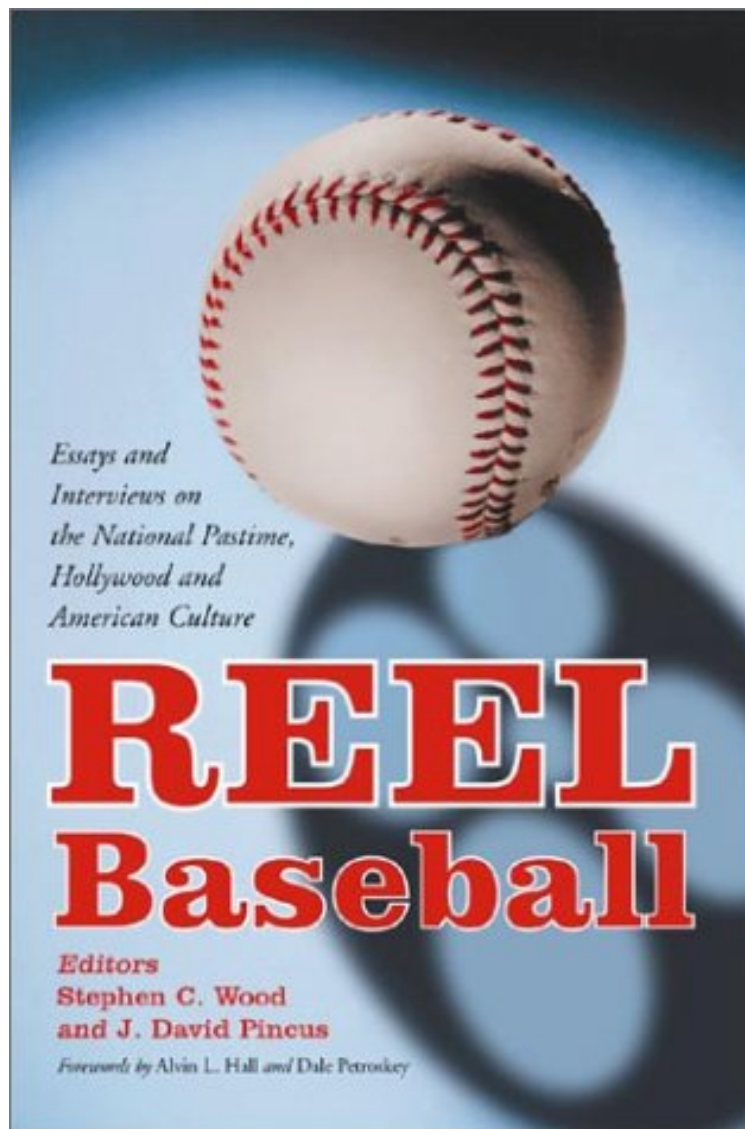


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## Reel Baseball: Essays and Interviews on the National Pastime, Hollywood and American Culture

*Stephen C. Wood, J. David Pincus*  
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**Stephen C. Wood, J. David Pincus : Reel Baseball: Essays and Interviews on the National Pastime, Hollywood and American Culture** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Reel Baseball: Essays and Interviews on the National Pastime, Hollywood and American Culture:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Arrived in great condition.By Sue K. SpencerHusband teaches sport

management and found this book very helpful. Arrived in great condition. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Good Collection of Essays on Baseball and Movies By Roger D. Launius For more than a decade and a half, the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame and the State University of New York at Oneonta have sponsored an annual conference on baseball and American culture. This collection of essays originated as a vehicle for the publication of some of the research presented at those conferences relative to baseball and film. It is a dandy work that offers something for almost everyone. Divided in four major parts, or "reels" as the editors call them, it contains essays on baseball films, depictions of Babe Ruth in the movies, baseball as seen in non-baseball films, and a set of interviews of directors, actors, and others associated with baseball films. By far the most interesting part of the book is the first "reel," in which several authors analyze such films as "The Natural" (1984) and "Field of Dreams" (1989). While there have long been baseball movies--some of them renowned such as "The Pride of the Yankees" (1942) about Lou Gehrig--many of are forgettable--such as "Rhubarb" where a cat inherits the Brooklyn Dodgers--the modern, effective baseball movie may be traced to "The Natural." Throughout, the best of these films use baseball as a backdrop to explore larger social and cultural issues, the tension of good versus evil, and the quest for spiritual fulfillment. Also interesting are the interviews at the conclusion of the book, especially the ones with Penny Marshall, who directed "A League of their Own" about women in baseball during World War II; Kevin Costner, who has made three memorable baseball movies, "Bull Durham," "Field of Dreams," and "For Love of the Game"; and Vin Scully, who literally "called" the perfect game depicted in "For Love of the Game." Throughout, this is an interesting and useful volume. Like all edited works, this one suffers from unevenness and interpretation from chapter to chapter, but overall it is quite a useful book.

Not only are movies and baseball two of America's favorite pastimes, they are integral parts of our culture. Small wonder that the two frequently merge in Hollywood's use of baseball themes, jargon, and icons. This work on baseball in the movies is organized into four sections examining different aspects of the cultural intersection between film and baseball. In the first three sections--"Baseball in Baseball Films," "Babe Ruth and the Silver Screen," and "Baseball in Non-Baseball Films"--essays by scholars in various disciplines cover such topics as symbols, the role of family, baseball as a facilitator of violence, and the American mythos. The fourth section consists of interviews with directors (such as Ron Shelton and Penny Marshall), actors (Kevin Costner, James Belushi), and baseball personnel (broadcaster Vin Scully, coach Rod Dedeaux) who have worked in baseball films. Instructors considering this book for use in a course may request an examination copy here.

"accessible essays...invites the attention of the fan of both movies and baseball...recommended"--Choice; "spectacular study...a sweeping baseball filmography...recommend[ed]"--Against the Grain; "[readers] can spend many happy hours with [this book]"--Burlington County Times; "a real treat"--True; "carefully researched"--University of Arkansas Research Frontiers; "an arresting work...academic yet accessible essays and interviews...inspects the cultural meshing of film and baseball in a thoughtfully provocative manner...a read as satisfying as a run-scoring double laced into the gap"--Arkansas Democrat Gazette; "the volume fills a long-overdue gap in critical discourse"--www.Reconstruction; "a fascinating collection...highly recommend"--The Providence Journal. About the Author Stephen C. Wood is chair of the communication studies department at the University of Rhode Island. J. David Pincus has held positions in the communications and business departments at California State University, Fullerton, the University of Southern California, and the University of Arkansas. He lives in Fayetteville, Arkansas.