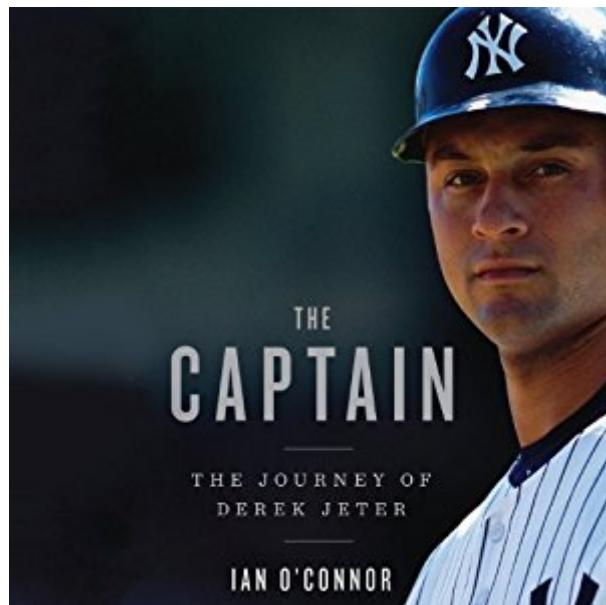


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# The Captain: The Journey Of Derek Jeter



## Synopsis

Every spring, Little Leaguers across the country mimic his stance and squabble over the right to wear his number, 2, the next number to be retired by the world's most famous ball team. Derek Jeter is their hero. He walks in the footsteps of Ruth, Gehrig, DiMaggio, and Mantle, and someday his shadow will loom just as large. Yet he has never been the best player in baseball. In fact, he hasn't always been the best player on his team. But his intangible grace and Jordanesque ability to play big in the biggest of postseason moments make him the face of the modern Yankee dynasty, and of America's game. In *The Captain*, best-selling author Ian O'Connor draws on extensive reporting and unique access to Jeter that has spanned some 15 years to reveal how a biracial kid from Michigan became New York's most beloved sports figure and the enduring symbol of the steroid-free athlete. O'Connor takes us behind the scenes of a legendary baseball life and career, from Jeter's early struggles in the minor leagues, when homesickness and errors in the field threatened a stillborn career, to his heady days as a Yankee superstar and prince of the city who squired some of the world's most beautiful women, to his tense battles with former best friend A-Rod. We also witness Jeter struggling to come to terms with his declining skills and the declining favor of the only organization he ever wanted to play for, leading to a contentious contract negotiation with the Yankees that left people wondering if Jeter might end his career in a uniform without pinstripes. Derek Jeter's march toward the Hall of Fame has been dignified and certain, but behind that leadership and hero's grace there are hidden struggles and complexities that have never been explored, until now. As Jeter closes in on 3,000 hits, a number no Yankee has ever touched, *The Captain* offers an incisive, exhilarating, and revealing new look at one of the game's greatest players in the gloaming of his career.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Ian O'Connor's **THE CAPTAIN: THE JOURNEY OF DEREK JETER** is a breezy and enjoyable biography of the iconic Yankee shortstop. O'Connor paints an overwhelmingly admiring portrait that nonetheless manages to remain objective. Through it all Jeter comes across as a prodigious talent who epitomizes class, grace, wholesomeness, dignity, dedication, and sportsmanship. If he sounds perfect, it's because he nearly is: as several different interviewees put it, he's the kind of person one would hope their son to be or their daughter to marry. There is not a more positive role model in all of sports. Yet Jeter is still only human and O'Connor is perceptive of his subject's faults. In particular, Jeter is portrayed as being both overly sensitive to criticism and ruthlessly unforgiving towards those he perceives as having wronged him or violated his friendship. The latter trait is especially highlighted in the second-half of the book, which is dominated by the complex relationship between Jeter and Alex Rodriguez. O'Connor, not unfairly, concludes Jeter failed A-Rod in his role as Yankee captain by holding a grudge over passive-aggressive comments Rodriguez had made years earlier and not extending to the third baseman during his early struggles in New York the same public support Jeter had given Chuck Knoblauch and Jason Giambi during their adversities. The chinks-in-the-armor are relatively trifling and stand out only because they contrast, however slightly, with what O'Connor astutely describes as Jeter's almost unfailing instinct to do "the right thing at the right time.

When I first picked up this book I thought I would just get a rehash of the things written by others and a series of "cliche-type" quotes that Derek has always given. Mr. O'Connor has done some impressive research to peel back the onion so to speak on Derek Jeter's inner person. He also tells the tale in a very compelling fashion that made this book difficult to put down. He goes back to the story of Jeter's grandparents and the work ethic that was always brought about by Jeter's grandfather. This ethic was later drilled into Derek by his grandfather. His mother Dot was also heavily influenced by her father and married Derek's father at a time when interracial marriages were still considered "shocking." Derek also bonded closely with his sister and even defended her honor a few times. Derek was from the start always sure that he would be a Yankee shortstop and marry Mariah Carey. He lived his entire childhood and teenage years with this dream. Each time

something would go wrong with him it seemed like the perfect coach or mentor came along to right him. He was the top high school player and the year the Yankees drafted him they had the six pick. O'Connor unfolds how the draft went down in such a way that even though the reader knows where Derek wound up, you still have your doubts as the suspense of the picking builds. Even when Derek finally decides on the Yankees, the author makes you so sure that he will be Bill Freehan's shortstop at the University of Michigan. Very much like Mickey Mantle, Derek had an incredibly rough first year in the minors and would run up big phone bills calling home crying, doubting his decision to bypass college and feeling like a total washout.

Rating: 4 of 5 stars (very good) Review: While I cannot consider myself a fan of either the New York Yankees or of Derek Jeter, I respect the consistent excellence that both of them bring to the game of baseball. When I found this book when looking for a good biography, I picked this up. I then let it sit on my "to be read" pile for over a year until the 2014 regular season ended and I decided to read it after Jeter played his last game. I was able to obtain the audio version of the book at no extra cost, and now that I have a longer commute, I decided to listen to the audio book and this review is based on that version. This is a book that truly lives up to the title. Ian O'Connor does take the reader on a journey of Derek Jeter's life and career. In the opening notes, O'Connor does state that he did not obtain interviews with Jeter and that the book was a result of research and interviews with other people. That is the strength of this book as O'Connor tells the complete story of Jeter's baseball career from his days in Kalamazoo, Michigan to the 1992 draft when Jeter was unexpectedly available for the Yankees (my favorite chapter in the book) to his struggles in the minor leagues and finally his adventures in pinstripes at both the old and new Yankee Stadium. O'Connor covers many sports in the New York metropolitan area, including the Yankees and his knowledge of the game and the team shows in the book. He writes not only about Jeter's ride through the Yankee dynasty of 1996-2000, but also has many stories about the team itself and some of the players in those years such as Scott Brosius and Mariano Rivera.

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