The New York Yankees in the Twentieth Century

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You Can See a Lot Just by Looking

By

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PREFACE

When I was five years old, I lived with my family in a two-family building on a busy commercial street right near the Passaic River. One day, a cabinet with a glass face was delivered to our home. It turned out it was a ten-inch television. It had channels that could be changed by turning a knob. There were about three choices, a picture and sound combination machine, a wonder. Early in the discovery phase, my father turned on a channel that was showing a baseball game, and one of the teams was the New York Yankees. He told me to watch the game and particularly to watch number 5 of the Yankees—it was Joe DiMaggio, the best player of them all. I watched the whole game, lasting about two hours, the picture rolling up some of the time and then replaced with the exact same image, something that happened no matter what show was on.

I was transfixed by the baseball game, watching the great DiMaggio. What I saw was DiMaggio standing around on the field, or other men standing around on the field without DiMaggio, and their clean white uniform with stripes. But usually he wasn't even in the picture at all. That was the first baseball game I had ever seen, and it was the beginning of this book about the Yankees, seventy-three years later.

Between then and now I have played a lot of sports, some better than others. I have been on championship teams, and I played with people who played in the professional National Football League, but none who made the Major Leagues in baseball. Even so, I had some peak moments of my own: I pitched a no-hitter in baseball—that ball sits in my living room on its own shelf, signed by all my teammates—scored four touchdowns in a football game, and won some tennis tournaments. But none of those balls have any space in my home, just that baseball. I admit that I have been to all three Yankee Stadiums but never caught a ball, not even came close. And, like many kids, I dreamed of being the Yankee shortstop, but I never came close to that either; I am not Derek Jeter, who grew up in a town not far from where I lived. The only thing I have in common with Jeter is that we both lived in New Jersey.

As I grew older, I developed one body part that was similar to that of many baseball players: the elbow on my throwing arm. When I couldn't even manage to hang Christmas lights, I needed the same surgery that many baseball players get. That surgery is the closest I have come to being a

Yankee or a teammate of the great Joe DiMaggio.

Just as I was fascinated as a youngster with DiMaggio but did not understand what he was doing or not doing, I have been fascinated by what I see and have seen as well. Here I am focused on the seemingly unseen things that are part of baseball. It is easy to see the contest between the pitcher and the hitter, which is the essence of the game. But there are things in plain sight that are unseen as well, even though the fans are staring at them. This book came out of that observation, the seeing what I am seeing without noticing it.

How come DiMaggio did not do anything on that television screen? When I was five, baseball had only one or two cameras. And the cameras then sent a signal of what they were seeing to the large antenna on my roof, only about ten miles from Yankee Stadium. With one or two cameras for the whole field, there was no seeing DiMaggio unless the ball was hit or caught by him. So he was rarely on camera, and therefore rarely in my television picture. And most of the time the ball never found him. He did have four at bats, but I don't recall him hitting the ball out of the park for a home run. But my research suggests he was toward the end of his record setting fifty-six game hitting streak, a record that has never been broken. So, although I was unaware of it, I did see him extend his record consecutive game hitting streak.

Thereafter I went to Yankee Stadium many times. I also went to the Polo Grounds to see the New York Giants play. Despite being just across the river from the grandeur of Yankee Stadium, the Polo Grounds was a step down. Somehow the seats did not face the action on the field, the food was meager, the team dressing rooms were in center field up a set of steps in the outfield: the Polo Grounds was a bizarre place best left unattended. Thank God, it was torn down and replaced by apartment towers. Good riddance. Yankee Stadium, though, had a totally different history.

I did meet DiMaggio once, though, at his restaurant in San Francisco, where he stood by the door and shook the hands of everybody who entered his restaurant. By then he was long retired, but he did act like he was both in charge and yet also unpretentious.

Now decades later here I am sharing my insights into "seeing" at a baseball game, through my eyes, filtered by my thoughts. What follows here is constructed around three parts: what you see, who you are watching, and how each affects the life you live and the cultural world in which you participate. In turn the culture that you live in is to some degree influenced by baseball, here the Yankees, and by community structures, and also to some degree by the unification of the United States, all making it a more favorable place than it would otherwise be, making our lives more coherent

and less confrontational, and therefore part of the "whatness" of American culture and popular culture. While baseball is not the only institution that does that, baseball's influence is substantial enough that even by seeing a game, one can recognize Major League Baseball as a cultural force. The event can open your eyes, like mine were opened at age five and later by my attendance at Yankee games.

My idea is grounded in philosophy. The first book-length study of the philosophy of sport and society, *Sport: A Philosophical Inquiry*, was written in 1969 by Paul Weiss. A retired professor of philosophy at Yale, Weiss taught at The Catholic University of America while I was a graduate student there. A major theme is his idea that spectators do not see most of what athletes are doing on the field of play, e.g., their training issues and the effects on their bodies, their intermittent mental and physical breakdowns, and even events on the cellular level that of course never show up to be seen by the human eye. Such is the work of a speculative metaphysician, one who has written on sports, but also the arts, politics, and other topics. Weiss approaches the lack of philosophical inquiry into sport as a reflection of academic elitism, but many of his ideas are elite. Sections of his book take on issues of metaphysics, ethics, moral philosophy, and political philosophy as they affect the athletic potential of athletes. He sees social values, aesthetics, performance, and display as parts of human nature. Later Weiss contributed a chapter to an anthology entitled *Sport and Society* which deals with a baseball contradiction: the most highly paid players are those who project the good old days of country boys who played merely for fun and love of the game. The volume you are reading now illustrates how neither money nor the more rustic times are as influential in professional baseball as social forces which play a much larger role than people can either see or realize.

So, let's see. Let's play ball!

CHAPTER 1

THE DESIGN OF YANKEE STADIUM

Walk up music: Edward Meeker, “Take Me Out to the Ball Game”

Polo Grounds / Yankee Stadium

To see a baseball game at Yankee Stadium is to embark on a sensual experience. First you have to get there. You can take a train, a subway, an airplane, a helicopter, a car, or even a boat. All of them afford a preview of what will happen in the stadium itself. There is noise, adventure, excitement, and some fear no matter which way you travel. And then, no matter what, you have to walk in. Your senses are alive, so alive you might feel that you are going to play in the game yourself. And why not, you are probably wearing some Yankee insignia. If you wear a Yankee insignia anywhere on your body, and you wear the insignia of the opposing team, you could be stopped by Yankee personnel who will inquire in a friendly way about the mismatch. You could say "I'm undecided." That will be enough.

From the start though, your senses press on you, the sounds of the vendors selling their food, their pennants, and their clothing, cut through the mass of sound created by other fans. In the air is the smell of hot dogs, popcorn, peanuts, Cracker Jack, and jelly apples, all the kinds of foods nannies don't want you to eat. You are clutching your ticket in a tight hand, so you don't lose it and can't get to your seat, and you feel the tension as you press the thin cardboard rectangle. You have to move fast, as people overtake you as you go to your rightful place. There is noise of all sorts, shouting, music, car horns blaring; a cacophony echoes off the concrete that surrounds your moving body, then up, and then inevitably down you go to your seat. You will be in touch with your seat now for the following hours unless you wander around during the game. When you try to recapture that high moment of entry into Yankee Stadium, home of the gods of baseball, smell, taste, touch, and hearing all work together, but mostly sight dominates. Things are moving, you are moving, faster than your usual gait. Your pulse is high as your brain tries to process what has happened, what is happening, and what will happen. Even the music bounces off you as if you are in a whirlpool of sound.

And so it begins—hot dogs, burned peanuts, sticky spots on the concrete floor, spilled beer puddles, the crack of the bat—batting practice is still on! Maybe you will get a ball, a treasure for the rest of your life. It's a ramshackle symphony of a dimension that is rarely a part of your life, a design better than that of the designated hitter. What has happened to you even before the game starts is that Yankee stadium itself, being geographically difficult but with a multiplex of transportation systems to make up for it, has created a chaotic congestion of energy that quickly dissipates with the order of the stadium's form. Once within the looming walls, individuals become organized crowds. The lines of defenestrations force the baseball fan forward like a comb running through tangled hair,

transforming the crowd of undifferentiated souls into functionally complete subsets of connectives.

But who else is in the stadium watching the game besides you, literally beside you, or me, and maybe they don't see it the way either you or I do? I might see the game the way you do, or I might not. What are those other fans seeing or doing? All of us are in a crowd, so we are part of each other's experience. Like a good fan, you are going to interact with others, sitting shoulder to shoulder next to them, passing them food and drink. As you are part of them, they are part of you. Yet an individual on his own is in an odd situation. Nobody is in your seat but you. If you get up, nobody replaces you. The proximity and the sharing that results with its being your seat and the other guy having his seat is permanent for the game, usually. One feels both stasis and change throughout the game as fans move about freely. Such movement results in crowd behaviors that can be intriguing.

Fortunately, crowds are an area of highly developed study, overshadowing what the fan in the stands might observe. So, let's take a a closer look at who is sitting next to you. In "20 Intriguing Demographics of Sports Fans," one website of many on the topic, Brandon Gaille shows how fans act at the event. Since everyone there is part of the crowd, Gaille shows how aspects of yourself are reflected and revealed by those in the crowd in the stands.

He does not note, but probably does not need to, that there is a crowd sometimes watching on TV, each from their own homes, while talking or texting to all the others on his own list of people who are his crowd, a distant crowd. I do that myself.

That practice started when my dying brother and I watched the Yankees play in our own separate homes, a day's drive from each other. The highlight of his day was when the game in the stands was more intriguing than the game on the field. One day two men seated behind home plate, and in camera view, imitated the actions of the home plate umpire during the entire game. Dressed as umpires, they acted out what was happening on the field, which was probably only about twenty feet from these self-appointed umpires. Everybody watching it on television loved it, and so did we. My brother and I started imitating the guys in the stands while in our own living rooms. Gaille takes that behavioral insight a step further than my brother and I did, saying that these behaviors, and all behaviors, show aspects of yourself to the others in the crowd, thereby introducing and developing your persona for access by anyone else in the crowd. I'll let you decide what you think of me now, as we are part of a crowd at this moment.

Now your behavior in the future may imitate mine—or not. God help us all. Consider yourself the next time you are in a crowd. See what

you do. Of course, you are likely to do whatever it is you do in a sports crowd, but the behaviors do change from sport to sport, the stimulus being different. That in itself is fascinating.

But whoa! Maybe the person you are sitting next to in the stands is not like you—that is to say, not a guy. You may not believe it, but gender studies is a good starting point for examining the fan sitting next to you. Consider that 37% of NASCAR fans are female, the highest percentage of any sport. Tied for the lowest percentage of female fans is pro basketball, the NBA, and Major League Baseball, MLB, both at 30%. Even with the lowest percentage of female fans, the chances are just about one in three that the person sitting next to you will be a female, which is in turn somewhat close to the gender balance of a NASCAR crowd. And I have to say that living close to one of the most famous dragstrips in the world tells me that NASCAR isn't the only driver of gender equality in the automobile world. Drag racing is right by its side.[1]

Now the number of female fans at Yankees games is rising, just like it is in all of Major League Baseball. Out of curiosity, I asked a woman whom I have known for almost sixty years and who has lived in Europe for fifty years what she thought about being a baseball fan. Here's how one ordinary woman in the crowd described the event:

> I like the atmosphere at baseball games but it's kind of difficult to concentrate on what is happening on the field. There's a pleasant feeling of camaraderie even though I'm not a decades-loyal Yankee fan. When I'm so far away and without a running commentary like you get on the radio, I can't understand what's going on below. But that's okay. I cheer when others cheer. Something good is obviously happening.

I would consider that her behavior and understanding of what she is watching are similar to that of any new fan of the game. I can also add that the part she liked most is when I took her around the stadium during the game so that she could see what else was going on and who was involved in doing it. I have to confess here that I do the same thing the first time I am at a different ballpark. I look for a way to get on the field during the game. I have no desire to actually get on the field, but it turns out that you can get darn close, except in San Diego.

I don't do this myself, but lots of people buy souvenirs, such as caps, at the game. Ballparks also now increasingly sell gender specific fan gear. Buying gear at the stadium is more valid than buying the same item at the mall. Or even online. That loyalty to the stadium over loyalty to the team is leading to the rules of the game being changed to accommodate fans, not fans like me, but the more casual fans, especially females.

The average fan has an annual income of between $40,000 and $70,000. That means that they can afford a few baseball games per season. The richest fans are golf fans, but then golf is an expensive sport, though it is one that old men can still play. You see few players over forty in the Major Leagues, but golfers over forty win lots of tournament on the pro golf tour, which has a women's tour, where older women do in fact win from time to time. Alternatively, the poorest fans are soccer fans. Despite the huge numbers of fans in the stands at sporting events, only 1% of television programming is sports, but 7% of your cable bill is for sports programming. Both genders are being robbed equally.

Sports followers are actually a small demographic because fans in the stands go to only a low percentage of games; furthermore, the percentage of male fans is decreasing. And yet the cost of being a fan, whether in the stadium or in the living room, is rising.

The owners of the teams do not seem to care about that now, but they do appreciate the rising number of female fans. So if you want to look for sexism in baseball, right there is where it is. Advocating for more female fans and for gender equality would result in more money for the owners, not less.

To be fair though, I don't like the argument against equality which attacks so-called under representation. This word and its meaning make people into things that are aspects of some other construct which is more important. Nor am I a representative of men. I am a man, not a shadow of somebody else's notions. So if you are arguing that 50% of the fans should be women then that is a bogus number, a facile construct that holds no water.

Bear in mind that early on Major League Baseball began selling cheaper tickets for women, especially on certain days when women might be more inclined to go to a ball game than other days. The term Ladies Day was appropriated to make baseball attract more women. While attempts to attract more women to attend games later increased, no games are called Ladies Day games anymore. On the other hand, women's softball is a major sport on college campuses, and many of the best female athletes are softball players, second only to the women's basketball teams. Just that alone will eventually increase the percentage of women attending MLB games, no matter how old they may be.

And women do have sports alternatives. I have a daughter who could really hit, but she didn't like baseball/softball as much as she liked volleyball. Volleyball games are controlled by tall players; she isn't tall. But she did play four years of Division One volleyball; her team made it into the national champion tournament of women's volleyball (the volleyball equivalent of the men's March Madness basketball national tournament)

twice in her four years as a player. And she testifies that she could not hold the job she has without her volleyball experience from which she learned how to get along with teammates and individuals under very high pressure. To me then, whatever the sport, the value is the same. Consider that her college roommate played on the softball team, and she says the same thing. So what difference does it make what the percentage is or which sport it is, trying your hardest under pressure is a good way to learn to be a fully functioning human.

However, *Forbes*, the business magazine, has a different view, but a thoughtful one. Their argument points to iconic men who popularized the game of baseball as an industry. Babe Ruth is an example on one side, and Yogi Berra and his Yogi-isms is on the other side of the equation. A Yogi-ism is the title of this book. There is even a fake Yogi-ism in the book; if you catch it, good for you. I couldn't help myself.

Another aspect that makes baseball popular is the respect for history and for data. Baseball has that in spades. The iconic numbers 3, 4, 5, 7 (numbers worn by star players), 56 (DiMaggio's record for consecutive games in which a player got a hit), 60 (Babe Ruth's record number of home runs in one season), and 406 (the highest batting average for a season set by Ted Williams) are ingrained in popular culture, even if you can't quickly associate what they represent.[2]

Then too, baseball has sense appeal, the crack of the bat, the smell of a leather glove, the shape of a ball in flight, the perfect shape of the infield and the irregular shape of the outfield, the uniforms, and also the caps. The sound of the announcers who cover 162 games at least in each season are all voices in your airwaves and in your wires. And every game is unique, and the outcome not determined by a clock, like in football. You don't run out of time and lose in baseball. But there is somebody who can steal and hit; what a deal that is, stealing home, hitting a homer. And then there are the recurrent images, Babe Ruth hitting a home run one hundred years ago, Willie Mays turning his back on the field and catching a fly ball over his shoulder while running at top speed away from the field during a World Series game. Greatness.

Neither you nor I could ever do that, not even dream it. So it is no wonder at all to think that the behavior of fans follows its own patterns, including these terms:

1. BIRGing—Basking in reflected glory; we won.
2. CORFing—Cutting off reflected failure: we didn't lose; they (the team) lost.

3. Superstitious conditioning—Adopting behaviors believed to promote success. Skinner experimented with a box of pigeons who would train themselves to become efficient at getting their food, except that some pigeons inserted a dance in the middle of their own process, a behavior that did not increase efficiency as theory would have it; an irrelevant behavior became part of the methodology of getting the food anyway. We are all pigeons, and baseball is our dance music.[3]

If you haven't read the Preface, I confess I usually don't either, you already know that I am doing something unorthodox at the beginning of a book which contains the unorthodox in every chapter. Typically, a chapter in a book has one constant and one variable. For example, how the Yankees won the World Series will be a book about only the Yankees, and the variables will be the things that they executed to win four games in a seven-game series. Every chapter will be about the games in the World Series and what the Yankees did, the variable being that each game was different and each will be handled differently in the explanation.

This book is different. Here there is no single constant. Each chapter is about different Yankee personnel. The variables as well will be different. The variable in one chapter, for example, will be design, in another chapter it will be cheating, in another it will be alcoholism, and so on.

At first your reaction may well be that the contents and order of the book seem disjointed, that the topics skip around from design, then to the lives of the players, and finally to the life of the community.

But bear with me as I show you what you don't see, how the stadium, the players, the front office, the fans at the game, and those watching on television or the internet use baseball media to stay in contact with a buddy or two, just like both of you were at the game. Your intersection and interconnection during the game remains after the game as well, even if you don't see it. This commonality works to bind you and your buddy and he and his buddies and her buddies, a result called social capital creation that makes not just the lives of those at the game culturally richer and more powerful and more civil, but it does it to your community as well, and beyond that even to your country, and maybe the whole world, although I think that last is a push too far, though the last chapter suggests that it can. So let's start with a discussion of the design of Yankee Stadium, which leads to an exploration of the players and then to the impact of both on the larger community.

All of it results in what psychologists call *terroir*, Latin for *from the land*, the combination of factors such as the taste and flavor of the

environment, usually associated with wine. The New York Yankees create their own terroir, a combination of artistic design and psychological, social, and mathematical connections. The home of the Yankees, their terroir, Yankee Stadium, may best be seen, described, and categorized by its designed grandness, its overwhelming monumental size, and its cultural function, its three parts. Not just The House That Ruth Built, the stadium is, by design, a monument to the working folk, to American culture, and to American aspirational motivation. While that is an important realization in Chapter 1 and the Roaring Twenties, the stadium being a powerful home, its third iteration, in the following century, is important in Chapter 8, as a home of monumental cultural design signaling and symbolizing the unifying power of American culture.

You don't notice that as a human you are prewired to prefer round organic shapes over jagged geometric and articulated ornateness. Your brain evolved from that of your forebears as a means of survival, your needing food to continue to live, your sexual reproduction so that you would outlive your own body, and finally your strength and cunning to protect you from predators. All of that is now under control at a ballpark. For you it is Yankee Stadium that is the issue of pleasure among other designed pleasure palaces you may visit. Its design combines design principles with the pleasure producing elements that humans crave.

Design is the culmination of everything that our eyes see, and how we interpret visual information and then assign it a feeling. While it may be difficult to imagine that design and the baseball experience are deeply entwined, scientific research has proved it over and over. Design can be measured in many ways. Artistically it is thought of as a series of elements and principles. Elements, such as line, color, shape, texture, value, form, and pattern, play an integral role while principles often include balance, proportion, unity, harmony, variety, emphasis, rhythm, and movement. Not just the ballparks themselves, but baseball itself has been said to be a work of art. The physical and emotional aspects of the combined elements and principles are said to *play*. And the *play* of the Yankees has a singular history.

Long ago, the New York Yankees, the iconic professional baseball franchise, hired a little former second baseman of middling talents to be its manager. That was Miller Huggins. In the 1920s, Huggins led the Yankees of Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, the most powerful hitters in the Yankee batting order then known as Murderers' Row, at the beginning of a successful Yankee dynasty that spanned virtually the entire decade. While Ruth and Gehrig are more famous, it was not a monument to either that was placed in the field of play upon their death. Instead, it was the monument of

Miller Huggins that stood in the deepest part of center field at old Yankee Stadium, by then known as The House That Ruth Built, the Huggins visage scanning the playing field for multiple decades until the Yankees moved to new Yankee Stadium, a city block or so over from the old ballpark. The 20s were a time when the players were conscious of their country roots and were not shy of showing their ethnicity, flaunting it with colorful nicknames.

From the beginning, these sportsmen as team members reflected the values of the team owners Jacob Ruppert and Tillinghast L'Hommedieu Huston (better known as Til Huston), who in turn used design to reflect the values of a team. Design, in fact, has always been a fundamental aspect of the New York Yankees, even before they moved from the Polo Grounds to Yankee Stadium in 1923. By that time they had used their stay at the nearby Polo Grounds as their home field to design Yankee Stadium. *Design* though is not a word that one associates with baseball but rather with more static constructs. While the team itself is a dynamic enterprise, the stadium that they play in is not dynamic. Nevertheless, like team personnel choices, the building of the home field also involves dynamics, the dynamics of design.

Yasmeen Elsemary's "Architectural Theory and Design Methodologies: Investigating the nature of relation," provides a handy window on the role of design in general, and by implication spotlights the role of design in early New York Yankee history.

In contrast to architectural theory being a wholly different discipline than design theory or design theory being an aspect of architectural theory, it is rather that architectural theory is part of design theory. The implication here is that design theory is the basis of the Yankee thought and judgment processes and that the architecture of the Yankees' home field is part of the design of what is the New York Yankees. We may see then that the roots of the Yankees grow at the first Yankee Stadium, The House that Ruth Built, as it was called.

We ought to expect to see then that the first step in the path to sports greatness is the construction of Yankee Stadium, both as a place of performance and as a symbol of the business organization called the New York Yankees. In what was then the greatest city in the United States, the Yankees built the greatest baseball stadium as its home field. That fact is the beginning of its design.

The first influence then would be modernism. One can make a good argument for the stadium being a modernist exercise; modernism was a new kind of style in the 20s. But instead, the first Yankee Stadium is actually a postmodern construction. Many of the architectural designs that one might expect in the new stadium were to be put aside because of zoning issues, costs, individual demands, and so on, or as a good postmodernist

would say, “Things are not what they seem, but a lot of times they are.” If things are not as they seem, but sometimes they are, then they are postmodern. And that is the basis of the design of Yankee Stadium, articulated in its construction. Architectural design has variety in its vocabulary, but it does not have a fixed definition that would explain the essence, let alone the accidents, of its own construction. As Elsemary notes, the theory describes only the motives and the production of the building.

No matter the initial approach, Yankee Stadium exhibits modernism as well, making its own contradictions evident. Modernism is evident in the stadium’s complexity and contradictions and reflects Geoffrey Brodbent’s studies in architectural semiotics, designing meaning into the building. Consider the baseball memes of constant chaos and orderliness, the rows of seating with limited legroom and difficult navigation, the padded plastic seats having replaced the wooden slats, hard and minimal, the picnic aspects of food and its delivery, challenging the patience of the saintly, dealing with the rogue vendors and long lines at the counters, a design flaw that creates form over function, where the unintended consequence of form creates a systemic brotherhood of connectedness. The unmovable seats, arranged in linear form, recreate the ebb and flow of tension and release, attention and focus. Glass suites block the first level of stands like odd goldfish bowls on a tabletop, forcing those on the concourse to re-route their views while waiting for their food, in turn leading to constant movement when you just want to see if the guy got a hit.

Design theory, on the other hand, which only started in the 1950s, is based on systems theory, created to solve complex problems. Design theory does not always result in these problems being solved, but it does account for form and function as its hallmarks are found in the design sequence through brainstorming, matrices, and flow charts, all tools of the design process. Design theory is implemented for a particular use or audience, either by empathy, defined interest, or archetype, using graphic elements, forms, lines, shapes, and creating an interplay of all these factors. In Yankee Stadium, design theory focused on the fans, not on the players.

Nevertheless, during the planning and construction of the stadium, a major influence on building form and function was the Bauhaus School. Prior to the Bauhaus, Le Corbusier, a pioneer of modernism in architecture, was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the Bauhaus movement. Le Corbusier’s five points of architecture include

1. elevation from the ground,
2. load bearing pillars that assume the building’s structural weight,
3. exterior façade,

4. long windows lighting space equally,
5. a roof garden, restoring the ground lost to the building.

All of these elements describe aspects of Yankee Stadium.

Other aspects of modernism are also found as well—complexity and contradiction, deconstructivism, form following function, regionalism, and resistance to the homogenization of the visual experience, in brief, making design new. As we will see, all of these are present or conspicuously absent in Yankee Stadium.

Comparing and Contrasting Architectural Theory and Design Theory

Architectural Theory	Design Theory
Didactic, teaches a lesson	Requires understanding of cause and effect
Within schools, different interpretations of the same item	Explains
Prescriptive, has guidelines that must be followed	Requires decisions and choices
Post-scriptive, follows models	Can move from cause to effect or effect to cause
Affirmative, reinforces	Builds upon known factors
Judgmental	Sees items as symbols

The Shillington design theory, another useful aid in understanding design, has a somewhat different approach. The first rule is that design theory answers one question: "Why am I designing it this way?" The answer to that question lies in addressing five design principles:

1. Alignment
2. Repetition
3. Contrast
4. Hierarchy
5. Balance

Color theory, the science and art of color, plays a significant role in design theory by examining how colors are used to create a specific emotion, highlight issues, or communicate messages. The Yankees have used color effectively: the pinstripes of the uniforms are dark blue, almost black, a color suggesting power and solemnity. The color of the pinstripes is

repeated in the NY insignia, which consists primarily of upright lines, but provides contrast by integrated curves. Together the pinstripes and insignia are unique in color and line, and so are the Yankees, by extension.

To simplify what both Elsemary and Shillington say can be understood from three little words that mean so much, a phrase of the 1970s that is key to understanding the forms and methods of literature, art, and art criticism: "relatedness as such," which is similar to the Shillington thought process. For example, within the design process and then the architecture of the building itself, parts touch each other, a simple observation. The observational focus on relatedness all by itself of each design element must bear some aspect of relatedness to the others. From any grammatology, the following relationships and their transitions are on a certain level easily understood. They would be additive (*and*), adversative, (*but*), alternative (*or*), causal (*so*), contrary (*yet*), and negative (*nor*). There are other, more complex, relations though than these. One may see these relationships at work in computer logic and the programming that goes into software, and they are the backbone of machine learning where there are scores of logical alternatives, the most useful being diagonal relationships, sort of parallel but between, say, true or false under certain conditions and not others. When we look to design, whether in architecture or systems of management, we see the use of this kind of logic, and we expect management theory not only to have relatedness as such within the bounds of management, but also in the semiotics of physical design.

The question then becomes what possibility is there for the Yankees to have total relatedness as such. So although the Yankees played at the Polo Grounds in the stadium of the New York Giants just across the East River from the Bronx neighborhood, we see an entirely different set of relationships at play in the design of Yankee Stadium as it reflects the design of its personnel then and ever after. The Polo Grounds was a baseball field with odd dimensions and an oddly placed clubhouse in deep center field up a long stairway from the field of play where, as previously noted, the players dressed. Both foul poles were short distances from home plate, making home runs out of poorly hit balls, while center field was cavernous because it had a stairway in play, making it unlikely that a ball could fly out of the field of play for a home run.

Obviously, design really had nothing to do with the Polo Grounds, which eventually was torn down and replaced by big apartment blocks, which had nothing to do with Bauhaus principles of design, no matter how loosely defined. I have been to a few games at the Polo Grounds to see Willie Mays play; it was a ramshackle place—no continuity, uncomfortable, bad sight lines. Its alternative sat across the river, clean, spacious, enormous,

decorated, a pleasure palace for a ten-year-old. I did not realize how wonderful it was for its time.

I heard Red Barber, a radio-TV play-by-play announcer with a mellow voice, describe the colossus on our family's ten-inch TV as simply "The Big Ballpark." The large size of the place afforded many of the Bauhaus principles somewhere in the expanse as well as in its construction. I didn't know about relatedness as such then, but it had that: giant scoreboards and seats facing the field of play rather than outside or on the edge of the field of play. The Yanks' field had everything and was everything that the Polo Grounds was not. It had it all sometimes in odd ways, but it also incorporated major design principles. The best use of design in the building was the facade, which is actually a frieze, not a facade. Along the top of the seats against a wall was a series of window like rectangles, made of copper, not accidentally like the Statue of Liberty. When the stadium was rebuilt in the 1970s the facade was replaced, the copper sold off; you could buy a whole piece and use it in your suburban villa. A new steel facade replaced it and ran not just around the outfield, but all around the stadium. The reason, from an engineering perspective, was that the facade was a support for the roof, but when it was replaced just to improve the look of the roof, an engineering marvel all by itself, extra support for the roof was no longer necessary. The facade was important in that no player ever hit a home run out of Yankee Stadium during a game, though it is said that Daryl Strawberry did it a few times in batting practice.

The size of the stadium proffered deep pockets but not lots of space to its customers, resulting in astonishing examples of relatedness. You could walk all around the stadium. If the ushers let you, you could sit in a section of seats that was close to your favorite player, you could eat not just hot dogs but other food as well, you could drink Knickerbocker beer until the cows came home. You could catch a foul ball because there were so many places you could think of where a ball might come down, although I never did get one. And you could track what your other favorite team was doing because the giant scoreboard would tell you all you needed to know.

In the mid-1960s the façade, which you can see in the photo on page 1, had been painted white, adding a classic verve to the structure and taking away the tarnished steel look that suggested not classicism but industrialism. The result was that an air of dignity crept into the design by the expansion of decorative elements whose form had no engineering function but did hearken back to the glory days of early Greek civilization, with the use of columns for temples and important buildings. Because the high Greek style is classical, the whole stadium took on an air of classicism, suggesting aspects of the Olympics and their values of athleticism and its

beauty in the stadium design. Of course, the Olympics also imply the best of amateur athletes in performance, not the highly paid professionals of New York City.

Even the site chosen for the stadium contributed to its design, mostly in the way modernism is recognized. First, the stadium was near a subway stop, second it was near the George Washington Bridge, easily reached by those in the western suburbs, and most importantly, from another angle, it was close to the brewery, which was owned by the Yankees' owner Jacob Ruppert. Mercantilism is at the forefront here, in that the Yankees were the means of advertising and selling Knickerbocker beer. "Have a Knick, feel refreshed" was the slogan. And beer was a competitive market in those days; for example, the Dodgers of Brooklyn were sponsored by Schaefer beer. Baseball and Ballentine had a nice ring to it. Of course, if you wanted a beer in Yankee Stadium, that beer would not be Schaefer. And the ads for beer all around the park were part of the scenery.

There was a bustling community around the stadium. After games, the Babe himself would go to a nearby restaurant where his waitress was a woman who eventually became the music teacher of my brother-in-law. Her father owned the restaurant that was the Babe's favorite for a while. So if you remember the concept from the popular Kevin Bacon movie *Six Degrees of Separation*—the idea that all people are six or fewer social connections away from each other—my brother-in-law was only two degrees of separation from Babe Ruth, and I am only three degrees of separation from him. Using the same logic, you may find yourself related to one of the famous Yankee superstars in the following chapters.

Of course, all of this happened in the Bronx, not mid-town. But that actually helped the Yankees because it made the sheer size of Yankee Stadium a symbol of pure power, since there was nothing as big in the Bronx, whereas in midtown it would have seemed out of place and not anywhere as grand as the skyscrapers but say, more on a par with Madison Square Garden.

As it was, the stadium size was a symbol of power, duplicating the rise of New York City as, arguably, the capital of the world, as its population swelled with immigrants from Europe in wave after wave. As older and smaller buildings were torn down, the new skyscrapers dominated downtown and even created the new skyline showcasing the work of Louis Sullivan, dubbed both the father of skyscrapers and the father of modernism. Sullivan's buildings legitimized sheer size and aspiration, which is mimicked by that of a "park," Yankee Stadium, which you had to pay to enter.

Although the stadium was modern in a number of ways, on the playing field it was much like the forsaken Polo Grounds. Considering that baseball is one of the few sports whose playing field is ungoverned by rules, one would not think that the two fields would be similar. But they were. Baseball only prescribes the size and shape of the infield. The distance from the pitcher's point to throw the ball is precisely sixty feet six inches. The bases are laid out in a square tipped on its side, each base ninety feet from the next. The size of the bases themselves is prescribed, with only home plate being shaped like half of a star.

And all this for $345 million in 2019 money. And money it did make. While building that stadium, Ruppert hired the player most in demand, Babe Ruth, away from the rival Boston Red Sox, and the stadium became known as The House That Ruth Built. Ruppert paid for both with his own money.

Yankee Stadium and Babe Ruth are shrines to Yankee capitalism. The Yankees have become one of the most valuable sports franchises in the world, sometimes #1, but now worth less than certain soccer clubs in Europe, such as Manchester United, which is owned primarily by the Glazer family. I own a small piece of Manchester United and once had a small piece of the Boston Celtics, whose dividends paid for all my golf expenses until I was bought out. I don't own any Yankees stock shares—they aren't listed on the stock exchange.

The Yankees, of course, are not the only ones performing at Yankee Stadium. Among those who have done their work at the venue are the New York football Giants, playing in the dirt, and various religious leaders playing in the sky, Billy Graham, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Pope.

Change came in 1973 when the stadium was closed for renovations in October, after the baseball season, and was then reconstructed; that chore finished by 1975, with significant changes to the stadium structures, mostly to make it safer, after big chunks of concrete fell into the right field stands. Indeed, the repairs proved temporary when the Yanks completed the new stadium almost adjacent to the old stadium, the move requiring a land exchange between the public park, which was the new site, and the remaking of the stadium grounds into a new park. Yes, the new stadium plot is bigger than the old. That, however, does not make the Yanks beneficent. When the new stadium opened in 2009, no more would I nor any other patrons be allowed to walk on the field of play after the game. The old stadium was demolished in 2010, becoming a real park to replace the one that the Yanks destroyed to make the new stadium.

The new stadium is a new business with some of the same aspects, but many are different. It is "similar yet different." Between the two, "things are not the same, but a lot of times they are."

Despite all this history, the new stadium's main feature was its design, that it was the first three-tiered stadium in the USA. Then but not now, few other such parks had been named *stadium*, the title bearing echoes of the golden age of Greece. Besides a slew of minor innovations that were to become standard in later built ball parks, Yankee Stadium had a number of important, relatively unique design effects, including a warning track on the edge of the playing field so that players pursuing a ball would not inadvertently run into a concrete wall or into the stands. The outfield dimensions were not accidentally those that benefited Babe Ruth; true, the short home run wall in right field helped make it easier for the Babe to hit home runs, but it also made it easier for the 245-pound fat guy to play in a position which did not require much running since right field was smaller than the others.

Right field came to be called "the short porch" thereafter, a term that is not innocent of negative implications, for its distance was similar to that in the Polo Grounds. The short porch is oddly like the facade in one major way; both are misnamed. The facade is really a frieze, and there is no porch in right field. The monuments that were on the field in memory of famous iconic Yankees in Old Yankee Stadium in the new stadium are in Monument Park, beyond the center field fence. Shaped like tombstones, they stand like ghost sentinels whitewashed figuratively by the name given to that part of centerfield, The Canyon.

While I have spent time and space on the facade as a technical issue, there is more to be said of its provenance as a third and fascinating aspect of design. The frieze at the top of the third level of stands in left and right field held up the roof by attaching it to the wall, making the frieze appear to be a crown, as if the stadium itself and the Yanks are gods crowned by wreaths of glory. Over time however, and then by common usage, mostly by the announcers, the frieze began to be called the facade. Though it is not technically a facade, it is one of the most recognized facades in the nation—the facade that is not a facade.

The facade is rarely seen as a design element but here, called a facade or not, the design element is central to the stadium's relatedness as such, not only by its physical structure, but also by the functioning of the Yankees organization and history. The facade replicates and implicates many of the values of the Yankees which have survived ever since 1923, save for one period which was mercifully brief, when an oil company owned the Yankees. Money was an issue from time to time. The Yankees, sometimes

hamstrung by a thin wallet, had what looked like a first class stadium to many but was really only first class in the dimensions of its field. That was made up for with new owners revising the facade to change its meaning and effects. The facade is not the same in the new stadium; it is merely decoration. Engineering has made the function of the facade structurally extraneous.

The genius of the facade's design is that it replicates in many ways not only the stadium as a whole, but also by its abstraction the Yankees uniform, but not that of the opposing players—truly a home field advantage. Though rectangular in shape, each piece of the facade is colored in white with the slots between the verticals appearing dark. The Yankee uniform is similar, white cloth with dark pinstripes.

Though rectangular, all of the design of the Yankees is about verticals. Verticals are everywhere. Though rectangular, the elements of the facade not only replicate the players but also replicate classical values in Greek architecture, the white columns, suggesting the Doric style, well represented in Classical Greece, lined up in series to simultaneously suggest the strength of the entire building. First copper, then steel, the facade is not made of stone like a real Greek column would be. The vertical lines suggest the uniform's pinstripes but also the Yankees NY logo on the baseball caps, the most popular cap in the nation. How the NY is placed on the caps is sheer genius. Most of the lines are vertical, and the ones that are not, are placed in such a way as to be reaching to be vertical. So even the caps represent the power of the verticals that abound in the architecture and design of the ballpark, which is the main signal of Yankee greatness.

Most amazing from a design perspective, in the new stadium one important change wrenches meaning into what would have been a blank wall in the old stadium: vertical lines of metal mesh cover whole walls or edge spaces of the walls, creating verticals inside verticals. Originally just in the outfield of the old stadium and then ringing the later stadium, no matter where you look, all the verticals together delimit the power of the visitor by suggesting the power of the home team and its entire organization. They also literally underscore how large the stadium is, as a contained and controlled space, since nobody has hit a ball over the parts of the stadium that are in play. That suggests to the visiting team that they can't even envision coming close to the target that many Yankees have at least approached. I saw Mickey Mantle hit two of these balls that seemed to be going over and out of the facade and the entire ballpark, but neither quite made it. That no visiting team came close immortalizes the Yankees and diminishes the goals of the visiting team.

Another interesting aspect of the seating and the frieze is that the Yankee's cheap seats are in the bleachers, rows of benches that the patron sits in, under the direct sun but so far from home plate that a good pair of binoculars is needed to see the pitches that the at bat player is trying to hit. That distance, backed by a huge scoreboard, infantilizes the major league baseball players who play in such a stadium.

So the facade with its symbols of power, wealth, and uniqueness, contrasts with the bleachers, where on a hot summer day, you will be bleached when your sunburn peels. But that is not all: those monuments that were placed in the outfield in the old stadium, then moved into the bleacher area in the new stadium, set up a kind of graveyard of the elephants, with similar monuments erected behind the center field fence in rows, like in a cemetery, marking the careers of the greatest of the Yankee stars, as ghosts, more powerful than the living men playing against the Yankees. The effect one feels going into Monument Park points out with no subtlety just how many there are and how great and exclusionary the Yankees are. Anyone who goes to the park to catch a home run ball, even in batting practice, has no chance in that part of the park. A netting over the top prevents the ball from landing there and potentially killing an unaware patron; in other words, nobody can hit a ball into Monument Park. It is purely a place of the gods of the Yankees.

So the facade suggests nobility, power, brains, deceptiveness, and the history of the Yankees as cornerstones of Western Civilization, just like Greek temples make such a claim.

The new stadium, however, does have one important design element of great meaning and function that the older stadiums did not have—those wire mesh walls and curtains. Its use in the new stadium carries with it plans and considerations as well as metaphysical values. Steel wire mesh curtains and walls carry a heavy load. Steel is made from iron, and in mythology iron represents inner power, rage, and primal urges. Iron and steel are not the same, but if the steel were colored with a gold pigment, it would represent wisdom, royalty, wealth, and prosperity. The use of gold colored steel mesh as wall decoration and even in place of drywall would have all those meanings as well.

In the late twentieth century, GKD Inc., an engineered metals company, pioneered the use of such steel mesh, installing it at the new stadium. The major design elements of that fabric is genius, compared to run of the mill sheetrock. When GKD Metal Fabrics installed this material, it became part of the iconography of Yankee Stadium, combining the symbolic values noted above with the values of those concerned with environmental issues, global warning, as well as everyday safety from heat

and fire. Its practical qualities made the climate concerned acolytes very pleased. According to GKD, the material itself is visually stunning, reduces energy needs, draws attention, creates a vibrant facade, transforms spaces, and is environmentally sustainable. Certified by the Green Building Council, it can be used on ceilings as well as walls. It is fireproof, durable, can be etched with graphics on metal panels, and it produces exterior and interior artistic solutions to traditional buildings and uses. It symbolizes environmental correctness as it intersects with energy savings and occupant comfort. It is made of recycled material and can be recycled. And it is not new, but first came into being in 1888 in England. Furthermore, it can be made of several other metals besides steel, but also of plastic. And its countenance is symbolic of the interplay of equal forces united for strength of the whole pulling in one direction—in other words, the perfect team.

From a different point of view, there is a static logic and dynamic logic of the woven mesh: pulling and then releasing the wire, the form bounces back into shape; however, if the mesh is pulled it can be manipulated to create an additional subset of connectives. The string can either unravel form or pull the form into order. Like the players and coaches, it comes in a variety of shapes and sizes and colors, has an open and closed feel, like people do, is flowing rather than rigid, (which we don't like in people either), and its structure as a mesh emphasizes the free functioning of individual elements and employees in a composed non-hierarchical structure—equality, diversity, and equity.

So the iconography of Yankee Stadium recapitulates classical power and control as major elements of meaning not only of the field of play but also of the players, managers, coaches, owners and any other Yankee worker, associating them with the greatness of Western Civilization. And the record of accomplishment over the years is the ontogeny that replicates philology.

But there is more. Over time stadiums changed relatively little, while the personnel playing in those ballparks did. Against the grand and seemingly permanent physical backdrop, a full century of players plied their trade, all individuals but part of a team of rare distinction. But they were also part of the ecosystem of New York City. As affected as they were by the business organization that is the Yankees, these employees and owners were also influenced by factors other than the Greeks virtues. It is them we owe, as they and not the ballpark are the major influences on American culture.

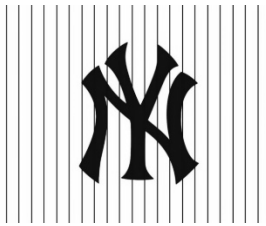
Monument Park statues and plaques mark the legendary Yankee stars of a glorious past, in a place which any fan with a ticket can visit before any home game. That Monument Park, its history, marks the hiring of Miller

Huggins as the beginning of the successes of the Yankees, leading to their place as the most storied and most culturally intensive symbol of all of American sports.

We may decide among these design icons which are the most important, which is the one we see as best representing the Yankeeness of the Yankees. We may do this by using machine learning techniques from the computer world. We may see computer code as analogous to design code to see that connectives are represented among the design icons that are mentioned above and which affect the attention of those watching a game. And we can chart that information to determine which of the icons is really the master icon. The master icon then is the essential element of not just the stadium but also the Yankees themselves.

The chart below historically precedes the current fascination with artificial intelligence, I am proud to say. It shows a connection or correlation between certain recurring icons that the Yankees use in the architecture of the stadium and the choice of apparel and symbols of the organization. The high scores in the conjunction category appear to indicate that two icons are found at the same time or repeated in different icons. It is also possible the alternative denial category is significant in describing the choices that were made in presenting the icons. So one cannot see two icons appearing at the same time under certain conditions. Disjunction seems to indicate that one or other of the icons can be found repeating in the organization choice. The *only if* category suggests that one icon has to be present if another one is also used. The material implications occur less often with restrictions of specific conditions that result in the *if then* and *but not* categories. Negation and joint denial do not have major impacts on icon use but are outnumbered by the profusion of choices that AI gives. In grammar there are only five or six; in AI that number is tripled.

What You See

	Negation (NOT)	Conjunction (AND)	Disjunction (OR)	Material Implications (IF THEN)	Bi-Conditional (IF AND ONLY IF)	Alternative Denial (NOT BOTH)	Joint Denial (NEITHER – NOR)	Material Non-Implication (BUT NOT)
Facade		4	1			1		1
Wire Mesh		2			3	2		1
Rows of Seats	1	2	1			2		1
Outer Walls and Windows	1	2	1	2	1	1		
Pinstripe Uniforms		4	1					1
Interlocking Insignia		3	1		1	2		
Monument Park and Former Yanks		3	1		1	2		

Now we can see that verticals are essential Yankee icons, most prominently represented by the pinstripes on the home uniforms. We find that one of Ruppert's first decisions as owner, outfitting his players in trendy pinstripes, led in turn to the replication of verticals throughout the stadium, and also became the controlling figure in the overall design of the Yankees as a corporation, as a sports team, and also of New York City. And as New York is an icon of America, so are the pinstripes an icon of America.

Once the stadium design was established, the Yankees went on repeating it, not with new stadiums but with who they put on the field to play in that stadium. That is to say that the on-field personnel, the players, were chosen to replicate the early glory years. That design consists of three to four players of All-Star quality, three to four players of above average quality, and the rest solid and consistent. It is true that the Yanks spent more money on these players, but the amount they paid was in proportion to the

money that the team brought in on ticket sales and other sources. In other words, they could spend more because they made more than other teams. And while that regularly happened, there also were times when the Yanks' salaries were less than those of other teams—and they did not fare as well on the field.

The Yankees themselves as individuals had their own opinions about Yankeeness: Joe DiMaggio, for example, thought that Joe McCarthy was Mr. Yankee. Other Yankees, for their part, made themselves into players that had odd skill sets; Babe Ruth, at 245 pounds, the most flamboyant, would steal bases. Billy Martin transcended his own ability. The major point here is that while the Yankees were what they wanted to be, all of them are outliers as in Malcolm Gladwell's book *Outliers.*

In Gladwell's book, we find that important players contribute more to team success than one might suppose. Their performance in turn seems to bring the "right stuff" out of the supporting players. Gladwell sees these stars as luxury outliers, having different qualities than the others. And some of the outliers were statistically not better players and therefore not accorded the ranking as one of baseball's best players. To ease your distress, I can say right here that these outliers had one thing in common: they marched to their own drumbeats. The stadium was itself built on that model, with the strong verticals all around, the players, the outliers also were strong verticals, and encouraged by their surroundings to be just that. The Babe and Gehrig were both prototypes in the early years and continued to be, even in death.

The Babe was all about fun, and Gehrig was all about success. Nothing else mattered to them, though they were on opposite sides of the caring spectrum. All the players in the chapters to follow have that in common, strong verticals in a rounded world. The effect of being an outlier is to insulate oneself from common concerns, annoyances, and practices and to just be what they felt like being.

All of them were different from each other, and all of them contributed a necessary ingredient to Yankee success. They were their own Boys of Summer.

Beyond the individual aspects, the team itself is a model of what now is called by sociologists a modern working group. These days there are working groups all over, in all businesses of any size, in recreation, and sometimes in households. With computers to keep records and to solve problems that would otherwise be laborious to approach, the working group is the means of dividing work efficiently and completely, and solving all kinds of issues that arise, among them issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity. Everybody has a role and everybody can contribute, theoretically.