

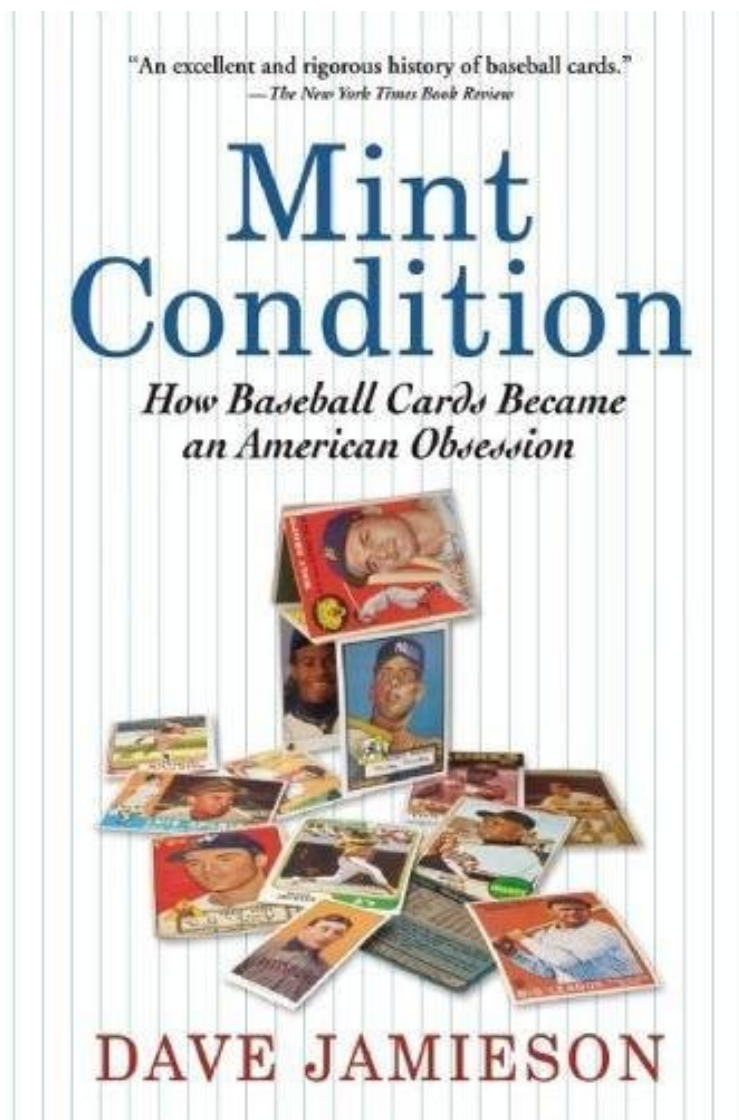
#384115 in Books Dave Jamieson 2011-04-12Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.21 x .78 x 5.76l, .61  
#File Name: 0802145329288 pagesMint Condition How Baseball Cards Became an American Obsession |

File size: 34.Mb



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(Read free) Mint Condition: How Baseball Cards Became an American Obsession

## **Mint Condition: How Baseball Cards Became an American Obsession**

**Dave Jamieson : Mint Condition: How Baseball Cards Became an American Obsession** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mint Condition: How Baseball Cards Became an American Obsession:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book is graded GEM MINT/PRISTINE 10!!!By Marlin T. CarlsonWow - if you want to be schooled in the history of baseball/trading cards from their inception: tobacco cards,

Cracker Jack cards, bubble gum cards, etc., this book will have you mesmerized! The history of cards is well described in chronological order so it provides a smooth transition from one generation to the next from vintage cards through the "Junk Wax" era to the modern day! We highly recommend you read "Mint Condition" if you enjoy the hobby and/or collect baseball cards in general. This book will not disappoint you! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Profiting From The Collector's Disease By Bill Dolworth This is a wonderful book on many different levels. I was surprised to learn that baseball cards have been in existence since the 1860s. The book explores, in a very entertaining way, the marketing of cigarettes and gum by packaging them with collectible cards; images of baseball players being by far the most popular. The author also tells fascinating stories of the men who significantly contributed to the hobby: the entrepreneurs, the collectors, the creative teams and in later years the speculators. The story of how one company became a long running monopoly in the industry and how that monopoly was broken by the head of the baseball player's union was engrossing. The chapter on a contemporary baseball card dealer who warns buyers about doctored cards, can be read in a new light, since he recently admitted to trimming the sides of the world's most famous and valuable baseball card. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Book on the Rise and Fall of Baseball Cards By Jeffrey Sandoz I, like the author, jumped into the card-collecting craze in the 80s and 90s (the junk wax era of cards). And I was hoping that my card collection would become valuable for me in the future. However, years later, I was shocked when it was revealed to me that my collection was virtually worthless. And this book finally explained to me just why this happened. This book was fun, easy to read, and very entertaining.

When award-winning journalist Dave Jamieson rediscovered his childhood baseball card collection he figured that now was the time to cash in on his investments. But when he tried the card shops, they were nearly all gone, closed forever. eBay was no help, either. Baseball cards were selling for next to nothing. What had happened? In *Mint Condition*, the first comprehensive history of this American icon, Jamieson finds the answers and much more. In the years after the Civil War, tobacco companies started slipping baseball cards into cigarette packs as collectors items, launching a massive advertising war. Before long, the cards were wagging the cigarettes. In the 1930s, baseball cards helped gum and candy makers survive the Great Depression, and kept children in touch with the game. After World War II, Topps Chewing Gum Inc. built itself into an American icon, hooking a generation of baby boomers on bubble gum and baseball cards. In the 1960s, royalties from cards helped to transform the players union into one of the country's most powerful, dramatically altering the business of the game. And in the '80s and '90s, cards went through a spectacular bubble, becoming a billion-dollar-a-year industry before all but disappearing. Brimming with colorful characters, this is a rollicking, century-spanning, and extremely entertaining history.

From *Publishers Weekly* It's a form of megalomania, of course, one famous card collector once said of his hobby and, as Jamieson explains, there are plenty of people willing to cash in on collectors' obsessions; the secondary market for baseball cards may be as much as a half-billion dollars annually. It used to be even stronger: Jamieson got interested in the history of baseball cards when he rediscovered his own adolescent stash only to find that its value had plummeted in the mid-1990s. His loss is our gain as he tracks the evolution of the card from its first appearance in cigarette packs in the late 19th century through the introduction of bubble gum and up to the present. The historical narrative is livened by several interviews, including conversations with the two men who launched Topps (for decades the first name in cards) and a collector who's dealt in million-dollar cards. Jamieson also digresses neatly into curiosities like the Horrors of War card set, the legendary Mars Attacks, and a profanity-laced card featuring Cal Ripken's little brother. It's a fun read, but it also shows just how much serious work went into sustaining this one corner of pop culture ephemera. (Apr.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From *Booklist* \*Starred\* Every time a rare baseball card brings a million-dollar price at auction, thousands of aging former collectors wistfully recall shoeboxes full of rookie cards and wonder if they lost a fortune when Mom cleaned out their rooms. The answer, according to Washington-based, award-winning journalist Jamieson is . . . probably not. Jamieson doesn't supply lists of valuable cards (there are collectors journals for that); rather, he chronicles the history of collectible cards, profiles a few unique collectors, and tracks the development of the hobby and ponders its future. He profiles Jefferson Burdick, an almost forgotten man who donated what was probably the greatest collection of baseball cards ever assembled to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art over the course of a decade before his death in 1963. In tracing the history of collectible cards, Jamieson shows the extraordinary lengths to which the early cigarette and card companies went to separate young boys from their money, a penny and then a nickel at a time. A not uncommon tactic was to issue incomplete sets to keep collectors fruitlessly buying in search of a card that didn't exist. This is a fascinating history that encompasses not only the nuances of serious collecting but also the business machinations and card-marketing strategies that contributed significantly to the rise of the cigarette and gum industries. Superbly informative and entertaining. --Wes Lukowsky A phenomenal primer in the pitfalls of personal investing and the dangers of believing something is valuable just because everyone says it is (see: *Tickle Me Elmo*, *Retired Beanie Babies*). *Boston Herald* "An entertaining history of baseball cards . . . an engaging book on a narrow but fascinating topic." *Washington Post* Nostalgic and quirky. *New York Post* "Jamieson chronicles the story of baseball

cards with skill and bounce ... It's a blast for collectors of all stripes." Austin American Statesman

Jamieson explores the history of card collecting through an entertaining cast of characters—the visionaries and villains who turned a gimmick designed to boost tobacco sales into a billion-dollar industry. . . . The pictures in Jamieson's book are captivating, a veritable art gallery of the industry from its infancy in the 1800s to the slickly produced versions of today.... For anyone who can recall being excited to rip open their newest pack of cards, *Mint Condition* is a treat.

Forbes.com

By the early 1990s, baseball card manufacturers were printing 81 billion of the things a year, or 325 for every man, woman and child in the U.S. . . . Of course it ended badly. How and why is the subject of Dave Jamieson's absorbing *Mint Condition*. Bloomberg

In this compelling book, journalist Jamieson tracks the history of baseball cards from their late 19th-century beginnings to the present, covering the controversies (e.g. card forgeries), the rivalries (e.g., between companies issuing cards, and between rival collectors), and baseball cards as investments. . . . This very satisfying account of the development of baseball cards and our attitudes toward them is highly recommended even for those casually interested in sports or collectibles. Library Journal

Engaging, informative, and full of unexpected pleasures, *Mint Condition* deserves a spot on any baseball fans bookshelf. Dave Jamieson has hit it out of the park.

Cait Murphy, author of *Crazy '08: How a Cast of Cranks, Rogues, Boneheads, and Magnates Created the Greatest Year in Baseball History*

*Mint Condition* kept me spellbound and couch-bound for two days. Its pages are redolent of basements, bubble gum and bachelorhood. They teem with artists, innocents and charlatans. Dave Jamieson fit a century-and-a-half of Americana on the back of a baseball card, a remarkable achievement. Steve Rushin

An engaging, playful and well-reported history of baseball cards, and how they went from being a premium in packs of gum to collectibles selling at six-figure prices at the world's auction houses. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

A thoroughly compelling, entertaining and sometimes tragic read, [*Mint Condition*] will provide even veteran collectors with new insight to the hobby they love. Voice of the Collector

"A definitive history of both a pastime and an industry. For those of us who grew up collectors--and still feel a sentimental attachment to those seventeen utterly worthless Dan Plesac rookie cards gathering mold in our basement--this is the book that explains everything." Michael Weinreb, author of *The Kings of New York* and *Bigger than the Game*

An interesting examination of a hobby that turned into big business and then fell back to earth. Charlotte Observer

A fascinating history of a once-vital tradition. Robert Birnbaum, *The Morning News*

The only history of baseball cards that matters. Kriston Capps, DCist.com

Jamieson elucidates with smooth prose and fascinating tidbits of historical trivia just how the production of baseball cards became a major industry

Jamieson peppers his narrative with stories of the eccentric characters and colorful personalities

The book is an essential read for the baseball fan or anyone who remembers ripping into a wax pack, hoping that their childhood heroes would be found inside. Brett Savage, *New Jersey Monthly*