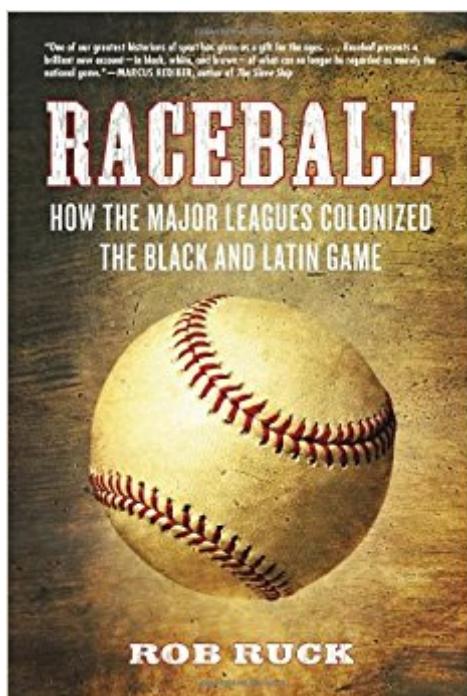


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Raceball: How The Major Leagues Colonized The Black And Latin Game



Synopsis

From an award-winning writer, the first linked history of African Americans and Latinos in Major League Baseball After peaking at 27 percent of all major leaguers in 1975, African Americans now make up less than one-tenth--a decline unimaginable in other men's pro sports. The number of Latin Americans, by contrast, has exploded to over one-quarter of all major leaguers and roughly half of those playing in the minors. Award-winning historian Rob Ruck not only explains the catalyst for this sea change; he also breaks down the consequences that cut across society. Integration cost black and Caribbean societies control over their own sporting lives, changing the meaning of the sport, but not always for the better. While it channeled black and Latino athletes into major league baseball, integration did little for the communities they left behind. By looking at this history from the vantage point of black America and the Caribbean, a more complex story comes into focus, one largely missing from traditional narratives of baseball's history. *Raceball* unveils a fresh and stunning truth: baseball has never been stronger as a business, never weaker as a game.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Before reading *Raceball*, I thought that there were two eras in baseball, before Jackie Robinson and after. That's true, from a certain perspective. But there are other perspectives, too, which Rob Ruck illuminates engagingly in this history that discusses the social and business aspects of the Negro Leagues, Caribbean baseball and their local cultures along with what became of them and their leaders in the aftermath of the integration of the major leagues. Yes, Jackie Robinson is a pivotal

and admirable character in US history. But there's much more to the story than the heroism of Jackie and Branch Rickey, a continuum that the events surrounding 1947 are a part of, but far from all of. Accordingly, Robinson and Rickey are characters in, but not the centerpieces of, this story about race and baseball. There were thriving Negro and Latin leagues in the US and the Caribbean before the major leagues were integrated. Those communities provided team owners, supporting businesses, stadiums, restaurants, hotels, radio, newspaper coverage and much more. These institutions were integral to the health and identity of the local communities. Ruck fills us in on this world and its lively characters along with some relevant bits of social history. When the majors began to let non-white players in, those leagues withered away in short order. Along with them went those businesses, subcultures and meaningful places in the world for a lot of people. While much was gained by integrating the major leagues, valuable things were lost in the process. The road to progress leaves destruction in its wake. Thankfully, Ruck vividly records for us what was there before that sea change occurred.

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