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Write a review. Apr 20, 2017 Will Byrnes rated it really liked it.

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In Smart Baseball, Keith
Law deftly answers
everything you always
wanted to know about
sabermetrics but were
too afraid to ask. Its
final three chapters

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probably each deserve their own books, and hopefully Law will oblige. I will think of Joey Bagodnuts often.”

-- Molly Knight. Smart Baseball can help any baseball follower evolve along with the game. It provides an insightful and thorough look at how this great game is being viewed now and into the future.

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Keith Law's

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statistics such as batting
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baseball, proving why some of the most trusted stats are surprisingly wrong, explaining what numbers actually work, and exploring what the rise of Big Data means for the future of the sport. For decades, statistics such as batting average, saves recorded, and pitching won-lost records have been used to measure individual

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players' and teams' potential and success. But in the past fifteen years, a revolutionary new standard of measurement—sabermetrics—has been embraced by front offices in Major League Baseball and among fantasy baseball enthusiasts. But while sabermetrics is recognized as being smarter and more

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accurate, traditionalists, including journalists, fans, and managers, stubbornly believe that the "old" way—a combination of outdated numbers and "gut" instinct—is still the best way. Baseball, they argue, should be run by people, not by numbers. In this informative and provocative book, the

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Renowned ESPN analyst and senior baseball writer demolishes a century's worth of accepted wisdom, making the definitive case against the long-established view. Armed with concrete examples from different eras of baseball history, logic, a little math, and lively commentary, he shows how the allegiance to

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these numbers—dating back to the beginning of the professional game—is firmly rooted not in accuracy or success, but in baseball's irrational adherence to tradition.

While Law goes sacred cows, from clutch performers to RBIs to the infamous save rule, he also demystifies sabermetrics, explaining

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what these "new" numbers really are and why they're vital. He also considers the game's future, examining how teams are using Data—from PhDs to sophisticated statistical databases—to build future rosters; changes that will transform baseball and all of professional sports.

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In this groundbreaking book, Keith Law, baseball writer for The Athletic and author of the acclaimed *Smart Baseball*, offers an era-spanning dissection of some of the best and worst decisions in modern baseball, explaining what motivated them, what can be learned from

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them, and how their legacy has shaped the game. For years, Daniel Kahneman's iconic work of behavioral science *Thinking Fast and Slow* has been required reading in front offices across Major League Baseball. In this smart, incisive, and eye-opening book, Keith Law applies

Kahneman's ideas

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about decision making
to the game itself.

Baseball is a sport of
decisions. Some are so
small and routine they
become the building
blocks of the game
itself—what pitch to
throw or when to swing
away. Others are so
huge they dictate the
future of

franchises—when to
make a strategic trade

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For a chance to win now, or when to offer a millions and a multi-year contract for a twenty-eight-year-old star. These decisions have long shaped the behavior of players, managers, and entire franchises. But as those choices have become more complex and data-driven, knowing what's behind them has become

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key to understanding the sport. This fascinating, revelatory work

explores as never before the essential question:

What were they thinking? Combining behavioral science and interviews with

executives, managers, and players, Keith Law analyzes baseball's

biggest decision making successes and failures,

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Looking at how gambles and calculated risks of all sizes and scales have shaped the sport, and how the game's ongoing data revolution is rewriting decades of accepted decision making. In the process, he explores questions that have long been debated, from whether throwing harder really increases a player's risk

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of serious injury to whether teams actually “overvalue” trade prospects. Bringing his analytical and combative style to some of baseball’s longest running debates, Law deepens our knowledge of the sport in this entertaining work that is both fun and deeply informative.

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While baseball is traditionally perceived as a game to be played, enjoyed, and reported from a masculine perspective, it has long been beloved among women—more so than any other spectator sport. Breaking into Baseball: Women and the National Pastime upends baseball's accepted history to at

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last reveal just how involved women are, and have always been, in the American game.

Through provocative interviews and deft research, Jean Hastings Ardell devotes a detailed chapter to each of the seven ways women participate in the game—from the stands as fans, on the field as professionals or as

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amateur players, behind the plate as umpires, in the front office as executives, in the press box as sportswriters and reporters, or in the shadows as Baseball Annies. From these revelatory vantage points, Ardell invites overdue appreciation for the affinity and talent women bring to baseball at all levels and shows

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us our national game anew. From its ancient origins in spring fertility rituals through contemporary marketing efforts geared toward an ever-increasing female fan base, baseball has always had a feminine side, and generations of women have sought—and been sought after—to participate in the sport, even when

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doing so meant challenging the cultural mores of their era. In that regard, women have been breaking into baseball from the very beginning. But recent decades have witnessed great strides in legitimizing women's roles on the diamond as players and umpires as well as in vital management and media

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roles. In her thoughtfully organized and engagingly written survey, Ardell offers a chance for sports enthusiasts and historians of both genders to better appreciate the storied and complex relationship women have so long shared with the game and to glimpse the future of

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women in baseball.

Breaking into Baseball is augmented by twenty-four illustrations and a foreword from Ila Borders, the first woman to play more than three seasons of men's professional baseball.

Baseball "by The Book."

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Broken up into sections (pitching, fielding, hitting), this authoritative yet fun and easy guide will help readers young and old fully understand and comprehend the statistics that are the present and future of our national pastime. We all know what a .300 hitter looks like. The same with a 20-game winner.

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Those numbers are ingrained in our brains. But do they mean as much as we think? Do we feel the same way when we hear a batter has a .390 wOBA? How about a pitcher with a 1.2 WHIP? These statistics are the future of modern baseball, and no fan should be in the dark about how these metrics apply to the

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game. In the last twenty years, an avalanche of analytics has taken over the way the game is played, managed, and assessed, but the statistics that drive the sport (metrics like wRC+, FIP, and WAR, just to name a few) read like alphabet soup to a large number of fans who still think batting average, RBIs, and wins

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are the best barometers for baseball players. In *A Fan's Guide to Baseball Analytics*, MLB.com reporter and columnist Anthony Castrovince has taken on the role as explainer to help such fans understand why the old stats don't always add up. Readers will also learn where these modern stats came from,

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what they convey, and how to use them to evaluate players of the present, past, and future.

For instance, what if we told you that when Joe DiMaggio had his famous 56-game hitting streak in 1941, helping him win the AL MVP, that there was, perhaps, someone more

deserving? In fact, the great Ted Williams

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actually had a higher
fWAR, bWAR, wRC+,
OPS, OPS+, ISO, RC . .
. well, you get the

picture. So, streak or no
streak, Williams should
have been league MVP.

An introductory course
on sabermetrics, *A
Fan's Guide to Baseball
Analytics* is an easily
digestible resource that
readers can keep turning
back to when they see a

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modern metric
referenced in today's
baseball coverage.

This smart and funny
fan's guide to baseball
explains the ins and outs
of pitching, hitting,
running, and fielding,
while offering insider
trivia and anecdotes that
will appeal to
anyone—whether you're
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potato, life-long season

ticket-holder, or a

beginner. What is the

difference between a

slider and a curveball?

At which stadium did

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an appearance? How do

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to improve their skills?

Which positions are

never played by lefties?

Why do some players

urinate on their hands?

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Combining the narrative voice and attitude of Michael Lewis with the compulsive brilliance of Schott's Miscellany, *Watching Baseball Smarter* will increase your understanding and enjoyment of the sport—no matter what your level of expertise. Features an glossary of baseball slang, an appendix of important

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baseball stats, and an appendix of uniform numbers.

An unprecedented look inside the world of baseball scouting and evaluation from two of the industry's top prospect analysts For the modern Major League team, player evaluation is a complex, multi-pronged, high-

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tech pursuit. But far from becoming obsolete in this environment—as Michael Lewis'

Moneyball once forecast—the role of the scout in today's game has evolved and even expanded. Rather than being the antithesis of a data-driven approach, scouting now represents an essential analytical component in a team's

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arsenal. Future Value is a thorough dive into baseball's changing world of talent acquisition and development, a world with its own language, methods, metrics, and madness. From rural high schools to elite amateur showcases, from the back fields of spring training to major league draft rooms, Eric

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Longenhagen and Kiley McDaniel break down the key systems and techniques used to assess talent. It's a process that has moved beyond the quintessential stopwatches and radar guns to include statistical models, countless measurable indicators, and a broader international reach.

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Practical and probing, discussing wide-ranging topics from tool grades to front office politics, this is an illuminating exploration of how to watch baseball and see the future.

Interest in Sabermetrics has increased dramatically in recent years as the need to better compare baseball

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players has intensified among managers, agents and fans, and even other players. The authors explain how traditional measures—such as Earned Run Average, Slugging Percentage, and Fielding Percentage—along with new statistics—Wins Above Average, Fielding Independent Pitching, Wins Above

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Replacement, the Equivalence Coefficient and others—define the value of players. Actual player statistics are used in developing models, while examples and exercises are provided in each chapter. This book serves as a guide for both beginners and those who wish to be successful in fantasy leagues.

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Explains how Billy Beene, the general manager of the Oakland Athletics, is using a new kind of thinking to build a successful and winning baseball team without spending enormous sums of money.

“A delight for baseball lovers” (Kirkus

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Reviews) and “one of the most significant baseball books of the year” (Bob Costas)

Ahead of the Curve uses stories from baseball’s present and past to examine why we sometimes choose ignorance over information, and how tradition can trump logic. Forget batting average. Kill the “Win.”

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Say goodbye to starting pitchers. And please, please stop bunting. MLB Network anchor and commentator Brian Kenny provides “an excellent, entertaining read for the all-around baseball fan” (Library Journal) and shows how baseball has been revolutionized—not destroyed—by analytical thinking. Most people

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who resist logical thought in baseball preach “tradition” and “respecting the game.”

But many of baseball’s traditions go back to the nineteenth century, when the pitcher’s job was to provide the batter with a ball he could hit and fielders played without gloves. Instead of fearing change, Brian Kenny wants fans to

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think critically, reject outmoded groupthink, and embrace the changes that have come with the sabermetric era.

In his entertaining and enlightening book, Kenny discusses why the pitching win-loss record, the Triple Crown, fielding errors, and so-called battling titles should be ignored.

He also points out how

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fossilized sportswriters have been electing the wrong MVP's and ignoring legitimate candidates for the Hall of Fame; why managers are hired based on their looks; and how the most important position in baseball may just be "Director of Decision Sciences." "Prepare to have your brain and your assumptions

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challenged. Guided by data and a deep love of the game, Brian Kenny takes a cutting-edge look at where baseball is and where it is going” (Tom Verducci, Sports Illustrated). Illustrated with unique anecdotes from those who have reshaped the game, Ahead of the Curve is “a great story about the game in the age of

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information and
technology” (Billy
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