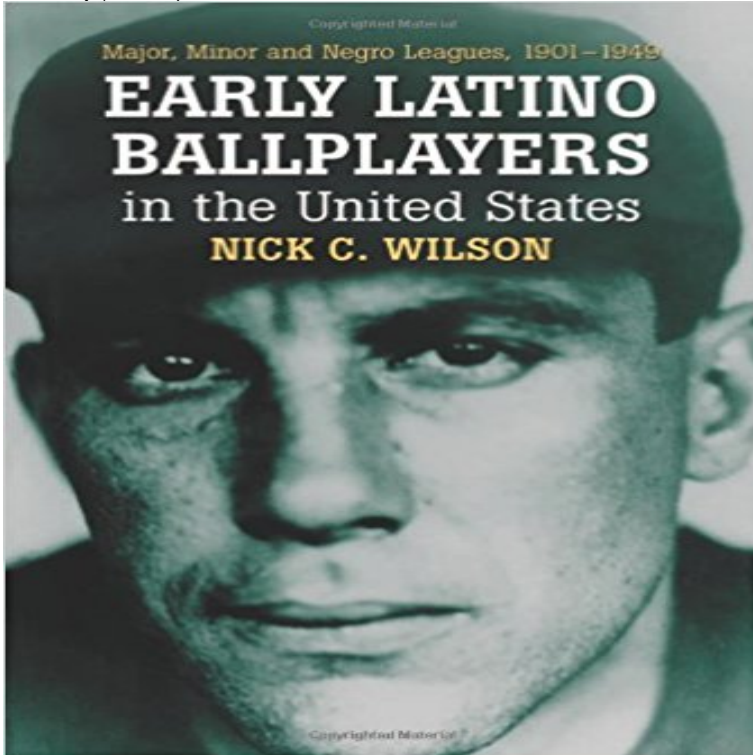


Early Latino Ballplayers In The United States: Major, Minor And Negro Leagues, 1901-1949



On the average major league roster, Hispanic or Latin-born players today account for at least 25 percent of the team. In 1900 there were none; in 1911 the number had crept to two; and after World War II when American GI's returned to the playing fields, there was, for a brief time, only one Latino in the major leagues. From 1900 through the 1940s early Latino players suffered discrimination, poor accommodations, low pay and homesickness to play a game they loved. Those who were both talented and light-skinned enough to make it to the majors were mocked for their foreign-ness. Those in the Negro Leagues were, like African American ballplayers, segregated and largely ignored by the public and major league scouts. Building on what we know about the careers of these pioneer players, Nick Wilson draws on primary documents and interviews to round out our knowledge of them as people. Organized by decade, this book presents new information on the players who came before baseball's great Latin explosion. Profiled here are Rafael Almeida, Jose Mendez, Miguel Gonzalez, Luis Tiant, Sr., Martin Dihigo, Armando Marsans, Rodolfo Fernandez, Roberto Ortiz, Adolfo Luque, Cristobal Torriente, Hiram Bithorn and Pedro "Preston" Gomez, and many others. An appendix on Americans who influenced the Latin migration is also included.

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