wanted without constricting urban restraints.

Brooklynites of the 1950s have no one to blame but themselves for the loss of their team. They had an incredible attachment with the team but they were moving out of the

172Ibid., 61-66.

city and seeking the quiet and space of the suburbs. They, like millions of other Americans, sought what they saw as better schools, safer neighborhoods, and easier access to shopping and diversions. O’Malley responded to the writing on the wall. America was becoming increasingly dependent on the automobile and any business that wanted to compete in a new a changing environment had to take this into account. Fans who did go to games in the 1950s were doing so via their new favorite conveyance. Parking was virtually non-existent and the streets around Ebbets Field failed to handle the traffic of those who found parking. Baseball as it existed had outgrown the urban confines of Brooklyn. “You could look it up.”

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12 This is a famous quote attributed to baseball legend Casey Stengel.
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