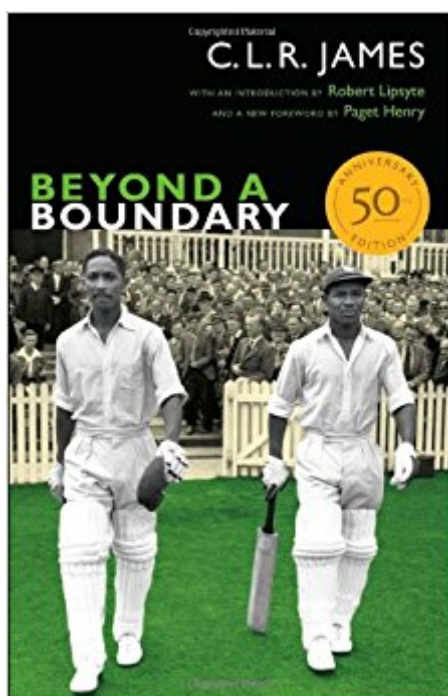


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# Beyond A Boundary: 50th Anniversary Edition (The C. L. R. James Archives)



## Synopsis

This new edition of C. L. R. James's classic *Beyond a Boundary* celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of one of the greatest books on sport and culture ever written. Named one of the Top 50 Sports Books of All Time by *Sports Illustrated* "Beyond a Boundary . . . should find its place on the team with Izaak Walton, Ivan Turgenev, A. J. Liebling, and Ernest Hemingway." —Derek Walcott, *The New York Times Book Review* "As a player, James the writer was able to see in cricket a metaphor for art and politics, the collective experience providing a focus for group effort and individual performance. . . . [In] his scintillating memoir of his life in cricket, *Beyond a Boundary* (1963), James devoted some of his finest pages to this theme." —Edward Said, *The Washington Post* "A work of double reverence — for the resilient, elegant ritualism of cricket and for the black people of the world." —Whitney Balliett, *The New Yorker* "Beyond a Boundary is a book of remarkable richness and force, which vastly expands our understanding of sports as an element of popular culture in the Western and colonial world." —Mark Naison, *The Nation* "Everything James has done has had the mark of originality, of his own flexible, sensitive, and deeply cultured intelligence. He conveys not a rigid doctrine but a delight and curiosity in all the manifestations of life, and the clue to everything lies in his proper appreciation of the game of cricket." —E. P. Thompson, author of *The Making of the English Working Class* "Beyond a Boundary is . . . first and foremost an autobiography of a living legend — probably the greatest social theorist of our times." —Manning Marable, *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* "The great triumph of *Beyond a Boundary* is its ability to rise above genre and in its very form explore the complex nature of colonial West Indian society." —Caryl Phillips, *The New Republic*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Beyond a Boundary . . . should find its place on the team with Izaak Walton, Ivan Turgenev, A. J. Liebling, and Ernest Hemingway." (Derek Walcott The New York Times Book Review)"As a player, James the writer was able to see in cricket a metaphor for art and politics, the collective experience providing a focus for group effort and individual performance. . . . [In] his scintillating memoir of his life in cricket, Beyond a Boundary (1963), James devoted some of his finest pages to this theme." (Edward Said The Washington Post)"A work of double reverence— for the resilient, elegant ritualism of cricket and for the black people of the world." (Whitney Balliett The New Yorker)"Beyond a Boundary is a book of remarkable richness and force, which vastly expands our understanding of sports as an element of popular culture in the Western and colonial world." (Mark Naison The Nation)"Beyond a Boundary is . . . first and foremost an autobiography of a living legend— probably the greatest social theorist of our times." (Manning Marable Journal of Sport & Social Issues)"The great triumph of Beyond a Boundary is its ability to rise above genre and in its very form explore the complex nature of colonial West Indian society." (Caryl Phillips The New Republic)"Everything James has done has had the mark of originality, of his own flexible, sensitive, and deeply cultured intelligence. He conveys not a rigid doctrine but a delight and curiosity in all the manifestations of life, and the clue to everything lies in his proper appreciation of the game of cricket." (E. P. Thompson, author of The Making of the English Working Class)"It's a measure of James's value as a writer that a case can be made that Beyond a Boundary is one of the best books about a sport ever written, and yet it's hard to imagine anyone placing it among the three or four most important books that James wrote. It is, however, well worth reading, because of what it tells us about James's political development, and because of its much broader lessons about sports." (Don Lash Socialist Worker)"Delightful and lively, full of vivid, detailed descriptions of players and play. . . . I doubt I'll ever sit through an entire test match, but if you told me I could only keep a half-dozen sports books, this would probably be one of them." (Tim Marchman Deadspin)

C. L. R. James (1901–1989), a Trinidadian historian, political activist, and prolific writer, was one of the twentieth century's most important intellectuals. He is the author of a renowned study of

the Haitian Revolution, *The Black Jacobins* (1938), and a play, *Toussaint Louverture: The Story of the Only Successful Slave Revolt in History* (1934), which is published by Duke University Press.

I originally chose it because I was familiar with the West Indies team of the 50s and 60s -- (once hit 2 against them) -- but this book turned out to be much more significant than a sports journal or "tell all". James moves through the history and context of cricket in the WI, weaving in the ties to the British public school culture, class 'warfare' and "the Empire". Although his stated aim is to produce a reasoned argument for a case (which he does), it can also be enjoyed by reading segments that are of particular interest (e.g. Victorian era, WG Grace, the great tours, the rise of professionalism, the 3 Ws) and as a reference -- particularly if of WI heritage. The writing style is crisp and often repetitive -- at first this was disconcerting, but I chose to imagine James talking to me or a group and putting out his thoughts and intermingled facts with the skill of a passionate advocate. It worked. My original plan was to read and pass on but it stays on my bookshelf -- trustworthy borrowers only!

A classic. And the autobiographical stories of late-colonial West Indies are wonderful, and wonderfully written. A great second perspective, for anyone interested in a view of this time, other than VS Naipaul. However, the cricket is incredibly technical, long, and dense. The author seems to revel in using detailed sports terminology, which must have been a little "inside baseball" even at the time when it was written. It's hard to understand, even for a modern cricket fan. And completely incomprehensible for someone who doesn't know the game beyond a flat bat, a bowler, and overs. The author seems to have disdain for the uninformed reader, when it comes to matters of sport. Although not at all for those who may know nothing of his island, which he loves informing the reader about. Which is a shame, because the book was thus written to date itself quickly. I'd love to see an edition that includes explanatory notes, or just cuts out some of the very technical cricket that has little to do with the overall story. It's almost a collection of unrelated chapters at times, although it certainly has an overall arc. A *Gulag Archipelago* of sorts. Much shorter, and less heavy. Although at times, it's hard to tell the difference.

One of the outstanding books of our time. James' development of his thesis on the relationship between sport and politics in the wider context of race, colonialism and socio-political development is outstanding. Derek Wilshire  
Lower Hutt  
New Zealand  
Award of Merit, International Hockey Federation

Extended essay of the relation of sports and culture. Lots of insightful thoughts. Not for anyone who has no familiarity with cricket.

Not an easy read but it is a great one. The book explores colonialism through the lens of cricket. Very interesting.

Great read.

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