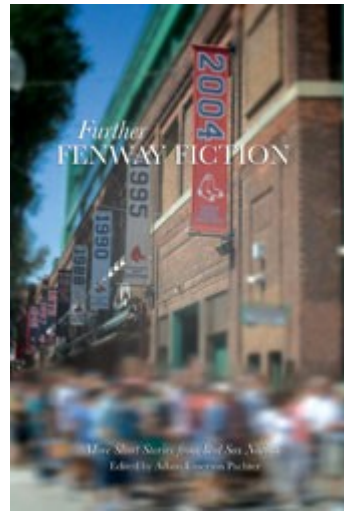


“Further Fenway Fiction” edited by Adam Emerson Pachter

reviewed by Doug Holder/ Ibbetson Update



Further Fenway Fiction. Edited by Adam Emerson Pachter (Rounder Books. One Rounder Way. Burlington, Ma. 01803) \$17. <http://www.rounderbooks.com>

Fenway Park would seem to be a natural setting to center works of fiction and poetry around. The stadium is a house of melodrama, history, bipolar highs and lows, all the right stuff for writers to mine. Former Somerville resident and author Adam Emerson Pachter edited an anthology of fiction aptly titled “Fenway Fiction,” that came out in September 2005. In 2007 a second anthology: “Further Fenway Fiction,” edited by Pachter and released by the local imprint Rounder Books has hit the street, and features poetry and fiction focusing around the old town team. And as always Somerville or Somerville - connected writers are represented on these pages. Author Timothy Gager, cofounder of The Somerville News Writers Festival, Steve Almond author of “Candy Freak,” and Festival regular, as well as long-time Somerville resident and novelist Mitch Evich, all have found homes for their work.

“Further Fenway Fiction” edited by Adam Emerson Pachter

Now mind you, I am no longer a real baseball fan, although truth-be-told I was a rabid 1969 "Miracle Mets" freak during my freshman year of high school. But over the years the passion for the game has dissipated with the weight of more worldly concerns...well you know the drill. But I still can remember a time when a Mets' loss could bring me to tears, or when the crack of a bat could me salivate like one of Pavlov's dogs.

This collection brings some of that heightened awareness through humor, pathos and some right-on writing.

Tim Gager's short satirical piece "Fantasy Camp;" appealed to the mired middle- aged man in me, as Gager sends up a group of over-the hill, never-have-beens at a baseball fantasy camp. Gager has these hapless campers practice fantasies of firing managers; has withdrawn, nerdish men trained to be bombastic," buck-stops- here" umpires, and even has women "of a certain age" train to be baseball groupies.

In Steve Almond's "The Tragedie of Theo" ("Prince of the Red Sox Nation") Almond uses Shakespeare's "'Hamlet" as a conceit to capture the tortured "to be or not to be" dilemma of the young Dane, I mean... general manager of the Sox, Theo Epstein.

Mitch Evich's "Johnny Boy," examines a man who had a fleeting taste of success as a ballplayer, but now in his mid 30's he is captured in a second rate city job and the banalities of a longtime marriage.

The poetry section has works from Jonathan P. Winickoff, Bob Francis, Al Basile, and Ron Skrabacz.

Adam Pachter, the editor, has a romantic piece "Cuttyhunk" that pulls at the heartstrings. Other contributors include: Rachel Solar, Henry Garfield, Bill Nowlin, Michelle Von Euw, Cecilia Tan, Jennifer Rapaport, Steven Bergman, Sarah Green

David Kruh, Tracy Miller Geary, Elizabeth Pariseau, and David Desjardins.

Whether you are a fan of baseball, fiction, poetry, or all three, there is much to recommend in this anthology.

- Doug Holder/ Ibbetson Update

