



The Swinger (Kindle Single)

Joseph Bottum

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After 20 years as shortstop for the New York Yankees, Derek Jeter leaves the game of baseball. And what, at last, are we to make of him? To the fans, he seems to stand among the greats: a Yankee like Ruth, Gehrig, DiMaggio, and Mantle. To the modern statisticians and number-crunchers of sabermetrics, he looks like a player whose fielding has cost his teams more runs than any other player in baseball history. To the sportswriters, desperate for storylines that don't involve steroids and bad behavior, Jeter appears an admirable sporting gentleman of an old, old school. To the gossip pages, running photos of the famously beautiful women he's dated, he seems a wonderfully useful image of the modern swinger and man-about-town.

The one thing certain about Derek Jeter is that we want him to stand for something, even if we can't quite settle on what that something is. Baseball has needed him as a symbol, and Jeter has allowed himself to be symbolic—even while he reveals nothing of his interior life and nothing of himself. In "The Swinger," Joseph Bottum examines the mask of Derek Jeter and considers his place in the history of the game.

Joseph Bottum is the author of bestselling Kindle Singles for Amazon, along with print books of poetry, fiction, literary criticism, and social history—including his latest book, "An Anxious Age: The Post-Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of America" (Image, 2014). His work has appeared in magazines and newspapers from the "Atlantic" to the "Wall Street Journal," and having fled the fleshpots of New York and Washington, he lives with his family far off in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

Cover design by Adil Dara.

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