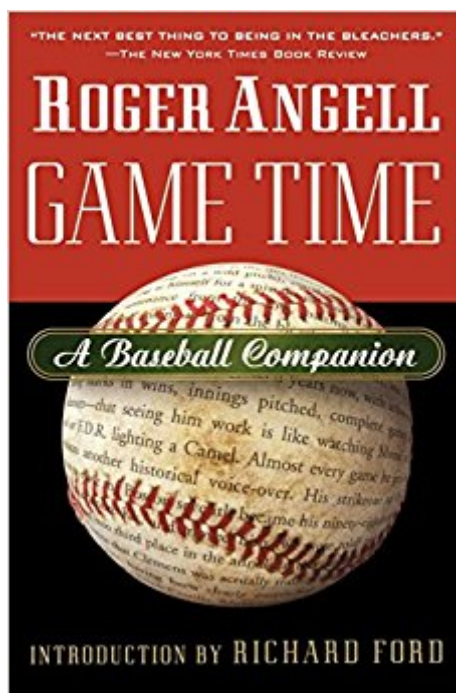


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# Game Time: A Baseball Companion



## Synopsis

Roger Angell has been writing about baseball for more than forty years . . . and for my money he's the best there is at it," says novelist Richard Ford in his introduction to *Game Time*. Angell's famous explorations of the summer game are built on acute observation and joyful participation, conveyed in a prose style as admired and envied as Ted Williams's swing. Angell on Fenway Park in September, on Bob Gibson brooding in retirement, on Tom Seaver in mid-windup, on the abysmal early and recent Mets, on a scout at work in backcountry Kentucky, on Pete Rose and Willie Mays and Pedro Martinez, on the astounding Barry Bonds at Pac Bell Park, and more, carry us through the arc of the season with refreshed understanding and pleasure. This collection represents Angell's best writings, from spring training in 1962 to the explosive World Series of 2002.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In *Game Time*, Roger Angell's essays illuminate baseball's heart and history in careful prose that New Yorker readers have grown to anticipate each spring. The collection spans the forty-plus years of Angell's baseball writing career and includes many of his favorite pieces as well as never-before-published material. Rather than stringing the selections together chronologically, the book's editor, Steve Kettmann, groups them by the three seasons of the game's spring, summer, fall. The structure works well to expose the breadth and depth of Angell's writing across the years. As Richard Ford promises in the introduction, "It is by getting those . . . baseball essentials (strategies, nuances, protocols) down onto the page, and cementing the hard foundation without which sportswriting can't earn your time away from

the game itself, that Angell has made his bones." The downside of this approach, however, is that some selections feel dated or misplaced for readers who did not live through the seasons in question. Many of the rookies scouted or players traded have long since faded into the obscurity. And for essays like "Distance," which profiles pitcher Bob Gibson, placement in "Summer" seems forced, the piece beginning as it does with recollection of Gibson's seventeen strikeout record set in the 1968 World Series. But these are faults to be expected in a collection that represent the vastness of Angell's contribution to baseball. In Angell, baseball is blessed to have found its perfect fan: literate, humble, and always eager for spring.--Patrick O'Kelley --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Baseball, a linear game with undulating peaks and valleys, has always attracted more writers than other sports, and of those many writers few have captured the essence of the game better than Angell. This collection of new and previously published writings edited by sports writer Kettmann is a testament to Angell's unquestioned writing skills and love of the game. Chronicling unlikely people and places—a pitcher uneasy in his retirement, a struggling former star, Fenway Park from the bowels of the right-field grandstand, the faceless scout—Angell often eschews the stories in the glare of the spotlight to examine the core values of the national pastime. Like a switch hitter, he deftly commands poetic descriptions (describing Dan Quisenberry's delivery: "a swallowlike, harmless-looking thing that rose abruptly... then changed its mind") and insightful analysis (on records being broken: "this erosion of the game's most famous fixed numbers... makes baseball statistics seem alive and urgent") to create essays that rise and fall like the very action on the field. Unlike many baseball writers who remember watching the likes of Lou Gehrig play at the Polo Grounds, Angell is able to convey his love for the game of yesteryear while still appreciating the stars, achievements and intricacies of the modern game. He manages all of this by not hiding his passion for the sport under the guise of journalistic detachment. On the contrary, he wears his heart on his sleeve, rooting his way through this collection of poignant and personal slices of Americana. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Roger Angell has been writing essays in *The New Yorker* since 1960 and originally was a fiction essayist extraordinaire. He first started writing about baseball in *The New Yorker* in about 1962. This compilation of essays tells the complete story from many different entities and factions of modern day baseball. The Author weaves specific tales from eclectic viewpoints. Some of these

viewpoints are from the memories of people such as Smokey Joe Wood in "The Web of the Game" to Bob Gibson in "Distance". Also specific teams are a mainstay of Mr. Angell such as the New York Giants, New York Yankees, New York Mets, and Boston Red Sox and yes even the Cleveland Indians. All these stories dwell on the people and the personalities of the game of baseball. It's as if Mr. Angell is probing into the heart of the game as if we were there asking the questions and trying to find out the finer nuances of the game. Angell possesses the platinum pen of the best baseball writer of all. His stories are timeless, so much so that I could read them over and over. They cover the entire modern day era of baseball as we know it today. Truly priceless! 9 Stars, it's that good!!!

Re-reading Roger Angell is always a pleasure for a baseball fan. It reminds me of my pretty long interest (from the 50's) as I still recognize the greats of the past decades. Reading Angell from the pieces from the 80's is almost demoralizing as they seem like yesterday or last April! If you have never read Angell and are a baseball fan, get with him for a few hours. After all he's now in the BHoF.

Well written and fun to read. Angell has a great feeling for baseball and the little things that make it the National Pasttime. I highly recommend this book for anyone who enjoys baseball.

This is a good collection of Angell's essays. Some of them make slow reading, but it is good for the educated fan. It is the kind of book you would dip into on different topics, not something you'd likely read from beginning to end. It doesn't flow but that's the case with collected essays. If you like Angell, you'll like it.

Angell's clean prose underlines and reflects his clear love and understanding of the game. I'm pretty sure I read every word of this compendium either as they appeared in The New Yorker or when they were published in book form. It's a wonderful bedside reader.

Enjoyable baseball book. This is a greatest hits collection of some of Roger Angell's baseball work that was mostly published in the New Yorker. Mr. Angell was recently inducted to the writer's wing at the Baseball Hall of Fame. It's a really enjoyable read because of the short story format. Great book for vacation or travel since you pick it up and put it down. I would agree that it is not his best of all time but very good. Summer Game and Five Seasons are two of the best baseball books ever written, but this is quite enjoyable.

The best baseball writer at his very best.

Asking fans of baseball and writing to conjure up which Roger Angell book is the best introduction to his body of work is like asking an art buff to pick out the definitive Da Vinci painting: There is no one answer. "Game Time" is not THE Angell book for the ages, but it IS the most representative. There are actually two Angell collections out there, this volume and "Once More Around the Park." You can't go wrong with either, but I'm giving "Game Time" the five-star treatment because it contains 20 full Angell pieces plus 9 "Takes" of shorter baseball stories from his prior published works while "Once More..." has 13 full pieces plus excerpts from 7 others. In both books, you'll find stories spanning four decades from the early 60's to the early 00's. While the player and manager names change over time, the terrific literary grace never does. You don't usually think of the New Yorker magazine when you think of sports, but it's been the perfect venue for a guy who is getting his (long past) dues at Cooperstown this summer. I'm one of those who think Roger Angell is the greatest baseball writer of our time and you could make a valid argument that he's the best ever. I can't think of another author who has been able to incorporate an appreciation of larger culture into writings about a sport as well as Angell does...perhaps the late cricket writer Neville Cardus, every bit the wordsmith Angell has been. If you've never read Angell's work, this is a good place to start and you can continue on to "Once More..." where some pieces (like "Web of the Game" and "Distance") are repeated, but not many. The best thing to do, of course, is to buy all four original collections of stories ("The Summer Game," "Five Seasons," "Late Innings" and "Season Ticket") that this book and "Once More..." draw from, and the beauty is that you can find used copies of any Angell book online for pennies on the dollar (including this one). But just one Angell book for now? Try this one.

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