



Don't Kill The Umpire: How Baseball Escaped Its Violent Past

Peter Morris

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If baseball is sometimes called the “pastoral game,” is it because it was once played in pastures? Maybe, but more telling is its attitude toward violence, which plays a peculiar, sublimated role in the sport. In stark contrast to the play of football and other widely appreciated American games like basketball and ice hockey, baseball players are schooled to take their aggressions out on the ball, not on other players. Yet the game was not always one of quiet courage played by gentlemen, as Peter Morris shows in this fascinating historical profile of the rise and fall of violence as a part of our national pastime.

"Don't Kill The Umpire" is published by Now and Then Reader, Digital Publishers of Serious Nonfiction Books and Essays. Now and Then concentrates on writings that are historically based but also have relevance for today and publishes a new Kindle book each week.

Peter Morris has established himself as one of the foremost historians of early baseball in America. His *A Game of Inches: The Stories Behind the Innovations That Shaped Baseball* (2006) was the first book ever to win both the coveted Seymour Medal of the Society for American Baseball Research and the Casey Award from *Spitball* magazine as the best baseball book of the year. Mr. Morris has also written *Catcher*, a study of how the man behind the plate became an American folk hero; *But Didn't We Have Fun?*, an informal history of baseball's pioneer era; *Level Playing Fields*, about the early days of groundskeeping; and *Baseball Fever*, the story of early baseball in Michigan. Along with Bill James, Lawrence Ritter, and five others, he was among the first group of baseball researchers to be honored by the Society for American Baseball Research with the Henry Chadwick Award for lifetime achievement. A former national and international Scrabble champion, he lives in Haslett, Michigan.

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