



Cooperstown Confidential: Heroes, Rogues, and the Inside Story of the Baseball Hall of Fame

Zev Chafets

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If baseball is America's national religion, then the Hall of Fame is its High Church. Being named among its 286 inductees makes you the closest thing our country has to an undisputed hero - even a secular saint. But the men in the Hall of Fame are no angels. Among their number are gamblers, drunks, race-baiters, at least one murderer, and perhaps the greatest collection of bona fide characters ever to be dignified by an honor of any kind.

This is the book the Hall of Fame deserves. Along with the story of the institution comes a smart, irreverent discussion of some of the great barstool questions of all time (Why did Jim Bunning make the Hall but not Mickey Lolich? How much is it worth to a player's autograph-signing career to get in? Did Ty Cobb really kill somebody?) and a fresh look at some of the Hall's most and least admirable characters. Taken in all, it amounts to a shadow history of America's Game, shown through the prism of its most sacred spot. Written with a deep love of the game and a hardened skeptic's eye, this is a book to incite both passionate conversation and a fresh appreciation of baseball as a mirror and catalyst for our nation's culture.

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