



**NEWS RELEASE  
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***“He foresaw the platooning that managers like Casey Stengel used years before it happened. He told me I had to be a switch-hitter if I was going to play.”—Mickey Mantle***

**Overland Park, KS, June 1, 2020**--Raised during the Great Depression, young Mickey Mantle faced overwhelming odds that he would ever reach the Major Leagues. The chances were even slim that his baseball talents would ever be discovered in the impoverished mining district of northeastern Oklahoma. Driven and coached by his father, Elven “Mutt” Mantle, Mickey not only reached the Majors, he became one of the greatest players and most admired heroes in the history of the game. But as we learned in his later years, the unrelenting pressure from his father may have had a psychological effect on the son, whose adult life was complicated by alcoholism, womanizing, and an enigmatic, sometimes boorish personality.

In his new book, ***Mutt’s Dream: The Making of The Mick***, veteran author Howard Burman creates the backdrop for the life of the simple rural lad who became the superstar known as “The Mick.” Based on actual events and enhanced by Burman’s abilities as a playwright, ***Mutt’s Dream*** presents the psychological and sociological threads that wove the tapestry of Mickey Mantle’s life. The 320-page book, published by Ascend Books, is now available at your favorite bookstore and on-line booksellers including Amazon.com and Barnesandnoble.com

Mutt Mantle’s dream shaped who Mickey became, from humble roots in rural Oklahoma to a baseball legend. Mutt saw only a few options in life for himself: farming in the Dust Bowl, or laboring in the zinc and lead mines that were death traps. But he did know baseball, and he knew it very well – better than most men did. If circumstances had been different, he might have become a Major League player himself, yet he felt family obligations had forced him to give up his chance. He wanted to give Mickey his dream, so he did exactly that. Some have said that Mutt’s obsession with developing Mickey caused emotional damage to his son. Mutt knew only that he was giving Mickey the best chance to have a better life than his, and his hopes and ambitions for Mickey were what kept Mutt going.

From the time Mickey was a toddler his father exposed him to the finer points of the game—and his preoccupation with switch-hitting bordered on fanatical. As recognized by Mickey later in life, those instructions proved prescient and productive as he became the greatest switch-hitter the game has ever known. But what price was paid in the development of the individual?

Burman examines these complexities with an engaging dialogue that exposes the inner conflicts of father, son, and those family members and friends who provided support.

**From Chapter 23:** *When Mickey hits a home run, Mutt applauds and shakes Mickey's hand...but that's all he shows. Afterwards Mutt won't mention the home run, but he will the errors.*

Burman creates scenes of other events and elements that molded Mickey: the sexual abuse by a half-sister, the freak football injury that almost cost him a leg, his time as a popular three-sport star in high school, and the camaraderie of friends in a dirt-poor community during the Great Depression. The book is targeted at baseball fans, particularly those of Mickey Mantle. But it is not just a baseball book—it is also an engaging coming-of-age narrative. This is the story of Mickey Mantle before he became famous, and how his upbringing forged the skills and difficulties of his adulthood.

**In the Introduction:** *There is a time when all the important choices in our lives are before us. A time pregnant with the excitement of adolescence and the promise of adulthood. This story is about that time. Baseball fans, even the casual fans, know something of Mickey Mantle—the tape-measure home runs, the blazing speed, the nagging injuries. His story of becoming The Mick is part of American lore—the ultimate baseball father creates a legendary player. There are many books detailing Mantle's professional career and life after baseball. **Mutt's Dream: Making The Mick** is unique. By exploring his early years, readers will come to understand the roots of this complicated hero.*

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Author Howard Burman was born in Brooklyn, where trips with his father to watch the Dodgers at Ebbets Field ignited a love of baseball reflected in some of the books and plays he has written. Burman attended Wilmington College in Ohio and later transferred to Ohio State University, where he received his B.A. and remained to earn his Ph.D. He later helped form Cameo Entertainments, and toured productions with television and film stars such as Valerie Harper, Roscoe Lee Browne, Lee Meredith, Michael Learned, and Roy Dotrice. He also produced an off-Broadway show in New York, *Behind the Broken Words*. Burman moved on to become Artistic Producing Director of the Hilberry Theatre in Detroit and the Chair of the Theatre Department at Wayne State University, where he produced some 35 shows, including two that were nominated for a national critics award. He returned to California to start the California Repertory Company, and chaired the department of Theatre Arts at California State University-Long Beach. There he produced more than 150 shows, including 23 which he wrote. He is the author of *The Iliad Was Either Homer or Somebody Else of the Same Name*, a novel--*A Story Told by Two Liars*, and several baseball books, including *A Man Called Shoeless*, the story of baseball's controversial and misunderstood star, Joe Jackson.

Burman has traveled extensively in Europe and Asia and has been a Fulbright scholar in Taiwan. He lived part-time in Switzerland and then for a few years in Ireland. He and his wife, Karen, currently reside in Felton, California--a small town in the mountains of Santa Cruz County south of San Francisco. Their son, Ty, daughter, Kerry, and granddaughters, Gabrielle and Lucy, live nearby.

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