

**AMERICAN JEWS AND AMERICA'S GAME: Voices of a Growing Legacy in Baseball**

**Author Larry Ruttman Examines the Jewish Cultural Connection to Baseball as Players, Executives, Journalists and Fans Open Up with Revealing Insight**

***Commissioner Bud Selig Provides a Foreword and a Chapter***

An important new oral history examining the relationship between American Jews and their love of the national pastime has been published by University of Nebraska Press - **American Jews and America's Game: Voices of a Growing Legacy in Baseball**. (560 pages hardcover, 75 photographs, \$34.95)

The book includes a foreword and a chapter by and about Commissioner Bud Selig.

The author, Massachusetts attorney Larry Ruttman, spent more than five years interviewing a wide range of figures who have experienced the game from within and without. The individual chapters examine each participant's life around the game, their Jewish heritage and its impact in their lives. In the end, the connection between Jews - many of whom assimilated into 20<sup>th</sup> century American society through the game - and the sport - whose rules, records, literature, art, trivia, anecdotes and memorabilia form such a strong bond, is thoroughly examined. In so doing, the experience generally of Jews in America over most of the last century and into our own is anecdotally examined and clarified.

Among the fascinating interview subjects are Selig, the late Marvin Miller, and Donald Fehr, who butted heads at labor negotiations, but who share a common heritage; players Kevin Youkilis, Ian Kinsler, Ken Holtzman, Al Rosen, Art Shamsky, Gabe Kapler,, Ron Blomberg, Ken Holtzman, Shawn Green, and Brad Ausmus; club owners and executives Jerry Reinsdorf (Chicago White Sox), Stuart Sternberg (Tampa Bay Rays), Randy Levine (New York Yankees), Theo Epstein (Chicago Cubs), and Mark Shapiro (Cleveland Indians); sportswriters Murray Chass, Ira Berkow, Roger Kahn, and Ross Newhan (along with his "Jews for Jesus" practicing son, former player David Newhan), and fans like attorney Alan Dershowitz and former U.S. Congressman Barney Frank.

The life stories of these and many others, on and off the field, have been compiled from nearly fifty in-depth interviews and arranged by decade in this edifying and entertaining work of oral and cultural history. In **American Jews and America's Game**, each person talks about growing up Jewish and dealing with anti-Semitism, assimilation, intermarriage, observance, viability, Israel and other hot-button Jewish issues. Each tells about being in the midst of the colorful pantheon of players who, over the past 75 years or more, have made baseball what it is. Their stories tell, as no previous book has, the history of the larger-than-life role of Jews in America's pastime.

Looming large over the stories are the first Jews inducted into the Hall of Fame who largely defined their own eras in terms of Jews on the field - Hank Greenberg and Sandy Koufax. The game today features 12-15 different Jewish players each season.

Larry Ruttman, who began attending games in Braves Field and Fenway Park before World War II, is the author of *Voices of Brookline*, a national finalist for the Award of Merit of the American Association of State and Local History. He has practiced law in Boston for more than 50 years and produces and hosts a television interview show in his hometown of Brookline, MA.

Ruttman was recently elected a Fellow of the renowned Massachusetts Historical Society, founded in 1791 and having had such Fellows as John Adams, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and John F. Kennedy. Larry was elected at the same time as his mentor, Professor and Jewish historian

Jonathan Sarna of Brandeis University, and he was sponsored by Fellow Daniel Coquillette, eminent historian and former Boston College Law School Dean.

A wealth of material about the book can be read, heard, and seen at its website:  
[Americanjewsandamericasgame.com](http://Americanjewsandamericasgame.com)

*Contact: Marty Appel Public Relations 212.245.1772 (AppelPR@gmail.com)*