Annotated Bibliography and Videography

Articles


David Conrads's article provides a good overview of Negro Leagues baseball, including quotes from Buck O’Neil.


Books: General Histories of Baseball and the Negro Baseball Leagues


Charles Alexander’s book explores the 1930s Depression era and how professional baseball remained the “king” of American sports.

This book is a well-written chronological history of black baseball, including six hundred photographs, many of which are published for the first time.


This book traces the history and evolution of the Negro Leagues and the experiences of black players from the late nineteenth through the early twentieth century.


The author explores the background and origins of the first Negro League through its heyday and, ultimately, its demise. The book also contains information on life as a ball player off the field and the baseball scene south of the Mexican border.


This revised edition of Bill James’s bestseller features enriched histories, updated rankings, and revised assessments.


Although not widely available, this book reflects on the history of black baseball with interviews by former Negro League players.


This groundbreaking work is still one of the best histories of black baseball. It single-handedly sparked the revival of interest in the then-forgotten Negro Leagues when it was first published in 1970, and it was instrumental in causing the National Baseball Hall of Fame to begin inducting former Negro League players.


Benjamin Rader’s second edition book expands his scope to include baseball in the 1990s and its commercialization.

A collection of vintage photographs and statistical biographies of living Negro League players is featured in this book. Also included are many the Negro League players elected into the National Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, New York.


This books covers similar ground as other histories written about the Negro Leagues, but from a unique, and occasionally contentious, perspective.


This book is a good general history of black baseball, but slightly more topical in its approach to the subject.


Jules Tygiel’s book reflects on the rise of baseball in the 1850s and 1860s, including the invention of baseball statistics and its shifting geography.


In this book, G. Edward White takes a critical look at how business decisions, inspired by self-interests and nostalgia for the game, transformed baseball into the national pastime and a professional sport. The author also deconstructs popular myths on the origins of the game and its progression into an “idyllic game.”

First published in 1907, Sol White’s book provides a unique and indispensable glimpse into the world of segregated baseball in the early days, thirteen years before the formation of the first viable league of all-black teams. This reprint augments White’s short book with other early documents.

Books: Other League Histories


The author of this book documents the extraordinary history of Detroit’s first and foremost black professional baseball team, the Detroit Stars. The greatest Star of them all was Norman “Turkey” Stearnes, the brilliant longball-hitting center fielder. Stearnes established virtually all of the team’s individual and career records during his nine seasons with Detroit. Through interviews with fans, players and their relatives, and sportswriters, author Richard Bak successfully captures the intrigue and drama of the city’s parallel sports worlds—one black, one white.


This book provides a good history of one of the great Negro League teams and a realistic look at the social history of black Kansas City, in which the team thrived.


This book is a useful compendium of information on the Negro Leagues that is based on two of the field’s most prolific, imaginative, and best-known scholars. Included is a complete register of all the players: 3,400 names with positions and teams dating from before the turn of the twentieth century to the 1950s, annual rosters, in-depth histories, and more than seventy-five original photographs.


This book traces the history of The Indianapolis ABCs as charter members of the Negro National League and one of the longest-lived teams in black baseball. Winners of the World Championship in 1916, the team was one of black baseball’s most competitive. This author draws from contemporary newspaper accounts, extensive research, and player interviews to recount the rise of the ABCs and of the Negro Leagues. Team rosters, player statistics, and biographies are included.

This book explores the development of the black Hilldale Club of Philadelphia, within the context of the Negro League.


The authors of this book highlight black baseball’s leading event, the East-West All-Star Game, which was held over a period of two decades. The book contains a chapter on Gus Greenlee, the visionary owner of the Pittsburgh Crawfords, who helped to establish this national showcase that featured stars from Satchel Paige to Jackie Robinson. Also included are year-by-year commentaries and excerpts from the black press and statistics.


This unique book spotlights the work of some of the best black sportswriters, who contributed greatly to the end of segregation in major league baseball.


This book looks at the history and culture of baseball in America, including a chapter on the dynamics and ethnic exclusion of Germans, Irishmen, and African Americans during the late nineteenth century.


The is the first and only book that documents the careers of about four thousand black baseball players, whose careers spanned from the 1870s through the 1950s.
Biographies and Autobiographies


In this book, the author traces the career of the great baseball hitter known as “the black Babe Ruth.” Brashler recounts Josh Gibson’s life from the sandlots and semi-pro teams of Pittsburgh through his debut with the Homestead Grays in 1930, and to his untimely death in 1947 at the age of thirty-five.


This book explores the career of Rube Foster, a world-class pitcher, formidable manager, and brilliant administrator. This is one of the best books on Foster, the first scholarly account of his life. Foster died in 1930 and was posthumously inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1981.


This autobiography is by one of the biggest star of the Negro Leagues in the late 1930s and 1940s. Before World War II, Irvin was the Negro League owner’s choice to be the player to break the color line. This role later fell to Jackie Robinson, while Irvin was serving in the Army. Irvin became the first black player with the New York Giants in 1949 and was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1973.


While including information on Buck Leonard’s private life, this autobiography focuses more on the games played and on other players. It is a chronological account of the Homestead Grays, the teams they went up against, and the things that happened to them on the road as a member of the team. Buck Leonard vividly portrays his memories of a bygone era.

Buck O’Neil was a mainstay of the Kansas City Monarchs and played when the Negro Leagues were in their prime. He went on to spend thirty years with the Chicago Cubs, mostly as a scout, and became the first African American coach in the major leagues.


In this autobiography, Satchel Paige tells his life story in his own words. Like most celebrity autobiographies, this is not an entirely reliable book—but a worthwhile primary source nonetheless.


This is a biography of the best-known player from the Negro League era and one of the most storied American athletes of all time.


This is a biography of the legendary slugger Josh Gibson, who many consider to be the greatest all-around player in the Negro Leagues and one of the greatest hitters of his era.


While not one of the great stars of black baseball, Robinson played for some great teams, caught many games for the legendary Satchel Paige, and has put his recollections together into a very enjoyable memoir.


This book explores the life of Moses Fleetwood Walker, the first African American to play baseball on a major league team before the Jim Crow laws of the late nineteenth century. His life demonstrates both the devastation of racism and the role of baseball as a symbol of the nation. Being part white, Walker experienced discrimination from white teammates and opponents despite his athletic skills and accomplishments as an author, inventor, civil rights activist, and entrepreneur.
Books: Oral Histories


The author of this book writes about the pioneers of the Negro Leagues, featuring short biographies of twenty-five of its most outstanding players.


In this book, the author explores invaluable interviews conducted with eighteen former Negro League figures, almost all of whom are now long deceased, such as Cool Papa Bell, Buck Leonard, Willie Wells, and Mrs. Effa Manley.


Following up on his 1998 publication, the author interviews another sixty-six people who played from the 1920s, when the Negro National League was formed, to the 1950s. He includes rare photographs and available statistics, and he notes that many of these stories are all that remain of the era.


This book enlightens the reader about many African American ballplayers, both stars and journeymen, who have largely been forgotten. These fifty-two players reminisce about the Negro Leagues, from the great teams and players to the conditions they faced in the South under Jim Crow laws.
Books: Jackie Robinson

Because of the large number of books written about Jackie Robinson, this section contains a selection of these publications for adult readers.


This author’s biography of Jackie Robinson offers an intimate look at one of the most well-known American figures in history. Drawing heavily on never-before-seen personal documents, Rampersad gives readers glimpses of this complex man and his compelling story, from his birth in Georgia to his stardom in baseball and his work in the Civil Rights movement.


Originally published in 1972, the year Robinson died, this autobiography recalls his early years and influences at the University of California-Los Angeles, his time in the Army during World War II, and the challenges he faced during the Jim Crow era. Robinson further recalls his frustrations, on and off the field, with the Negro Leagues and that famous day when he became Branch Rickey’s “noble experiment” by integrating baseball. This edition includes a new introduction by Hank Aaron.


In this book, renowned broadcaster Scott Simon brings his passion for baseball and civil rights to this crucial moment in history when racial segregation was morally questioned in the United States. The author captures the drama of Robinson's first year in baseball, tracing his journey from Rookie of the Year, the award that now bears Robinson's name.


Re-released on the fiftieth anniversary of Jackie Robinson’s historical entrance into major league baseball, the author offers a new afterword in which he addresses the mythology surrounding Robinson’s achievement. Additionally, Tygiel explores Robinson’s effect on baseball and other sports and the enduring legacy that he left for African Americans and American society.
Written from a scholarly perspective, Jules Tygiel focuses on the broader cultural scene that surrounds the game of baseball, and how developments in the game reflect American society and the ways in which our nation has changed over time. Tygiel examines the history of blacks in baseball, and he analyzes what baseball history has to offer—how it should be written, the intersection of television and baseball, and a reflection on the current state of the game.

Published in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of Robinson’s first appearance as a Brooklyn Dodger, this book contains a series of essays written by the baseball player’s contemporaries, reflecting on his life and career.

*Books: Children (Ages 5–8)*


Winner of the Coretta Scott King Award, this children’s book takes an interesting look at the Negro baseball leagues during the 1940s with a sincere story of a young boy’s love of the violin and his father’s struggle in coaching “the worst team” in the league.


To be released in 2004, this book is written in simple text with photographs that introduce the life of Jackie Robinson, the great African American athlete who broke the color barrier in major league baseball during the 1940s.


This book describes the racial prejudice experienced by Jackie Robinson when he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers and became the first black player in major league baseball. It also details the acceptance and support he received from his white teammate Pee Wee Reese.

This biography tells the story of Jackie Robinson, who broke the color barrier in major league baseball when he became the first black ball player for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.

**Books: Children (Ages 9–12)**


This book is a biography of Josh Gibson, considered to be the greatest hitter in the history of the Negro Leagues.


The author of this book traces the history of black baseball from approximately 1890 to 1947, from the ban on blacks in major league baseball through the creation of the Negro Leagues and their ultimate demise. The book is also illustrated with historical photos.


This book is a photo essay that presents the history of the Negro baseball leagues, a separate organization of baseball in the first half of the twentieth century featuring those kept from playing in the major leagues due to their race.


This book examines the life of Jackie Robinson, a talented black athlete who broke the color barrier in major league baseball by joining the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.


This book is a biography of Jackie Robinson’s distinguished baseball career. The book is part of a series highlighting individuals’ achievements, demonstrating qualities for young readers. The series also thoughtfully documents the extreme pressures of
segregation and prejudice, while emphasizing the positive efforts and successes of each person.


This book looks at the remarkable achievements by baseball players of the Negro Leagues despite enduring hostile conditions.


This book traces the history of the Negro Leagues that evolved due to segregation in professional baseball, and the experiences of black players from the late nineteenth through the early twentieth century.


In this book, the author takes a unique look at the social experiences of blacks in mid-twentieth-century America. The book’s character, Joe Stoshack, travels back in time with the help of old baseball cards to meet Jackie Robinson, one of the greatest black players in the major leagues. In the process, Joe unexpectedly changes race, forever changing his view of history and his definition of courage.


This book surveys the life and career of the Negro Leagues’ pitching phenomenon and the first Negro Leagues baseball player to be inducted in the National Baseball Hall of Fame.


Winner of the Coretta Scott King Honor Book in 1995, this book traces the history of baseball in the Negro Leagues and its great heroes including, Monte Irwin, Buck Leonard, and Cool Papa Bell. This book is also appropriate for middle school readers.


This fictional account of teenager Biddy Owens’s 1948 journal about working for the Birmingham Black Barons explores the games and the players, racism the team faced from New Orleans to Chicago, and his family’s resistance to him becoming a professional baseball player. It includes a historical note about the evolution of the Negro Leagues.


This fictional story addresses the realities of discrimination and prejudices and how baseball was able to bring people together.


This novel for young readers follows eleven-year-old Jason, who discovers that the janitor of an elementary school in Michigan is a former star pitcher of the Negro Leagues. Ultimately, young Jason helps the former baseball player to coach a Little League team.


This book is a fictional account of eleven-year-old Thomas, who talks his grandfather into driving them across Florida to meet the legendary black baseball player of the Birmingham Black Barons and the Kansas City Monarchs who can remember everything about the baseball greats of the Negro Leagues.


The author focuses on the role of determination in the success of Jackie Robinson, who broke the race barrier by joining the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.

**Books: Young Adult**


This book is part of a series that covers various aspects of black history and the black experience, from ancient civilizations to today's African American social and political movements. In this book, the development of segregation in professional baseball and the various attempts to break the color line, culminating in Jackie Robinson's joining
the Brooklyn Dodgers, is recounted. Included is a chronology, a bibliography, and an index.


The author of this book depicts the 1930s and 1940s, one of the most important eras in the context of African American history. Not since U.S. slavery ended in 1865 did the destiny of America’s blacks change so radically and so fast.


Winner of the Coretta Scott King Honor Book in 1995, this book traces the history of baseball in the Negro Leagues and its great heroes, including Monte Irwin, Buck Leonard, and Cool Papa Bell. This book is also appropriate for middle school readers.


This book presents the history of black baseball leagues that flourished during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, showcasing the talents of such superstars as Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, Cool Papa Bell, and Buck Leonard.


In this book, the author describes the life and times of the National Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher who gained widespread recognition in the Negro Leagues before becoming the first black pitcher in the American League.
Videography

Annotated list. Materials accompanying the exhibition are marked with an asterisk (*).


Aired on station WFYI in Indianapolis, this video looks at the home of the Indianapolis ABCs, who won the Colored World Championship in 1916. The narrator also looks at their contributions to the Negro National League.


Produced in conjunction with the Festival of the Arts in Sport in Colorado Springs, Colorado, this video features a presentation and question/answer session with John “Buck” O’Neil, legendary player for the Kansas City Monarchs and chairman of the board of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Missouri.


Produced by Ken Burns and narrated by John Chancellor, this extensive video compilation covers the entire history of baseball in the United States, including the period of the Negro Leagues and its greatest stars and history makers. The _Fifth Inning. Shadow Ball: 1930–1940_ videocassette accompanies the exhibition.


Originally broadcast on September 26, 1994, as an episode of the television program _Nightline_, Ted Koppel interviews Ken Burns and Buck O’Neil about African Americans in baseball and the Negro Leagues.

Starring Richard Pryor, Billy Dee Williams, and James Earl Jones, this lighthearted comedy follows the adventures of a black baseball team that barnstorms around the country after it breaks away from the Negro National League. Based on the novel of the same name.


This documentary video looks at the history of the Birmingham's Black Barons, the first film ever produced about this lesser known team. Included are oral histories of a team that was the focal point of an entire community's social activities for nearly a half-century.


This documentary tells the story of the Negro Leagues, focusing mostly on the Memphis Red Sox’s relationship with the power politics, race relations, and Blues culture of the mid-century in the South. The Memphis Red Sox was one of the premiere teams in the Negro Leagues.

**The Boys in the Field.** 57 min. UNC Center for Public Television, 1980. Videocassette.

This documentary film discusses the history and current status of African Americans in professional baseball through interviews with black and white players, managers, and owners. Topics include: the Negro Leagues; the accomplishments of Jackie Robinson, Hank Aaron, and Frank Robinson; the scouting system; and advancement opportunities.


This dramatization depicts how Jackie Robinson was court-martialed for refusing to move to a seat in the back of an Army bus.

Starring Lou Gossett, this film depicts the life and pitching career of Satchel Paige, and how he finally gets his chance to play in the major leagues dominated by white baseball players.


Written by August Wilson at Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, this historical drama depicts the life of Troy Maxson, former baseball player with the Negro Leagues. Now a garbage collector, Maxson feels that his life has been hemmed in by others. As the story unfolds, however, he is forced to confront his own role in the building of fences in his life.


In this documentary video, Ernie Banks narrates the history of African Americans in baseball. The video covers the infancy of the Negro National League in 1920 through its heyday in the 1930s and 1940s. It also covers the appearance of the first black player in the major leagues up to the emergence of today’s superstars. Included are interviews with Hank Aaron, Lou Brock, Whitey Herzog, Monte Irvin, and Ozzie Smith.


In this documentary, Peter Graves reviews the life of Jackie Robinson, the American hero whose accomplishments personified a new definition of the phrase “All-Star.”


This documentary video looks at the history of the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro Leagues, a team that sent more black players to the major leagues than any other team. Discussed are Leroy “Satchel” Paige and Jackie Robinson, as well as other notable African American players.

In this video, the history of the Negro Leagues is discussed as well as the great players of the time. Emphasis is placed on the Pennsylvania teams, the Homestead Grays and the Pittsburg Crawfords.


In this short documentary video, baseball player Willie Grace is interviewed about his early years in the Negro Leagues.


Narrated by actor Don Johnson, this short documentary video briefly covers the history of the Negro Leagues and is narrated by Don Johnson.


In this video, storyteller Leslie Perry presents a story for elementary school children about the Negro Leagues. It is followed by a question-and-answer period with Perry, authors John Holway and Phil Dixon, and Negro League players Sammie Haynes and Merle Porter.


Narrator Paul Winfield recounts a number of unrecognized athletes, as well as some better-known players, such as Jackie Robinson and Roy Campanella, who were hired by the major leagues. The video also traces the history of the Negro Leagues through photographs, film footage, and interviews with the ball players. Discussions are also included on the era when major leagues in the United States refused to hire black athletes.


This video evaluates the societal contributions of Joe Louis, Jesse Owens, Jackie Robinson, Toni Stone, Willie O’Ree, and Arthur Ashe—sports icons who broke the color barrier in professional sports, paving the way for later Civil Rights victories.
Safe at Home. 57 min. Atlanta, Georgia, WPBA-TV, 1993. Videocassette.

This documentary video tells the story of the Negro Leagues and the men who were barred from the major leagues because of the color line. Included is vintage photographs, film clips, and interviews. Much of the video focuses on the Negro Southern League and its importance to the black community.

Soul of the Game. 97 min. HBO Pictures, 1996. Videocassette.

This film drama depicts the final year of baseball’s Negro Leagues and the events leading up to the integration of the major leagues in 1945. The film explores the talent and ambition of two of the Negro League’s star players, Satchel Paige and Josh Gibson.


This video chronicles the history of the black baseball leagues and Jackie Robinson’s pioneering role in integrating professional baseball. The video also contains rare historical footage and interviews with black baseball greats.


This video presents a history of the Negro Leagues and biographies of some of its most notable players.

Compiled by the education department of ExhibitsUSA