



mouth : public relations
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March 20, 2007

Dear Producer/Editor:

"Mickey was one of my best friends and this book is the closest thing to the real Mickey Mantle that I have ever read."

--Bill Reedy

"This book would make Henry Miller blush."

--Publishers Weekly

One-Day Lay-down – Tuesday, April 3, 2007
Critically-Acclaimed Lawyer and *New York Times* Best-Selling Author of 30 Books
Releases *Wild Romp on Mickey Mantle*

**Controversial Book Originally Slated to Be Published by Judith Regan,
Now Releasing on Lyons Press**

Controversial books are published every season, but rarely does a book play a role in the demise of an entire publishing imprint. Such has been the case with **7: *The Mickey Mantle Novel*** (Lyons Press, An Imprint of The Globe Pequot Press; April 3, 2007; One Day Lay-down; ISBN 1-59921-270-6; \$24.95; Hardcover), veteran baseball writer **Peter Golenbock's** fictional memoir of the Yankee legend, which was originally slated to be released by Regan, Judith Regan's division of HarperCollins Book Publishers. Regan's unwavering defense of this hastily maligned book was allegedly one of the reasons that HarperCollins decided to end their long affiliation with her. The Lyons Press has happily stepped into the breach and is pleased to have the opportunity to bring this eagerly-anticipated book to the curious public.

So, why all the fuss? Peter Golenbock has dared to give us a candid portrait of a baseball icon that eschews deification and instead offers a warts-and-all, yet affectionate, picture of the real man behind the legend. Though it was widely known that Mickey Mantle was a notorious womanizer and drinker, the propriety of his era kept much of the truth from the public. Golenbock, who idolized Mantle as a child—and still does—drew not only on personal interviews with the Mick, but also with many of his friends and teammates, including Billy Martin, Whitey Ford, Joe Pepitone, and Jim Bouton, who told him firsthand about Mantle's exploits. The resulting narrative is filled with explicit sex and juvenile, alcohol-fueled antics, but even more it paints an accurate picture of the real Mickey Mantle—preternaturally talented, yet terribly insecure, fun-loving, yet haunted by demons. The real Mickey, Golenbock says, was irreverent, complex, funny and sad. **7** captures Mickey as no conventional sports biography ever could. Everything in this novel is based on truth or stories the author was told—Golenbock has merely filled in the blanks.

No one but Peter Golenbock could have written **7**. One of the nation's best-known sports authors, he has written some of the best selling sports books of the last thirty years, including *Idiot* (with Johnny Damon), *Balls* (with Graig Nettles), *The Bronx Zoo* (with Sparky Lyle), *Bums: An Oral History of the Brooklyn Dodgers*, and *Wild, High and Tight: The Life and Death of Billy Martin*. "Ever since I was a kid, I have lived and breathed baseball, and have reported on the game extensively for years," Golenbock says. Five of his books about America's pastime have been *New York Times* bestsellers. Golenbock, who is an attorney and the author of over 30 books, lives in St. Petersburg, Florida.

One small, yet ironic grace note to the story of **7**'s bumpy road to publication: Months before the brouhaha erupted at Regan, I had left my position there as Sr. VP, Executive Marketing and Publicity Director to start my own public relations firm. Yet, in an odd twist of fate, Lyons has come to me to help promote **7**. Clearly it is my destiny to bring Golenbock's captivating book to your attention. But most importantly, I hope you will help us publicize the book based on its merit and not the hype surrounding it.

Peter Golenbock will be available for national and local television, radio and print interviews on April 3-5 out of New York City. I look forward to talking with you as soon as possible about media possibilities.

Sincerely,

Justin Loeber
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Mickey Mantle Novel

PETER GOLENBOCK

**The Much-Talked-About Fictional “Memoir” of the Baseball Legend
is Published Despite Attendant Controversy**

Branded as salacious and outrageous even before publication, **Peter Golenbock’s** controversial **7: *The Mickey Mantle Novel*** (Lyons Press, An Imprint of The Globe Pequot Press; April 3, 2007; One Day Lay-down; ISBN 1-59921-270-6; \$24.95; Hardcover), in actuality, offers a sharp-witted, down-to-earth, and ultimately affectionate portrait of a complex American icon. Golenbock, one of the county’s preeminent baseball writers, counts the great Yankee legend as one of his childhood heroes, and in **7** he uses the mechanism of fiction to capture the essence of the man in a way that a traditional sports biography never could. The result is a ribald, yet sympathetic narrative fueled by incidents of Mantle’s widely acknowledged womanizing and drinking, but also by his baseball achievements and his mastery and love of the game.

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7 takes the form of a memoir, dictated by Mantle himself from his perch in heaven. “As told to” the late sportswriter Lenny Shecter, Jim Bouton’s co-author on the iconoclastic baseball classic *Ball Four*, Mickey’s story is savagely honest and uncompromising. “I swore in the AA meeting I would look at myself honestly, so I have to tell the whole story,” he says at the start of the book. “I know there will be people who will ask, Mickey, does the public really want to know the whole story? But somehow I ended up in heaven, so how could it hurt?... Lies and cover-ups and misinformation are for those who passed and went to the other place where sportswriters, politicians and umpires end up.”

By his own admission, only three things mattered to Mickey—broads, booze, and baseball. And as he chronicles his rise from dirt-poor miner’s son to sports superstar, these are the key elements of a story at once revelatory and poignant. From his introduction to sex in the balcony of the Commerce, Oklahoma, movie theater, the naturally shy country boy would continue to break down his inhibitions with alcohol, until drinking and sex became one indistinguishable pastime. Though married young to his lifelong wife, Merlyn, Mickey’s extramarital sexual escapades were legion, and as he shares the explicit details of encounters with women from all walks of life—stewardesses, secretaries, baseball groupies, single women, married women, even a librarian—he imparts his underlying adoration of the female of the species. In what is already the most notorious episode in the book, Mickey even has a brief encounter with the girlfriend of his teammate, Joe DiMaggio—a young actress named Marilyn Monroe.

Mickey's inseparable friendship with teammate and noted reprobate Billy Martin is at the heart of much of the insouciant debauchery, and **7** is in many ways as much about the irredeemable Martin as it is about Mantle. Their tandem antics, both sexual and mischievous, often sink to new lows of juvenility, with Billy's hot-blooded daring a perfect counterpoint to Mickey's "aw shucks" demeanor. Two other men play central roles in Mickey's story: his bitter, hard-assed father who shames and cajoles him into becoming one of the world's best ballplayers, and the equally hard-assed Yankees manager, Casey Stengel, who becomes like a surrogate father to Mantle, using similar psychologically abusive tactics to get the best out of his young outfielder.

With Shechter playing devil's advocate, Mickey fields questions about his often abrasive relationship with the fans and the press, revealing how, with his underlying insecurities, he tried to keep the hero worship at arm's length. Forced to retire due to age and injury, Mickey continues to enjoy his other two favorite pursuits, but is hit hard by Billy Martin's death, by his own public admission of alcoholism, by the death of his troubled son, and by his battle with the cancer that ultimately kills him. In the end, Mantle's flawed humanity resonates as—in Golenbock's deft hands—he becomes a living, breathing, imperfect man rather than a deified sports icon.

"Mickey was one of my best friends, and this book is the closest thing to the real Mickey Mantle that I have ever read," says Bill Reedy. "Mickey Mantle was the most fascinating ballplayer I ever covered," adds former *New York Times* sportswriter Robert Lipsyte, "I thought I knew everything about him; but Peter Golenbock's wildly funny, shrewd and eventually compassionate fiction take is as intellectually satisfying as it is risky. The pathetic journalists and fans who have objectified the Mick to make him an icon won't like it, but I bet Mickey would laugh and cry his ass off."

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About the Author:

Peter Golenbock is one of the nation's best-known sports authors, and has written some of the best selling sports books of the last thirty years, including *Idiot* (with Johnny Damon), *Balls* (with Graig Nettles), *The Bronx Zoo* (with Sparky Lyle), *Bums: An Oral History of the Brooklyn Dodgers*, and *Wild, High and Tight: The Life and Death of Billy Martin*. Five of his books have been *New York Times* bestsellers. Golenbock lives in St. Petersburg, Florida, This is his first novel.

7: *The Mickey Mantle Novel*

By Peter Golenbock

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