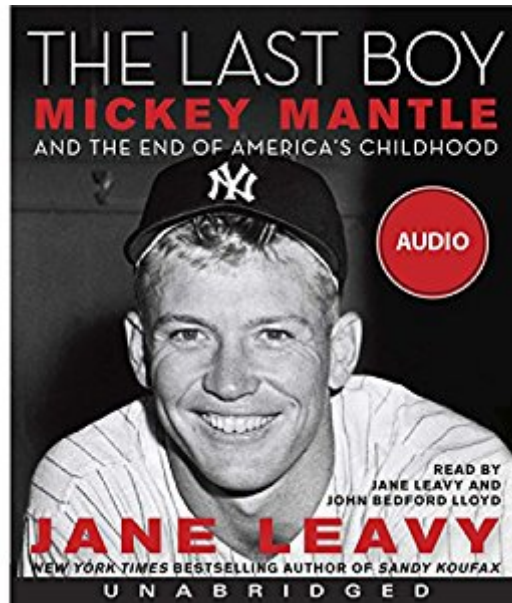


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The Last Boy: Mickey Mantle And The End Of America's Childhood



Synopsis

Jane Leavy, the acclaimed author of the New York Times best seller *Sandy Koufax: A Lefty's Legacy*, returns with a biography of an American original: number 7, Mickey Mantle. Drawing on more than 500 interviews with friends and family, teammates, and opponents, she delivers the definitive account of Mantle's life, mining the mythology of The Mick for the true story of a luminous and illustrious talent with an achingly damaged soul. Meticulously reported and elegantly written, *The Last Boy* is a baseball tapestry that weaves together episodes from the author's weekend with The Mick in Atlantic City, where she interviewed her hero in 1983, after he was banned from baseball, with reminiscences from friends and family of the boy from Commerce, Oklahoma, who would lead the Yankees to seven world championships, be voted the American League's Most Valuable Player three times, win the Triple Crown in 1956, and duel teammate Roger Maris for Babe Ruth's home run crown in the summer of 1961 - the same boy who would never grow up. As she did so memorably in her biography of Sandy Koufax, Jane Leavy transcends the hyperbole of hero worship to reveal the man behind the coast-to-coast smile, who grappled with a wrenching childhood, crippling injuries, and a genetic predisposition to alcoholism. In *The Last Boy* she chronicles her search to find out more about the person he was and, given what she discovers, to explain his mystifying hold on a generation of baseball fans, who were seduced by that lopsided, gap-toothed grin. It is an uncommon biography, with literary overtones: not only a portrait of an icon, but an investigation of memory itself. "I believe in memory, not memorabilia," Leavy writes in her preface. But in *The Last Boy*, she discovers that what we remember of our heroes - and even what they remember of themselves - is only where the story begins.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

How wonderful in an age when we don't have heroes anymore, we can go back to an earlier age in our lives, when we did. We can then hand a book like this to our children, and perhaps, just perhaps they can come to understand how a different generation from their own, could have revered such a man as Mickey Mantle, who represented everything that we all wanted to be. For all of us, it was a dream that could not be fulfilled, but that didn't mean we couldn't still fantasize about it, and maybe that's why some pay so much for collectibles. We are able to hold, or touch something that belonged to the hero, and the hero's journey. First of all, you must love sports, and sports heroes to thoroughly enjoy this book as I did. Ms. Leavy has captured the real Mickey Mantle, and although she covers the warts and all, this is still very much the story of a hero, a hero of mythic proportions. In ancient Rome there were the Gladiators. In the 20th century, we have our sports heroes, and surely Mickey Mantle captured America's attention like no other. He made us forget about Joe DiMaggio who dominated an earlier generation of Yankees in center field. DiMaggio knew it, and made Mantle pay for it emotionally for his entire career. You might want to read Joe DiMaggio: The Hero's Life by Richard Ben Cramer, a great biography of Mantle's predecessor in center field. Ah, and can Ms. Leavy write; she is accomplished, having earlier penned a magnificent biography of Brooklyn Dodger hero Sandy Koufax. When I began to read about Mickey, I at first wondered if she could capture the same spirit she captured in "Sandy Koufax: A Lefty's Legacy". By that I mean could she capture the essence of the man and the time in which Mantle lived.

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