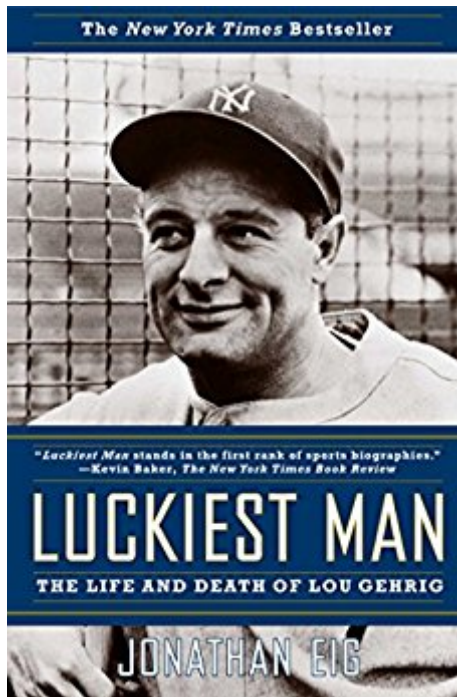


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# Luckiest Man: The Life And Death Of Lou Gehrig



## Synopsis

The definitive account of the life and tragic death of baseball legend Lou Gehrig. Lou Gehrig was a baseball legend—the Iron Horse, the stoic New York Yankee who was the greatest first baseman in history, a man whose consecutive-games streak was ended by a horrible disease that now bears his name. But as this definitive new biography makes clear, Gehrig's life was more complicated—and, perhaps, even more heroic—than anyone really knew. Drawing on new interviews and more than two hundred pages of previously unpublished letters to and from Gehrig, *Luckiest Man* gives us an intimate portrait of the man who became an American hero: his life as a shy and awkward youth growing up in New York City, his unlikely friendship with Babe Ruth (a friendship that allegedly ended over rumors that Ruth had had an affair with Gehrig's wife), and his stellar career with the Yankees, where his consecutive-games streak stood for more than half a century. What was not previously known, however, is that symptoms of Gehrig's affliction began appearing in 1938, earlier than is commonly acknowledged. Later, aware that he was dying, Gehrig exhibited a perseverance that was truly inspiring; he lived the last two years of his short life with the same grace and dignity with which he gave his now-famous "luckiest man" speech.

Meticulously researched and elegantly written, Jonathan Eig's *Luckiest Man* shows us one of the greatest baseball players of all time as we've never seen him before.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

a newer yankee fan, growing up and being familiar with the teams starting in the 90's and fav player being Donnie baseball, I always saw that Gehrig was always chosen as the all time 1st baseman, I never knew anything about Lou but after finding this book, I wanted to read it. while I don't have anything to compare it to, it reads as if the interviews and recall were more recent than 80-90 yrs ago. I have a new appreciation for Gehrig and given his reliability as well as his clutch performances, had he been able to play out his career, he may very well have been remembered as the greatest of all time, although he's still mentioned as an all time great, there wouldn't have been any question. For any yankee fan, baseball fan, this is a must read! well written, fast read

Lou Gehrig was one of the greatest ballplayers in the history of the game. Known not only for his record of most consecutive games played that stood for decades, but also as a man who stood courageously while suffering from a terminal illness. Gehrig was born in 1903 as the son of German immigrants. He was raised in a poor household and both of his parents worked to make ends meet. Young Gehrig would find an interest in baseball and played for his high school and college teams. While playing for the Columbia University team, he was noticed by a scout from the New York Yankees. He left college, never graduating, to pursue a career in professional baseball, first in the minor leagues, and then as the first baseman for the Yankees. During his time in the Yankees, his early rise to stardom was overshadowed by the greatest baseball legend, Babe Ruth. Gehrig and Ruth were generally friendly, even if they were polar opposites from a personality standpoint. Ruth was gregarious, drank a lot, and womanized while Gehrig was reserved, humble, and even a little shy. He was often offered less money than he deserved, but his poor upbringing made him happy to be paid just to play a game he loved at all. Gehrig himself seemed to find himself out of place with his teammates. He was not "one of the boys" so to say. While on exhibition, for example, while other players would bring their wives or girls (or pointedly did not) Gehrig would invite his mother along. It was not until he was 30 that he married Eleanor, despite his mother's objections. Gehrig's most famous record was his streak of most consecutive games in Major League Baseball. Although he acted humble about it, his streak became ever more important to him as it continued to grow. Injuries would not stop Gehrig, even if it meant playing for only the first inning and then sitting out the rest of a game. Eventually, Gehrig would play in 2,130 games before his streak ended, a record

that would stand until Cal Ripken, Jr. broke it in 1995. Unfortunately for Gehrig, his career in baseball, and his life, would be cut short. Fans and sportswriters noted how terrible his performance was at the beginning of the 1939 season. Gehrig himself noticed it more than anybody else. After visiting doctors, he would be diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a disease that attacks the nervous system and which eventually causes bodily systems to falter and then fail. The disease forced Gehrig's retirement from baseball. On July 4, 1939, Lou Gehrig Appreciation Day was held at Yankee Stadium where Gehrig was honored and he made his famous "luckiest man on earth" speech. Gehrig remained optimistic that he could beat ALS, even though there was no cure. Mayor of New York City Fiorello La Guardia appointed Gehrig to the city's parole board, which Gehrig excitedly accepted. However, his condition continued to decline until he could no longer walk or even eat properly. Gehrig died in 1941 at the tragically young age of 37. Lou Gehrig was truly a great man and a great ballplayer. He was humble throughout his life and really felt lucky to have had and experienced what he did. Even while suffering from ALS, he had the courage and strength to declare himself the luckiest man on the face of the earth. I thought this book was a good biography of Lou Gehrig. Even if you are just curious to learn about Gehrig and not really interested in baseball (like myself), this book is still a great read of a great man.

This is a wonderful book, especially for baseball fans, people interested in ALS, and for those interested in life in the U.S. in the early to mid twentieth century. Well written and researched, the author obviously enjoyed telling Gehrig's story. Well worth your time. Just a note about the Kindle version of the book; there are a number of minor typographical errors throughout. Although I was able to ignore them, it's a shame they have not been eliminated. I think it is somewhat disrespectful to allow this sloppiness to continue for both the author and the reader.

Luckiest Man is the most definitive book on Lou Gehrig's period. Mr. Eig goes into great detail introducing you to a young Lou full of talent while at Columbia and on through his days as the great run producer for the Yankees. Lou would have most definitely been the RBI king if not being stricken with ALS. He is without a doubt the greatest first baseman the game has ever seen, but he was an even greater man. He was a humble man of grace and dignity and the Yankee Captain. The best sports biography I have ever read!!

This is an extraordinarily well-researched biography of the great Iron Horse of baseball. The author balances Gehrig's private and baseball life so well that the reader becomes a friend as well as a

fan. My father was a great fan of Lou's and saw him play many times from his start with the Yankees in 1924 until his departure in 1939. Like so many other Gehrig fans, he was deeply affected by the loss of a friend - so much so that my father rarely spoke of him, even though we saw many games together in Yankee Stadium from the early forties until 1959 when I left New York. If you were to read only one Gehrig biography, this should be the one.

The title is very appropriate. Lou Gehrig called himself "the luckiest man" in his farewell speech at the Yankees' stadium. Among ALS patients in his time, he was very lucky. He was lucky to be physically talented to the degree he could play a game for a living - at the highest level. But he was very unlucky to be afflicted with ALS. The book also portrays him as a very modest, humble person who let his actions speak for him. Though quiet, he was gracious and respectful in his dealings with other people. His personal attributes, added to his baseball accomplishments earned him a huge outpouring of support from friends, fans, and associates in his struggle with ALS. Most ALS patients do not experience this level of attention and support. He considered himself lucky in this respect, but he also earned tremendous support by being the person he was. The main negative thing as I was reading the book: the author seemed to skip around in time and I was confused as to the sequence of events. A minor item: The baseball statistics at the end of the book are almost unreadable on my e-book.

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