

**Quotations from:**  
**Henry Aaron, Barry Bonds, Joe DiMaggio, and Ted Williams**  
**Casey Stengel**

**Chapter 15**

*The interesting facts for **Chapter 15** focus on the quotations of the four players, mentioned most in this book. They are Henry Aaron, Barry Bonds, Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams. One way of getting to know these players as people with views on the times they lived in is through their quotations. We will now look at some quotations for each of these players. I have added a fifth person to this list, the famous manager, Casey Stengel (the Old Professor was his nickname). Any person with such a nickname must have had a lot to say. In fact, he had his own language called Stengellese.*

**Ted Williams**

At the age of 42 in 1960 the owner of the Red Sox offered Williams the same \$125,000 contract he had in 1959. Ted told the owner he did not earn the \$125,000 in 1959 and did not deserve the \$125,000 offered. He told the owner to make it \$90,000. He then signed the contract. Can you imagine a player today negotiating his contract down?

**Ted Williams's Quotations**

- In losing the 1941 MVP Award to Joe DiMaggio, Williams stated, "I didn't feel cheated or robbed that year. I believe there isn't a record in the books that will be tougher to break than Joe's 56-game hitting streak. It may be the greatest batting achievement of all times."
- "Joe DiMaggio was the greatest all-around player I ever saw. His career cannot be summed up in numbers and awards. It might sound corny, but he had a profound and lasting impact on the country."
- "I hope somebody hits .400 soon. Then people can start pestering that guy with questions about the last guy to hit .400."

**Joe DiMaggio's Quotations**

- “Now I've had everything except for the thrill of watching (Babe Ruth) play.”
- “I’m a ballplayer, not an actor, when asked why he looked so serious after hitting a home run.”
- “I Thank God for making me a Yankee.”
- “A player’s got to be kept hungry to become a big leaguer. That’s why no boy from a rich family ever made the big leagues.”

### Casey Stengel

Casey Stengel managed the New York Yankees for 12 years. **He won 10 pennants and seven World Series championships.** He was also the first manager of the expansion New York Mets in 1962.

### Casey Stengel Quotations

- "He (Mickey Mantle) has it in his body to be great."
- "He (Mickey Mantle) should lead the league in everything. With his combination of speed and power he should win the triple batting crown every year. In fact, he should do anything he wants to do."
- "He (Satchel Paige) threw the ball as far from the bat and as close to the plate as possible."
- "He (Babe Ruth) was very brave at the plate. You rarely saw him fall away from a pitch. He stayed right in there. No one drove him out." Source: Babe: The Legend Comes to Life (Robert Creamer)
- "He'd (Yogi Berra) fall in a sewer and come up with a gold watch." Source: Baseball Digest (August 1972)
- Referring to the 1962 Mets, Stengel said, “Can anyone here play this game?”
- "He (Gil Hodges) fields better on one leg than anybody else I got on two." Source: The Incredible Mets (Maury Allen)
- "He (Lyndon B. Johnson) wanted to see poverty, so he came to see my team (1964 New York Mets)."
- "The secret of managing is to keep the guys who hate you away from the guys who are undecided."
- "The trouble with women umpires is that I couldn't argue with one. I'd put my arms around her and give her a little kiss." Source: Time Magazine (August 11, 1975)

- "The Yankees don't pay me to win every day, just two out of three."
- "They got a lot of kids now whose uniforms are so tight, especially the pants that they cannot bend over to pick up ground balls. And they don't want to bend over in television games because in that way there is no way their face can get on the camera."
- "They're been a lot of fast men but none as big and strong as (Mickey) Mantle. He's gonna be around a long time, if he can stay well, that fella of mine."
- "They say he's (Yogi Berra) funny. Well, he has a lovely wife and family, a beautiful home, money in the bank, and he plays golf with millionaires. What's funny about that?"
- "They say some of my stars drink whiskey, but I have found that ones who drink milkshakes don't win many ball games."
- "They told me my services were no longer desired because they wanted to put in a youth program as an advance way of keeping the club going. I'll never make the mistake of being seventy again."
- "This club (1969 New York Mets) plays better baseball now. Some of them look fairly alert."
- "Wake up muscles we're in New York now."
- "We (the Mets) are a much improved ball club, now we lose in extra innings!"
- "Well, that's baseball. Rags to riches one day and riches to rags the next. But I've been in it thirty-six years and I'm used to it." Source: The Sporting News (November 3, 1948)
- "We've (1962 New York Mets) got to learn to stay out of triple plays."
- "Why has our pitching been so great? Our catcher (Yogi Berra) that's why. He looks cumbersome but he's quick as a cat." Source: New York Times (April 15, 1981)
- "You can't go out to the mound, hobbling and take a pitcher out with a cane." Source: San Francisco Examiner (September 30, 1975)
- "You got to get twenty-seven outs to win." Source: You Could Look it Up (Maury Allen)
- "You have to go broke three times to learn how to make a living."
- "You have to have a catcher or you'll have all passed balls."
- "You put the whammy on him, but when he's (Sandy Koufax) pitching, the whammy tends to go on vacation." Source: You Could Look it Up (Maury Allen)
- "Now there are three things you can do in a baseball game: you can win or you can lose or it can rain."

- “The trick is growing up without growing old.”
- “Oldtimers” weekends and airplane landings are alike. If you can walk away from them, they’re successful.”
- “If you don’t get it by midnight, chances are you ain’t gonna get it; and if you do, it ain’t worth it.”

### Henry Aaron’s Quotations

- "Babe Ruth never had to contend with anything like that when he was establishing his record."
- "Babe Ruth never had to contend with anything like that when he was establishing his record." Source: Baseball As I Have Known It (Fred Lieb)
- "Can I smoke now without someone taking my picture?"
- "Does Pete (Rose) hustle? Before the All-Star game he came into the clubhouse and took off his shoes and they ran another mile without him."
- "Guessing what the pitcher is going to throw is eighty percent of being a successful hitter. The other twenty percent is just execution." Source: 714 and Beyond (Jerry Bronfield)
- "I can't recall a day this year or last when I did not hear the name of Babe Ruth." Source: Babe: The Legend Comes to Life (Robert W. Creamer)
- "I don't see pitches down the middle anymore - not even in batting practice."
- "I don't want them to forget (Babe) Ruth, I just want them to remember me!"
- "I looked for the same pitch my whole career, a breaking ball. All of the time. I never worried about the fastball. They couldn't throw it past me, none of them."
- "I'm hoping someday that some kid, black or white, will hit more home runs than myself. Whoever it is, I'd be pulling for him."
- "In baseball, there is something electrifying about the big leagues. I had read so much about (Stan) Musial, (Ted) Williams and (Jackie) Robinson. I had put those guys on a pedestal. They were something special. I really thought they put their pants on different, rather than one leg at a time."
- "I never smile when I have a bat in my hands. That's when you've got to be serious. When I get out on the field, nothing's a joke to me. I don't feel like I should walk around with a smile on my face." Source: Milwaukee Journal (July 31, 1956)

- "Last year, I was sort of a kid and I was a little scared, I ain't scared any more." Source: The Sporting News (May 4, 1955)
- "On the field, blacks have been able to be super giants. But, once our playing days are over, this is the end of it and we go back to the back of the bus again." Source: Hammerin' Hank (Dan Schlossberg)
- "Roger Maris lost his hair the season he hit sixty-one, I still have all my hair, but when it's over, I'm going home to Mobile and fish for a long time."
- "The pitcher has got only a ball. I've got a bat. So the percentage in weapons is in my favor and I let the fellow with the ball do the fretting."
- "Yogi (Berra), I came up here to hit, not to read." 1958 World Series answer to Berra after being told to turn his bat around so he could 'read' the label and not break the bat.
- "You can only milk a cow so long, then you're left holding the pail." 1976 Retirement
- "You got to play a hundred and fifty games a year, so pick your spots. You can miss two games a month; so pick the days you're gonna be hurt, or you're gonna rest or you're gonna have a drink or two. The rest of the time, be on that field."

### **Barry Bonds' Quotations**

- "I've always played for the acceptance of my godfather (Willie Mays) and my father (Bobby Bonds)."
- "I like to be against the odds. I'm not afraid to be lonely at the top. With me, it's just the satisfaction of the game. Just performance."
- "I need to win, man. I've had numbers, but I've never won a World Series."
- "I never stop looking for things to try and make myself better."
- "I think of myself as 'catching' the ball with my bat and letting the pitcher supply the power."
- "It's called talent. I just have it. I can't explain it. You either have it or you don't."
- "It's not the name that makes the player. It's the player. If all sons of players could play in the major leagues, they'd all be up here, but they're not."
- "I was born to hit a baseball. I can hit a baseball."
- "Losing dad (Bobby Bonds) was the worst thing in the world."

- "My career is an open book, but my life is not."
- "Serra High school, to me, was my most enjoyable time for me in my entire life. That was the only time I was free. We just played baseball because it was fun."
- "Sometimes I surprise my own damn self."
- "Today's home run (number seventy), I was just in shock. The chance of hitting a home run off a guy (Dennis Springer) who throws that slowly is slim. I just said, `What else can you give me, God? Enough is enough.'" - Jet (October 22, 2001)
- "When I hit it (#500), I couldn't believe I hit it. Everything was in slow motion. It looked like it was stopped in midair. Then I saw it went past those people (on the left field wall) and I thought, 'Wow! I did it!'"

Bonds tells MSNBC he would boycott Cooperstown if the Hall of Fame displayed his record-breaking home run ball with an asterisk. Bonds said, "There's no such thing as an asterisk in baseball."