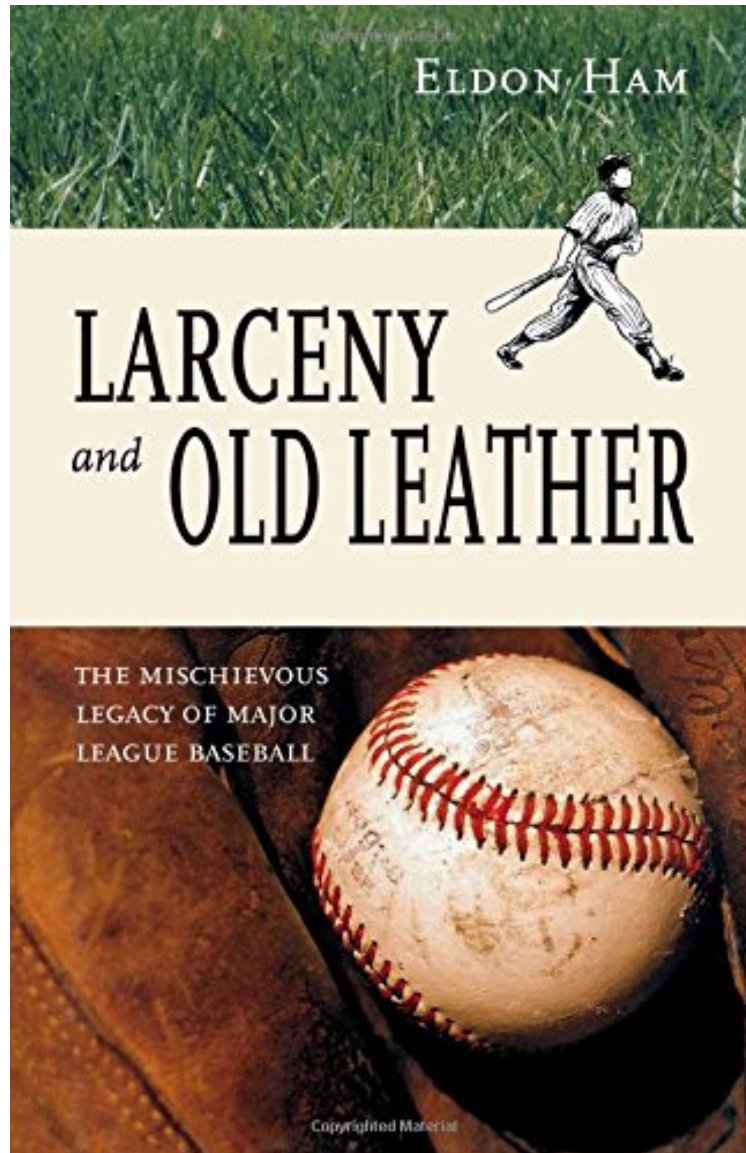


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Larceny and Old Leather: The Mischievous Legacy of Major League

Eldon L. Ham

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Eldon L. Ham : Larceny and Old Leather: The Mischievous Legacy of Major League before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Larceny and Old Leather: The Mischievous Legacy of Major League:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Larceny by the Author!!!!By William a BourneToo bad Mr Ham

didn't research his book. 1) Pete Gray played in 1945 before Bill Veeck owned the Browns. 2) Steeler fans, he gives credit for the "Immaculate Reception" to the Raiders and doesn't even mention the Steelers 3) The Roger Maris Asterisk - Mr. Ham there never was an asterisk! 4) Your Softball treatment of the lying Pete Rose is wrong. All this and I only read 1/3 of the book before I became disgusted with all the errors. Don't waste your money. I am not impressed with the authors not verifying all the facts. I guess the title fits his writing. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good Read-Baseball Fan or NotBy William H. ThiebenI've followed Baseball for nearly 50 years and I truly believe that colorful Owner Bill Veeck (obviously addressed in a work of this type) would have loved this book. I did too.As I began reading, I found myself smiling almost immediately. Author Ham describes a time in baseball's history when only one individual officiated the game. Unable to see everything, all the time, the lone "ump" was often at the disadvantage and prone to miss such antics as fielders trying to impede the base-runners! I could not help but flash on the image of the Bad News Bears player attempting a tackle and being drug along the base path by the enemy base-runner.In my opinion, this book is like the film---one need not be a sports fan to truly enjoy the experience. There are a lot of smiles and chuckles in these accounts of mischief throughout the history of our National Pastime. A history that is so often reflective of the America of that day.From "hidden ball tricks" to sign stealing to the use of the good old "spitter" there is wealth of stories and revelations that are interesting and informative.At 57, I recall experiencing some of these events, others I knew only from books and films and still others I had not known until now.There are some deeper currents here too. While there is a great deal of fun and some relatively light weight sinning revealed in the stories told by Mr. Ham, there is a line between hi-jinks and heavy stuff.The author makes clear that one cannot "grin and wink" at all of baseball's transgressions. The steroids issue saddens anyone who cares at all about Baseball. And while I was amused by the account of "Chief Tokohoma" it was also a reminder that racism one tainted the baseball world is another sad era.But, while this book acknowledges these issues, the great majority of the work celebrates the type of behavior that informs and entertains with good humor.A dust jacket comment suggests that Mr. Ham is a "great storyteller". I agree

Larceny and Old Leather is baseball at its best and worst-a unique, informative and often humorous glimpse into some of the secret and not-so-secret dirty tricks, thefts, vaudeville pranks and just plain cheating that dot the long, colourful history of America's most beloved game. The storied shenanigans of baseball include many kinds of mischief in a century-old legacy of corked bats, spitballs, grease balls, hidden balls, outright spying where, it seems, almost everything can be stolen - from bases and signs to games, batting titles, court decisions and much more. Larceny and Old Leather shows how baseball fans have a considerable tolerance for the bizarre, not to say devious, behaviour of their heroes: from the nasty Ty Cobb to Roger Maris (asterisk and all) and Pete Rose's memory lapses. (Listen, nobody's perfect.) The inclination of baseball fans to cut some slack for their heroes makes them unique among sports aficionados. Here is a book for both seasoned baseball fans and neophytes who'd like to get a look at the game that evolved into an industry-one with unique perks in the world of sports or, for that matter, in any other universe of commerce.

From Publishers WeeklyChronicling baseball's history from the early 20th century through the present, Ham (The 100 Greatest Sports Blunders of All Time) takes a close look at all aspects of the sport to find instances where the players, management and even the umpires weren't on the up-and-up. The author, a lawyer by trade, presents a strong case that baseball has had a naughty side since its inception, when the game's anti-Victorian "tobacco-spitting, sweaty, sometimes wayward players" were seen as a throwback to the "American industrialists, adventurers, and entrepreneurs" who built the nation. The book presents a wide range of examples of baseball's "larcenous side," although they're sometimes haphazardly organized. They vary from observations on the game's psychological aspects ("the art of pitching flows... from one common principle: deception") to some of its humorous moments (minor leaguer Bill Bresnahan firing a "red-seamed potato down to third" base, a trick that later got him fired) to its unforgivable past (the game's exclusion of black players until 1947). Most of these stories have been told before, but Ham does an admirable job collecting them into one volume for trivia-obsessed baseball fans. (Apr.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistIt is a testament to baseball's greatness that it survives the flagrant incompetence and chicanery of those who run it. Fans will know too well the tales of "mischief" that sports lawyer Ham relates here: the Pete Rose gambling controversy, New York Giant Bobby Thompson's possibly tainted home run in the National League pennant play-off game against Brooklyn in 1951, Sammy Sosa's corked bat (2003), baseball's unlawful reserve clause, the curses on the Cubs and Red Sox, the rogues' gallery of spitballers who have thrived in the game, and many more. Ham's strength is purely as a legal analyst of these issues, not as a baseball historian--he wrongly attributes baseball's record 56-game hitting streak to Lou Gehrig, not Joe DiMaggio, for example. And, stunningly, he only mentions in passing the time-bomb issue of performance-enhancing drugs in baseball. Still, hard-core baseball fans, eternally forgiving, will find something of worth here. Alan MooresCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved "Larceny and Old Leather is a unique, informative, and often humorous glimpse into some of the secret and not-so-secret dirty tricks, thefts,

vaudeville pranks and just plain cheating that dot the long, colorful history of America's most beloved game." —
Chicago Tribune