Turning Back the Clock:
Authenticity Crises and Retro Fashion Cycles

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Draft: November 2012

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Abstract:
Why do previously cast-off products, practices, or styles abruptly return to popularity? This question has particular salience in the context of endogenous models of fashion, which explain fashion change as an incremental and unidirectional process, and thus cannot account for the type of retro fashion change that motivates this paper. I use a mixed methods approach in analyzing archival data on the case of venue design in Major League Baseball throughout the twentieth century. My analysis shows that the re-emergence of a once popular, but previously forsaken style arose in response to concern over the increased prominence of an ulterior, mercenary motive for performance. I argue and show that this “authenticity crisis” invalidated the prevailing popular style, and in its place the retro (“ballpark”) style was valued as an expression faithful to the traditional roots of the industry. I also rule out the possibility that the retro turn was due to a broader “zeitgeist” by comparing deviant and counterfactual cases, in both MLB and neighboring professional football (NFL).

1 The author would like to thank participants in the Economic Sociology Working Group at MIT and Ezra Zuckerman, Renee Gosline, Kate Kellogg, and Cat Turco for their comments and discussion on earlier drafts; Gary Gillette and the Society for American Baseball Researchers for sets of interesting discussions on the history of baseball and ballparks; and the staff at the Cincinnati Public Library Information and Reference Public Desk and the Library of Congress Newspaper Reading Room for their assistance in data collection. The remaining errors are the responsibility of the author.
The Retro Fashion Change Puzzle

Why do practices that were once discarded become popular again? Fashion dictates that what is popular today is apt to be replaced tomorrow (e.g., Sapir 1931; Simmel 1957; Robinson 1975; Strang and Macy 2001). These popular cultural expressions are not discarded on a whim. Whether it be a perceived improvement to an aesthetic form or a more effective practice, each new iteration is welcomed by its audience as progress along already valued dimensions (Blumer 1969). This image of progress is reinforced with discourse that promotes the newer version and highlights the shortcomings of the older form in order to justify why it should be considered outmoded (Abrahamson and Fairchild 1999). Thus, readopting these retro forms or old practices, once left behind for their inferiority, evokes the case of the proverbial fool returning to his folly. So why would these cast-off styles ever reemerge as the most popular form in the same domain in which they were so summarily dismissed?

There are two ways that this question has been approached and each has yet to fully account for retro fashion change. Proponents of studies that focus on forces external to any domain, such as a broad societal shift in a zeitgeist, or spirit of the times, argue that general social or political upheaval cause affected audiences to demand practices, products, or styles from the past as reminders of a less chaotic time (Davis 1979; Boym 2001). Because these forces influence audiences across many domains, this type of “zeitgeist” argument cannot account for why retro fashion emerges in some domains and not others, at any given time (Lieberson 2000:10–13). Various examples, from art’s retro turn and music’s contemporaneous modern push in the 1960s (compare Guffey 2006; Reynolds 2011) to professional football’s modern stadium spree alongside professional
baseball’s retro ballpark boom in the 1990s, suggest that a shift in the zeitgeist cannot be a sufficient condition for retro fashion change. A second view, which espouses the idea that fashion change is the result of forces endogenous to a domain (Lieberson 2000; Kaufman 2004), predicts that each popular form builds on the one that preceded it, allowing for the possibility that past styles, such as hem lengths from a bygone era, will eventually become popular again when material limits cause a change in direction and a gradual return back. While the idea that fashion change is incremental finds empirical support in the non-retro case (e.g., Richardson and Kroeber 1940; Robinson 1976; Lieberson 2000), this “ratchet effect” model is incomplete because it cannot account for the many cases where steady patterns of incremental change were abruptly halted in favor of returns to older styles (e.g., Guffey 2006; Peterson 1997; Rao, Monin, and Durand 2003; Gillette et al. 2009).

My argument builds on the ratchet effect model by questioning one of its key assumptions – that the current popular practice in a domain is always legitimate – and developing a theory of when a domain will face an authenticity crisis, triggering a retro turn. The ratchet effect’s inability to account for retro fashion change is the result of a key assumption: that the current most popular cultural form always carries legitimacy from which an attempt to differentiate can borrow. Differentiation is at risk of being misunderstood as an attempt to distance oneself from an audience or category. As such, differentiating actors are more likely to inspire emulation by combining components of the current popular form with some new elements, rather than introducing a completely new form or attempting to re-copy an older, inferior style. However, a current popular form, originally accepted as authentic to the domain, can be re-defined as illegitimate or
inauthentic in the midst of an authenticity crisis in the domain (Peterson 1997). Once a form is defined as inauthentic to the domain, there is no benefit in using components from it. However, it is not obvious from previous work on authenticity when an authenticity crisis will arise. In fact, the diffuse manner in which the term authenticity is invoked reinforces this problem. In order to determine when the next style will borrow from the current popular form or seek for legitimacy from once-discarded styles, we must determine what causes these authenticity crises.

In this paper I argue and demonstrate that these authenticity crises, and corresponding retro trends, happen when the audience perceives a weakened commitment to the domain on the part of the actor. Hahl and Zuckerman (2012) find that the clear presence of ulterior, instrumental motives leads an audience to question the authenticity of an actor’s performance (cf., Ridgeway 1982). When activities in the domain increase the visibility or prominence of the actors’ rewards, creating common knowledge about the actors’ lack of commitment, the same cultural expressions that were once valued will be considered examples of posing to gain benefits (Turner 1976; Trilling 1972). Under these conditions, previously cast-off cultural forms re-emerge as symbols of commitment to a domain now gone astray, and are re-adopted to fulfill demand for authentic cultural expressions. My analysis demonstrates that while the endogenous processes of differentiation and emulation lead to incremental change in cultural forms along valued dimensions, once an audience doubts the sincerity of actors’ motivation in their performances, audiences will demand and reward more traditional forms as welcome expressions of commitment to the cultural domain.
My examination of Major League Baseball’s (MLB) return to a once-outmoded style of ballpark validates the theory. The mid-1990s in MLB saw collective re-adoption of an old-style, “Retro Era” ballpark, which was an abrupt departure from the gradual change in ballpark styles that celebrated ever-larger and more modern playing venues in the first nine decades of the twentieth century. I use historical archive data to show that demand for this type of change was the result of the increased visibility of the players’ economic rewards, related to the advent of free agency and the public bickering that ensued. This caused the audience (media and fans) for MLB to doubt the sincerity of the players’ performance and commitment to the domain. I also rule out the counter-argument that this style change was due to a zeitgeist that increased the value of tradition and authenticity for audiences across all domains by showing that similar construction projects in a neighboring domain (professional football) continued on a modern trajectory, and that the domain differed in its exposure to perceptions of inauthentic performance. The paper concludes with a discussion of the implications of this theory for explanations of cultural change.

Theory: Authenticity Crises and Retro Fashion Change

Existing Limits to the Endogenous Model of Fashion Change

Fashion, or the process by which cultural expressions, such as practices, products, or styles rise and fall in popularity (Simmel 1957; Sapir 1931; Strang and Macy 2001), is driven by the dual endogenous forces of differentiation and emulation (Lieberson 2000; cf., Kaufman 2004). The popularity of a product, practice, or style leads to higher rates of adoption and emulation (Banerjee 1992; Salganik, Dodds, and Watts 2006), until some
point when actors seeking to distinguish themselves from the masses will adopt something different, hoping to gain the esteem of audiences that value such distinction (Lieberson and Lynn 2003; Simmel 1957). Through this process, popular cultural expressions are replaced as other actors in the domain emulate the new products, practices, and styles, and a new popular cultural expression emerges (Strang and Macy 2001; Abrahamson and Fairchild 1999; Simmel 1957).

Among the various types of fashion change, the “recycling” or reemergence of a previously popular cultural expression is puzzling. At first glance, understanding that the engine of fashion change is differentiation does not necessarily predict what form the newly popular cultural expression will take. There are various directions an actor can go to differentiate, but in order for the activity to rise in popularity others must also emulate the behavior. For it to be emulated, it must be the case that an audience values this activity over what it replaces. The idea that the newly popular activity is considered better than what it replaces is reinforced when we consider that producers explicitly frame the previous cultural expression as inferior to the newly popular cultural expression (Abrahamson and Fairchild 1999; Blumer 1969). Since the fashion apparatus ensures that the new activity is framed, at least implicitly, as being better than what came before it, it seems odd that an older form, having been discarded for its inferiority, would ever re-emerge as the most popular once again.

This puzzle is reinforced when we consider the implications of this endogenous fashion change perspective on what will emerge as the new popular cultural expression. As mentioned before, Lieberson (2000) argues that the changes in content of popular cultural expressions are governed by a mechanism he called the ratchet effect, which had
two components. First, because actors are looking to distinguish themselves from the masses they cannot copy cultural forms that were recently popular, but now are only associated with those who are out of step with the latest fashion. This is not inconsistent, in principle, with retro fashion change, which entails re-adopting past styles that are no longer in use. In fact, if differentiation were the only criterion, then the content of the next most popular form could be anything from returning to a long discarded style (i.e., retro fashion), incorporating some new components into the current form, or introducing something completely new and heretofore unseen.

The second component of the ratchet effect narrows the possibilities down, but it also makes it difficult to account for the types of retro fashion change that motivate this paper. As mentioned above, in order for a cultural form to become popular, it must be emulated. The styles that are most likely to be emulated will be those already considered legitimate in the eyes of the audience (cf., Meyer and Rowan 1977). Cultural expressions that are completely new to a domain are more difficult for an audience to understand (cf., Zuckerman 1999; Hsu 2006) and are less likely to catch on as a result. Perhaps even more problematic, engaging in cultural expressions that are completely new might be interpreted as attempts by actors to distance themselves from the audience or serve another audience altogether (cf., Obukhova, Zuckerman, and Zhang 2011). Based on this premise, Lieberson argues that new fashions will necessarily incorporate some components of the current or most recent dominant patterns because he assumes that the currently most popular cultural form is seen to be more legitimate than any other alternative (i.e., recent or long discarded forms). Thus, the ratchet effect implies that the change in content of the next most popular cultural expression in any period will be
incremental, combining new components with some component of the current form, and “fairly persistent in one direction” (Lieberson 2000:95).

Lieberson’s approach can explain incremental and unidirectional change in popular cultural expressions (Richardson and Kroeber 1940; Robinson 1976), but the ratchet effect is empirically challenged when trying to account for the abrupt re-adoption of a historically popular, but previously discarded style. Lieberson (2000:93–98) illustrates the ratchet effect mechanism through the example of dress fashion discussed by Richardson and Kroeber (1940). He points out that the most fashionable hem lengths for dresses increase (decrease) at a persistent and gradual clip for a time and will only reverse vertical direction when there is a material limit to the dress—too long makes it difficult to walk, too short makes it a belt. The ratchet effect implies that a previously popular, but discarded style is only arrived at again after long periods of incremental and gradual shifts in the style combined with some material limits that generate such a change in direction. However, as will be shown in more detail in the case of professional baseball ballpark design, at times retro fashion change entails non-incremental and abrupt shifts in cultural expression towards a previously cast off style. For instance, the art world of the 1960s abruptly departed from realist trends back to turn-of-the-century styles like art nouveau (Guffey 2006). Robinson (1958:128–9) even observes a similar abrupt departure in women’s headdress styles in late eighteenth century Europe, which saw increasingly larger and more unwieldy styles give way to simple combinations of curls.

\[^2\] In this discussion, Lieberson does make a brief reference to the violation of social mores as a reason for change in direction, referring to the ways social mores define material limits – how different eras defined hem lengths as “too short” in different ways. This is distinct from a violation of social mores that might generate an abrupt return to discarded styles without generating a material limit.
and ribbon that celebrated “classical attitudes.” These are the types of fashion change still unexplained by the ratchet effect model.

This empirical difficulty is the result of a key theoretical problem in the ratchet effect model. In arguing that new cultural expressions must incorporate components from the current popular forms, Lieberson makes the key assumption that the current popular form will always be considered legitimate. This seems reasonable, since the current popular expression is something already valued by the audience and modifications to this style are more easily compared and framed as improvements. However, this assumption does not always hold and whether the next popular cultural expression will build upon the current form or not hinges on understanding the conditions under which this assumption about the current popular form’s legitimacy does not hold.

Peterson’s (1997) study of changing styles in the country music industry is instructive because it shows that a current popular form, although initially valued, can be redefined as inauthentic while the domain faces an authenticity crisis. In the first instance, Peterson observed a pattern consistent with the ratchet effect as each new popular style of an artist’s sound and appearance was rewarded for its distinctiveness, while still maintaining enough similarities with the most recent popular patterns to be accepted within the same category. At some point along the way, however, the domain began to face an authenticity crisis and the audience re-defined previously accepted popular styles as inauthentic to the origins of the genre. In place of these styles, audiences began to celebrate a new breed of, “hard-core neo-traditionalists.” (Peterson 1997:229)

First, this is a case where the return to the “hard-core” traditional style was counter-directional, abrupt, and not incremental as the ratchet effect predicts. Furthermore, this
example shows that the current popular form can be re-defined as inauthentic even though it was initially accepted. However, Peterson’s argument is left specific to the music industry and, as such, this work does not address, more generally, when a domain will face an authenticity crisis.

Peterson argues that the crisis in country music arose because the style had moved too far towards the mainstream and away from the origins of the genre. However, the fact that the style was initially accepted and rewarded by its audience for its unique expression and only was eventually derided as inauthentic shows that it is not obvious when fashion’s path of progress will lead to concerns that the cultural expression is inauthentic. In fact, the diffuse nature with which the term authenticity is invoked reinforces this question. Work on authenticity highlights the fact that audiences define cultural expressions as authentic in two ways: 1) being consistent with or “true to” the origins of a domain and 2) making distinctive progress towards an ultimate ideal (Turner 1976; see also Trilling 1972; Peterson 1997). Similarly, in the case of ballpark styles, which I will discuss, the style eventually defined as inauthentic, the “Super Stadium Era” style, was initially valued for its authenticity as exemplified by this quote: “This is a true ballpark. You get a true hop in the infield and that means that a hit is really a hit.”

Audiences initially valued these styles for their authenticity as defined by making progress towards an ideal. However, just as in the case of country music, this style was later redefined as inauthentic to the origins or traditions of the domain. These examples highlight the idea that authenticity is a function of the cultural expression’s context and not inherent to a cultural expression (Grazian 2005; Peterson 2005; Wherry 2006). As

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such, the authenticity crisis in which the dominant style is redefined as inauthentic is not a result of the product, practice, or style, but is the result of changes in audience perceptions in the domain. Therefore, in order to explain when the next expression will turn retro or when it will continue along its incremental course we must establish the conditions that cause a domain to face an authenticity crisis.

Authenticity Crises As a Lack of Commitment To the Domain

In this section I argue that an authenticity crisis will arise through the increased prominence of rewards, which creates doubt about the actors’ commitment to the domain. As discussed above, fashion cycles are driven by the fact that audiences reward actors for cultural expressions that distinguish these actors from the masses (Simmel 1957). However, the very rewards that, in the first instance, promote continual displays of distinction also threaten the actor’s perceived commitment to the audience and domain. Hahl and Zuckerman (2012) show that the clear presence of ulterior, selfish motives for performance, like performing merely to gain rewards from the audience, create (private) audience concern about the authenticity of an actor’s performance. When activities in the domain increase the prominence of these rewards, a clear ulterior, selfish motive for performance emerges and an audience will doubt the actor’s commitment to the domain.

Work on scandals indicates that private concern about actors’ deviance, which lack of commitment to a domain would entail, is a necessary but insufficient condition for a crisis. An audience’s private doubts can turn into crisis in a domain when there is common knowledge of this concern such that each audience member knows that each audience member knows (and so on) that the actors are deviant (Adut 2005). Common
knowledge about the increased prominence of rewards and actors’ lack of commitment in the domain can be generated by activities such as public events (e.g., trials, strikes, etc) or promotion by cultural entrepreneurs (e.g., journalists or critics) (Adut 2008; Chwe 2003). When rewards increase in prominence, the domain is at risk of facing an authenticity crisis. If these increased rewards are coupled with public displays in which actors are seen to choose rewards over performance, this evidence will turn concern about lack of commitment into an authenticity crisis.

When the domain faces an authenticity crisis, the current popular cultural expression, as the prominent symbol in the domain, becomes de-legitimized, and retro fashion is valued in its place. Since the de-legitimized current popular form no longer signals commitment to the domain, borrowing components from these forms will not provide the signal of legitimacy implicit in the operation of the ratchet effect. Furthermore, historically popular forms, while previously discarded as inferior, represent a time when motives for performance were more pure and concern for ulterior motives less predominant.4 These perceptions infuse traditional and historical forms with a sense of authenticity, as a genuine and credible representation of the original intentions of the domain. This argument is consistent with findings in diverse lines of research that show returns to traditional styles accompanied with apparent concern for over-commercialization or overt reward seeking. For instance, Peterson discusses how country music’s turn towards the “hard-core” style meant that performers turned away from decidedly more commercial venues like stadium’s or larger theaters and instead the

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4 The perception that performance in these historical periods was not contaminated with these instrumental motives for gaining rewards need not match with well-documented evidence. Instead, these perceptions can be a function of a socially constructed collective memory that idealizes the past as a simpler time, less tainted with the instrumental motivations prevalent in the domain’s present (Osman 2011; cf., Fine 2003; Peterson 2005).
newly popular, traditional forms were to be found in settings such as “bars, honky-tonks, and college area clubs.” (1997:229) Similarly, Carroll and Swaminathan’s (2000) study of the beer market, where organizations promoting micro-brews, a beer type that emphasizes an artisan tradition over mass-produced modernity, arose in response, at least partially, to concerns about the over-commercialization and increased scale of larger nation-wide brands. When facing an authenticity crisis, audiences will reward actors that recreate traditional, historical forms as expressions of sincere commitment to the domain. These rewards will lead to emulation and re-popularize the discarded products, practices, and styles. This discussion generates this paper’s general proposition:

*Proposition: The increased prominence of ulterior, mercenary motives leads to an authenticity crisis, which contaminates the currently popular cultural expressions and creates pressure for actors to turn to previously popular, but discarded cultural expressions to show commitment to the domain.*

**Empirical Setting: 20th Century MLB Ballpark Design**

The Ballpark as a Strategic Setting

In order to investigate this proposition I will discuss the case of Major League Baseball (MLB) ballpark design throughout the twentieth century. In the mid-1990s, the MLB industry saw a massive shift in popularity from more modern venue designs to ones that attempted to match a historical model, an era in ballpark design known as the Retro Era (Loverro 1999; Gillette et al. 2009). Studying the changing popularity of ballpark styles in the twentieth century is instructive because 1) the fashion turn happened without the prior fashion having run up against the restraint of material limits, 2) ballparks are
central to the identity of the domain’s actors, and 3) it has a comparable counterfactual setting in professional football (NFL) that varies on key explanatory variables. First, as discussed above, the ratchet effect model has argued that fashion change only returns to previous styles after long periods of incremental change combined with material (or technological) limits to the functionality of these expressions (Lieberson 2000:97–98). Of course, the ratchet effect does not account for the possibility of an abrupt turn to the past. Nonetheless, ballparks in the 1990s had not hit a physical (material or technological) limit when the retro turn happened, therefore this domain setting allows us to further rule out that factor as a necessary force for why styles returned to previously fashionable, but since discarded patterns.

Secondly, focusing on cultural expressions that are central to the identity of the actors in a domain helps us rule out changes that might be unrelated to fashion and instead might be considered one-off decisions by individual actors. It is one thing for an individual to sporadically wear one pair of bell-bottom jeans, among more modern styles of pants, but it is another thing to be among a certain group of individuals that only wear clothes from decades in the past, making them central to the group’s identity. My question is focused on these characteristics more central to a group’s identity because we have yet to explain why collective sets of actors would spend so many resources, social and economic, to re-adopt these clearly older and commonly discarded styles as core symbols of their identity. Ballparks have long been the local symbol of the team and often were the only locations in which audiences could support their teams. Furthermore ballpark design involves large investments of money and other resources in ways that
eliminate the possibility that the retro turn was motivated through a desire to only temporarily experiment with a style.

Finally, the MLB ballpark trends in the 20th century have a comparable counterfactual case in the major American professional football league (NFL), which continued on its modern trend while MLB was turning retro. The NFL is a useful comparable case because it shares a complementary audience with MLB and also constructs playing venues, often in adjacent lots with the local MLB ballpark. Thus, we can compare similar sets of measures for MLB and NFL to test whether the claimed causal force, increased prominence of rewards and a shift in audience demand for authenticity, is present in baseball and not football.

One might suggest that a retro shift of this type in professional baseball is unsurprising because Major League Baseball as a valued piece of Americana, has long been discussed as a domain in which its history is prized (e.g., Leifer 1998; Tygiel 2001). To the contrary, in the case of ballpark design, as I will show, baseball has a long history of choosing modernity over tradition. Furthermore, even if baseball as a setting has arguably always valued its history more than other cultural domains, this does not explain either why retro fashion in ballpark design took place when it did and not in other periods, or why it occurred so thoroughly and abruptly. Therefore, this aspect of the case’s setting does not affect its usefulness as a setting to validate my argument.

**Empirical Strategy and Findings Overview**

The evolution of ballpark style, from an open field to wooden structures, and on to “Classic Era” ballparks, followed by the “Stadium Era” and then to the self-styled
“Super Stadium Era” can be seen as a gradual updating of each preceding dominant form, consistent with the ratchet effect. This gradual pattern was suddenly broken in the 1990s during the “Retro Era” as organizations returned to older models and styles instead of updating the most recent dominant form. Table 1 lists some of the primary features in each era that served as visible style markers, the rough time period that each style dominated the baseball landscape, and the number of ballparks built with each respective style. Note that the Retro Ballpark Era copies the Classic Ballpark Era features listed in the table. In the following sections, I will discuss how these patterns evolved and how the Retro Era not only copied these physical features, but did so to purposefully recall the Classic Era period.

The proposition from the theoretical discussion generates some testable implications for this setting and I use a mixed methods approach to analyze the case of MLB ballpark design throughout the 20th century. I rely on primary historical archive data to illustrate that the retro trend in ballpark design resulted from an authenticity crisis in the domain. I will present my findings in five sections. In the first section I will show, through content analysis of the public justifications used for replacing ballpark styles in each period, that each newly popular style leading up to the Retro Era was valued as an expansion on the dimensions of size, modernity, and civic (re-)vitalization. In the second section, through quantitative analysis of trends in national news coverage of MLB, I will show that a clear increase in concern for authentic performance in MLB was caused by the advent of free agency and the public bickering that followed. In the third section, I will take advantage of a deviant case in style choice to show that this clear mistrust of the players’ authentic motives for performance became associated with the currently popular
ballpark style of the time, re-defining it as inauthentic to the domain. In the fourth section, once again through content analysis of public justifications for changing ballpark styles, I will show that the Retro Era styles were valued as a return to tradition over the previously established patterns of progress along dimensions of size and modernity. The fifth section uses a counterfactual setting (professional football) to support my argument and rule out the most prominent counter argument: that demand for traditional expressions of authenticity is merely the result of forces external to the domain like a shifting zeitgeist across society. Because each section has related, but distinct data collection and testing strategies, I will describe the specific methods used to test the predictions in each respective section below.

I - Ballpark Style Changes and Justifications in the 20th Century, Prior to the Retro Era

This section discusses the changes in ballpark fashion through the twentieth century leading up to the Retro Era ballpark designs of the 1990s. I use secondary historical sources to track the changes in physical features that took place for each of these eras. The major physical feature changes are chronicled in Table 1. Beyond these physical changes, I will also show why audiences valued each new style. To do this I follow established practices in sociological research by content coding the justifications for replacement of the previous style presented in primary historical archive data (cf., Boltanski and Chiapello 1999; Boltanski and Thevenot 2006; Swidler 2003). I collected data on local coverage of ballpark openings and closings in various cities. Appendix A shows the list of cities, newspapers and dates for which I collected these data. In each section below I will discuss some of the physical feature changes and display quotes that
capture prototypical justifications for these changes to show that each of the style changes was an attempt to make progress on established dimensions of value: 1) size, 2) modernity and 3) city revitalization.

*Period 1 - Pre-Classic Era (Mid 1800s-1909)*

Baseball was a game originally played in an open field by groups of amateurs. Initially, there was no obvious need for a specific area set apart as a baseball park. As long as someone had a ball, a bat, and could imagine four bases, any open field would do. Crowds often gathered, without paying admission, behind the batter and along the baselines as these offered the best places to observe most of the action. As baseball grew in popularity, towards the end of the nineteenth century, makeshift wooden structures were built around the playing field with paid admission seating located behind home plate and along the base lines, an area known as the “grandstand.” Collecting admissions fees changed the game significantly as teams began to set aside playing areas as “home” parks, coordinating with local supporters who benefited from knowing when and where they could come and watch their local team (Leifer 1998; Schaefer 2011). Owners promoted their fields to attract additional fans by claiming to have the finest park in the land (Gershman 1993:30). Thus, from its inception, the ballpark was a major driver of both the organization’s image and the economic returns of the professional game, causing the owners to think hard about the styles and materials used to attract fans to the parks.

*Period 2 - The Classic Era (1909 to 1915)*

Because many of these Pre-Classic Era ballparks were destroyed by fire, beginning in 1909, organizations began building similarly styled larger and more permanent structures, which came to be known as “Classic Era” (e.g., Gillette et al. 2009)
or “Jewel Box” (e.g., Benson 1989; Gershman 1993) Ballparks. These styles continued to focus on capturing benefits from this increased popularity primarily by augmenting the number of seats it could charge for admission through adding a second deck of grandstand seating. These ballparks used steel and brick not only as adornments or reinforcements for the basic wooden structure, but as primary components of a much-enlarged structure and were closed off to almost every possible nonpaying spectator with the advent of new seats beyond the outfield fence called bleachers. Furthermore, teams attempted to maximize space by filling out the entire allotted city block (or two), giving each park a unique asymmetrical design.

The size of the new ballparks was by far the most prominent theme in local newspaper coverage of the Classic Era ballparks. A typical article about the new ballpark was hyperbolic about the grandness of the stands or the size of crowds these new structures could accommodate:

"Smashing all records for attendance and creating a brand new epoch in the history of the national pastime, the greatest crowd that has ever witnessed a baseball game stormed Shibe Park yesterday…The spectacle was grand."5

Also, incorporating and commenting on the latest technology became an important signal for modernity and the progress of the game. In the Classic Era, much of the technology was focused on the playing surface with the object of eliminating the field’s imperfections, making it as easy to play on as possible. Modern appeal was also achieved by way of these ballparks’ entrances, which were grandly made of brick and ornate concrete and stone, built to evoke the contemporary theater “where Sir Lancelot would have felt right at home” (Gershman 1993:42).

5 Anon. (1909, April 13). Greatest Baseball Crowd at Shibe Park Sees Athletics Win Opening Game 8 -1. Philadelphia Inquirer, p. 1
Finally, newspaper coverage of the Classic Eras emphasized the ballparks as symbols of progress and improvement for the city itself. Philadelphia, the first to capitalize on this new form, played up the importance of this new ballpark in the city’s quest to be recognized as a forward-looking city:

“Shibe Park is one of the greatest institutions in the bounds of Philadelphia. Too much praise cannot be given of it and that sterling bond of sportsmen who were sponsors of it … In our days there were no Shibe Parks, but nothing is too good for baseball. It is the greatest sport of the Nation … With the Opera House and Shibe Park, Philadelphia has two immense structures that can cause Philadelphians to rebuke any reference to the city being slow.”

Hyperbole ran rampant as local papers were quick to point out the particular changes to the ballpark that would make it the “the best in the land.” These Classic Era parks are remembered today as artistic in their ornate Gilded Age architecture, but little discussion in the coverage at the time mentioned this aspect of the buildings.

Period 3 – Stadium Era: A Bridge From Ballpark to Super Stadium (1923-1962)

By 1915, all sixteen teams played in one of these Classic Era ballparks. Following the barrage of construction in the Classic Era, no new ballparks were built until 1923 when Yankee Stadium, the first ballpark to be called “Stadium” and one that is often mistakenly linked with the Classic Era (Gillette et al. 2009), was built in response to the amazing growth and fan support for the New York Yankees and their star Babe Ruth.

While Yankee Stadium was primarily built for the baseball club, it had multiple purposes in mind and, as such, was discussed as the prototype for multipurpose stadiums in (Serby 1930), setting the standard that would continue up until the Retro Era.7

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7 Strictly speaking, multipurpose use was not new to Stadium Era ballparks. There are reports of Chicago owner Charlie Comiskey inviting the circus to perform on his field in order to ensure that the field was rarely sitting idly by as potential revenue opportunities presented themselves.
The Stadium Era ballparks, just like each ballpark style before them, were envisioned and built to maximize paid attendance primarily by increasing the size and number of grandstand decks and limiting non-paid attendance by locating near highways and in open areas, eliminating access from nearby rooftops. In order to achieve these larger sizes, the exteriors of the ballparks were often made with pre-fabricated reinforced concrete, giving the facades a minimalist look and replacing the more ornate brick structures that dominated the Classic Era. Media and fans once again focused on the size:

“Although many facts and figures had been published in advance to give baseball fans some idea of the massiveness of the Yankees’ Stadium, it was not until the formal opening yesterday that the fans really had an opportunity to grasp what a gigantic edifice Colonels Rupert and Huston have caused to be erected as a monument to baseball.”

Justifications for the style changes of this era continued to emphasize modernity and city revitalization. Dodger Stadium, the last ballpark built in this style, was praised for its many modern improvements including the fact that it was made with pre-cast concrete. This led the media to cheer both the city and the organization: “Baseball has never had anything like this…It marks a new era in baseball. We are very proud of Los Angeles, Walter O’Malley and the Dodgers.”


Between 1964 and 1973, 12 new ballparks, the so-called “Super Stadiums” (Gillette et al. 2009), appeared in rapid order with numerous similarities and were built with a more explicit dual-sport model in mind. The new stadium style was yet another update to the existing ballpark model, based on the same objective: maximize potential attendance. While continuing the pre-fabricated, minimalist look instituted in the Stadium

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Era, the Super Stadiums increased the number of seats by creating larger circular structures that included new sections of “Upper Deck Bleachers.” This new feature not only increased potential attendance to upwards of 70,000 (from the 30,000 seat parks they replaced), it also ensured that no fan could watch the game without paying. Local coverage echoed coverage of the Classic Era ballparks half a century earlier in emphasizing the sheer size of the crowd:

“The downtown sports center attracted 46,048 persons, probably the largest audience in the history of professional sports in St. Louis. It overwhelmed most of the customers with its size, simplicity, and spaciousness.”

The concern for size was not limited to the ballpark itself, but also cited the incredible amount of acreage used up in creating these ballparks, comparing them to the relatively small amount of space utilized in the city’s Classic Era ballpark.

Coverage of Super Stadium styles continued to glorify the march towards modernity. Prototypical coverage emphasized replacing an outdated and un-functional park with a modern wonder of construction. When journalists did mention the history of the older parks, the coverage dwelt on the memories in the park, but ignored any reference to the Classic Era ballparks themselves as important symbols of baseball history worth preserving. For instance, even though Pittsburgh’s Super Stadium was to be built in the same location as the city’s Pre-Classic Era, wooden ballpark, fans were explicitly told, “not to worry, because the Bucs are not going back to the old style, just the old location.”

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11 Anon. (1970, July 15) Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Special Section on Three Rivers Stadium, p. 28, emphasis added.
Perhaps the strongest symbol of modernity was the use of non-grass artificial turf in lieu of natural grass playing surfaces. This surface, branded AstroTurf because it was first used in Houston’s Astrodome, was both an emblem of modernity and an improvement motivated by desires expressed in previous era stadium construction. AstroTurf, essentially a carpet painted green to look like grass, was seen as progress for the game because it allowed for fewer unpredictable misplays caused by surface irregularities in the infield. Furthermore, in previous ballpark models, if the forecast called for rain fans would stay away resulting in loss of revenue from lower ticket, merchandise, and food sales. With AstroTurf surfaces, fewer fans would be turned away because as long as the rain stopped at some point on the day the game was scheduled, the field could be dried and the game could go on. This surface would later become very controversial, but at its introduction, it was lauded as the next great advancement in modernizing the game\(^{12}\) even by future Hall of Fame manager Sparky Anderson, who loved the surface so much that he predicted, “I think in 10 years you won’t have any dirt infields left in the big leagues.”\(^{13}\)

Finally, the Super Stadium was often viewed as a core of downtown revitalization projects. Many cities purposefully selected sites in rundown areas of the city to help rejuvenate and bring fresh improvements to portions of its urban territory. For instance, echoing a sentiment from articles written nearly 60 years earlier in Cincinnati about their Classic Era “Palace to the Fans”, Cincinnati’s Super Stadium, was singled out as something that would symbolize a new Cincinnati:


“Seldom before in this city’s history has a building done so much for the civic spirit…You are reminded of Lumen Harris, manager of the Atlanta Braves. It was opening day. He took one look at the stadium and said, ‘This isn’t Cincinnati.’ He was wrong. He just didn’t recognize it. It’s still Cincinnati. The new one.”

By 1973, 20 of the 24 teams had built a new ballpark in the Stadium or Super Stadium Era. Only the Boston, Detroit, and two Chicago ballparks survived this period without change, although many local newspaper articles of the time called for their upgrade (Trumpbour 2006:163). Even Yankee Stadium was renovated to look more like the symmetrical “modern” Super Stadium structures. These ballparks styles were clearly valued as expressions of progress towards ever larger and more modern structures, as were the styles that preceded them. The next two sections will show that over the next two decades, while these Super Stadium styles were the dominant image in the game, a shift in the economic structure of the game led to concerns about actor commitment and eventually led these ballpark styles to be re-defined as inauthentic, symbols of an era of increased greed and selfish motivation.

II – Authenticity Crisis and the Advent and Fight Over of Free Agency

In this section I will show that the increased prominence of economic activity in MLB, related mostly to the advent of free agency, between the Super Stadium Era and the Retro Era, from 1972-1995, caused an authenticity crisis in the domain. The visibility of increasing rewards and the battle about these rewards between the players and owners caused the fans to doubt that the performance on the field was for them and not just for the benefit of the industry’s selfish actors. This doubt increased demand for authentic

expression and resulted in the Retro Era. Understanding why economic rewards became so conspicuous in the period preceding the Retro Era hinges on understanding the history of labor relations in MLB. I will provide a brief history here before moving on to validate this claim.

From before the inception of the two leagues in Major League Baseball, in 1901, owners had taken steps to limit the player movement between clubs with something called the *reserve clause* (Flynn 2006). This clause stipulated that owners would not compete with each other over a player’s services. Players could move to different teams in trades, but at the end of each season, the current team’s owner could re-sign the player without competition from the other owners. This eliminated any kind of labor market for players, which greatly limited player salaries. In effect, the owners were not called upon to share the growing profits earned due to the game’s rising popularity.

The reserve clause also helped to reinforce a myth that professional baseball players were not concerned with money and performed strictly for the love of the game. In promoting this myth, the game’s promoters created a situation where although players were actually lower-status “professionals, yet they are received and regarded as high amateurs” (Evers and Fullerton 1912:41). During the first half of the twentieth century players were often lauded for working for relatively low wages considering their celebrity status and even for taking pay cuts. In reality, because of the reserve clause, players had no other option but to accept the offered contract if they wanted to continue to play in the major leagues. News coverage of the sport celebrated the myth of the unselfish player through articles that applauded players for their pure motives “untouched by the sickness

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15 As quoted in Murphy (2007:183).
of greed that is crippling the world.”"16 Because the reserve clause was so misunderstood (Thornley 2007; Hertzel 1970), the myth of the high-amateur ballplayer lived on.

This all changed in the early 1970s. Through a combination of negotiation, a 1972 player strike, and a landmark courtroom battle, the reserve clause was made ineffective by the start of the 1976 season (Thornley 2007). The consequences were immediate. Players not only showed that they were interested in money, by accepting and at times demanding salary increases, they also showed that they were willing to leave a city and its fans behind in order to offer their services to the highest bidder. To pay for these salaries, aggressive new owners stepped in with valuable TV contracts in hand.

Coverage of free agency and related labor issues dominated the baseball industry over the next two decades. From 1901 until 1971 there were no league-wide labor stoppages of any kind. However, over the next 23 years (1972-1994) there were eight work stoppages, including three that caused cancellations of parts of the playing season and four that postponed the start of the regular season. These work stoppages culminated in 1994-95 when a players’ strike cancelled the last 30% of the regular season and all of the playoffs, including the World Series, marking the first season without an ultimate championship in 90 years. The World Series had survived major wars, natural disasters, and economic depressions, but it could not overcome the extraordinary public bickering over who was getting the spoils of the increased economic success in the game. Fan response was clear as Schmidt and Berri (2002) estimate that the 1994-95 strike caused an astounding 20% drop in attendance the following year, the largest drop since disruptions caused by World War II.

All of these activities, the public bickering and work stoppages, the visibility of players’ salary increases, and players’ willingness to leave their original team for the highest bidder served as the common knowledge generating events that triggered an authenticity crisis in the domain. These events shattered the players’ wholesome high-amateur image and served to increase the attention placed on the economics of the game and the rewards the players and teams were getting at the fans’ expense. The below analysis will show that this period indeed corresponded with a marked increase in concern for authenticity often driven by these work stoppages.

In order to show that this period’s increased focus on economic rewards lead to increased public denigration of the players and owners over their lack of commitment to the domain, I collected primary historical archive data at the industry (MLB) level to evaluate how the audience viewed MLB throughout the twentieth century. My principal aim was to assess whether there was an across-period increase in public concern for ulterior motives and more specifically greed or selfish motivation, resulting from the changes in baseball’s economic model discussed above. By comparing periods within the same domain, my data strategy for this stage was similar to Jenkins and Perrow (1977) who compared perceptions of farm labor disputes in one period versus another by content coding and statistically analyzing national level newspaper articles covering farm worker movements from 1946-1972. In order to measure concern for ulterior motives, I performed a search for the words “greed” and various synonyms17 in the *The Sporting News*, a national sports journal that began to cover baseball in 1886 and had searchable archives through 2003. The result was 948 articles that included some version of the

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17 Synonyms of note included the words selfish and avarice. All other synonyms were rarely mentioned.
word greed over those 118 years. I then coded these articles by date, sport, and whether
the mention was positive or negative towards the sport. I ran a negative binomial
regression predicting the number of articles per year covering baseball that deride the
industry for its greed.

Below is a prototypical quote from the period preceding the Retro Era (1972-
1994). Where fans were once recorded as lauding the player’s pure motives, fan concern
over sincere player commitment was clear:

“The antics of so-called baseball 'heroes' is sickening … In their haste to
cash in on good seasons with outrageous demands, players … showed that
their loyalty rests not with their teams, and certainly not to the lowly fans,
but to themselves, their greed and their bank accounts. Why should the
fans root for and loyally support their local teams when the stars
themselves bail out and go elsewhere at the drop of a dollar? Loyalty
works both ways.”18

This was a quote from 1984 about baseball and the mention of greed was coded as
negative (as opposed to saying that players were not greedy, a positive mention). This
type of article, despite its intense level of anger, counted as one negative mention.

Since I am predicting a period effect, the primary independent variable is a
dummy variable for the period starting in 1976 when free agency was introduced and the
Super Stadium was the dominant model. I also run a model that includes a variable for
years in which there was any kind of work stoppage in MLB with a dummy variable to
capture the effect related to these events specifically and to see if this factor could explain
all of the period effect. Finally, since both overall size of the journal and content specific
to baseball varies over these 118 years, I also include controls for the number of annual
pages covering baseball and the percentage of the journal dedicated to the sport. I

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calculated this variable by compiling a random sample of five journals every five years, starting in 1942 when sports besides baseball began to be covered in the journal, and counting the number of pages dedicated to each sport.\textsuperscript{19}

Figure 1 shows the measures of these article counts by year from 1886 until 2003. Note that there is a distinct increase, compared to earlier periods, in the amount of journalistic content devoted to “greed” in baseball after 1972 and the fight over free agency began. This trend increases up through the mid 1990s, culminating around the major player strike in 1994 and begins to reduce as the Retro Ballpark trend was taking off. Table 2 shows a negative binomial regression predicting the count of articles that negatively mention the word greed. The period effect is positive and statistically significant, meaning that this period saw about four times more articles mentioning greed in any given year than a year in the prior period.

This analysis shows that when Super Stadiums dominated the image of major league baseball, concern for greed as a motivation for performance was significantly larger than in prior periods. The next section will show that the Super Stadium ballparks, originally valued for their progress and distinctive style, became symbolic of this period of high concern for greed in baseball. This link with the period of public bickering over rewards de-legitimized this form and led to the re-emergence of the Classic Era features and style valued because of their authenticity in response to this concern for greed and inauthentic performance.

III – Linking Greed with the Stadium Style

\textsuperscript{19} Because of the potential for measurement error in this variable, I performed robustness checks, which show no change in significance or direction, including varying the percentage of coverage in the sport from 0\% to 100\% of the journal’s overall coverage.
This section will show that the Super Stadium Style had become associated with this concern for greed and was delegitimized because of this authenticity. To illustrate this I will utilize a “deviant” case, Chicago’s New Comiskey Park, a Super Stadium Era ballpark built one year prior to the Retro Era boom. This case is instructive because it shows that fans were uncomfortable about this new Super Stadium ballpark specifically and directly because the Super Stadium style had become symbolic of baseball’s increased display of greed and lack of commitment to the fan. It is not surprising that a style once lauded like the Super Stadium can become disliked. What is instructive is the manner in which the Super Stadium style was disparaged. I argue that dominant cultural expressions can become delegitimized and symbols of inauthenticity when they are the dominant form during periods of authenticity crisis. My argument implies that a Super Stadium ballpark would be disliked in the early 1990s, as concern for greed was at its height, specifically because it represented the era of greed and not because, as implied by the ratchet effect argument, it is not original or distinct enough.

In 1991, after a battle in which their owners publicly threatened to leave Chicago for Florida, the Chicago White Sox replaced their Classic Era Comiskey Park with a new version, New Comiskey, replicating the Super Stadium style:

“The new Comiskey Park feels like a stadium, not like a ball park … Its tall, concrete upper deck pushes up over the masonry walls… There will not be a single obstructed view in the house, the press releases for the new Comiskey shout, and they promise lots of restrooms, coat-checking areas, restaurants and 85 private suites…The new Comiskey Park, which towers over the old, lower park, is more like a closed-in stadium rather than an open baseball park.”

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I collected articles written about New Comiskey one week prior and one week after the opening of the new ballpark. My main source of articles was from the local *Chicago Tribune*, but I also conducted a search over the same time period for three national newspapers *The New York Times, USA Today*, and *The Washington Post*. This resulted in 18 articles. From these articles, I coded reports of fan discussion of the new ballpark. I was particularly interested in what justifications fans would use in saying that they *disliked*, the new ballpark. The local sports journalists were wary of negative reporting for fear of offending an ownership who was prepared to leave only a few years prior (Trumpbour 2006). This meant only 7 of the 18 articles actually mention anything that could be considered negative. I coded the complaints made by fans in these negative articles. Below are two examples of the type of quotes found in these articles:

“And it seemed a *bittersweet vindication for some downhome fans who have been complaining that the team has become too uppity with the new ball park*, outfitting it with 90 skyboxes and suites and ticket attendants in tuxedos. Ralph Edders, a steel worker, and Henry Ruiz, a truck mechanic, left the new park in disgust after the third inning with the score already 6-0, but not before taking a last look at old Comiskey. ‘*If they were losing in the old park, I’d stay,*’ Mr. Edders said. ‘*These rich people are just taking over. You see all these people in suits. You see these limousines. You see these suites. I’m just a regular steelworker. We’re out of here.*’”21

“Comiskey Park is built for the rich. We have season tickets in the upper deck, and there's not an inch to spare between seats. The best thing is it's still on the south side,’ said Jim Rigney of suburban Morton Grove.”22

Out of 7 total articles in which fans were reported to have made negative comments about New Comiskey Park, 6 of them (like the ones above) used greed, money or class related concerns while just 3 articles mentioned concerns related to functionality or location.

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This section provides some preliminary evidence in support of the idea that the Super Stadium had become symbolic of the concern over inauthentic performance and greed prevalent in this era. New Comiskey was not the only Super Stadium ballpark that was treated this way. As I will discuss in the next section, replacement of the Super Stadium ballparks was often based on this style’s lack of perceived authenticity and clearly associated with this period of greed. An example of this kind of sentiment is expressed in an article from 2003 about the demolition of Philadelphia’s Super Stadium known as “The Vet”:

“The Vet is a cold, clammy, concrete circle, long overdue for a dynamite doomsday… For me, the Vet has become a symbol of what has gone wrong with baseball in the last 33 years. Since it was built, salaries have skyrocketed…and owners have seemed more interested in making money than in winning pennants. I know I’m not the only one who has been turned off by all this.”

While the earlier sections showed that ballparks were valued throughout the twentieth century in terms of their ability to make progress on ever larger and ever more modern playing venues, because the currently most popular Super Stadium style was delegitimized in this way, the next most popular expression could not build on this style. Instead, I will show in the next section that the Retro Era style was valued because of its authenticity, and in particular through its expression of tradition in re-capturing the Classic Era styles.

IV – Retro Fashion Valued as an Expression of Authenticity

23 Fisher, Dennis. (2003, September 30) Vet Reminds Us of What is Wrong with Baseball. Lancaster New Era, p. C-1, emphasis added
In this fourth section, I will provide support for the claim that the Retro Era ballparks were valued because they were seen as expressions of traditional authenticity. Through content analysis of local newspaper coverage of the openings and closings of ballparks throughout this period, I will show that the Retro Era in ballpark design was valued as a manifestation of a traditional image and an expression of re-commitment to a domain that recalls a time prior to its authenticity crisis.

Similar to Section I above, I once again measure how audiences value a new cultural expression through analyzing the justifications they give for replacement of the previous expression. In this section I will provide some quotes to illustrate the major themes from this Retro Era as well as a key comparison of article counts categorized by city and time period to identify the justifications used in valuing a new or different style of ballpark over a current ballpark or other ballparks in the same period.

*Period 5 – Retro Era (1992-2006)*

From 1992 through 2006, 17 new ballparks were built and all of them disregarded the natural progression of twentieth century changes in stadium design by turning wholeheartedly to a retro style that meant to recall the Classic Era ballpark designs. Each sought in a similar array of ways to call back to the Classic Era of ballparks (Loverro 1999). Figure 2 shows the gradual decline and drastic increase of three of these features used prominently to replicate the Classic Era: ornate brick entrances, grass surfaces, and naming practices. The determined attempt to replicate the Classic Era was captured by a baseball historian who noted that many of the features in these new ballparks were included solely to recreate some of the aspects that improvement after the Classic Era styles had left behind:
“At the classic parks, a swimming pool or a railroad track might sit next to a ballpark by coincidence; now, pools and train tracks were built deliberately to be part of the ballpark experience. The pitcher’s path, formerly a naturally worn erosion of turf between the pitcher’s mound and home plate, now became a landscaper’s carefully groomed creation.” (Gillette et al. 2009:401)

Completely reversing the trend of the previous 100 years of ballpark design, these replications were even accomplished at the expense of ballpark size as organizations that replaced Stadium or Super Stadium ballparks with Retro designs reduced seating capacity by 25% on average.24

While size was the most prominent theme in earlier eras, the most prominent theme in the Retro Era shifted to justifying the ballparks based on their propriety or suitability with the game, i.e., how things “should be” in baseball. This was done in two ways: 1) the ballpark’s name, and 2) the playing surface. First, the trend of calling ballparks “Stadiums” was clearly over in the Retro Era. From 1923 when New York’s “House that Ruth Built” took on the name Yankee Stadium, until 1990, 19 baseball structures were built with the name Stadium. Of the six other ballparks built during this time period, five incorporated the term dome instead of stadium and only one outlier called itself a “park”: Candlestick Park built in 1960 by the San Francisco franchise. From 1991 to 2006, 18 ballparks were built and all of these ballparks have avoided the name stadium and in place used some variation of Field, Park, or Ballpark as part of the name. Even Tampa’s Florida Suncoast Dome, a domed ballpark built in 1990 and put into use in 1998 for the expansion Devil Rays, was renamed Tropicana Field.

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24 This number is an average across the 14 Retro Ballparks built to replace Stadiums, not including Detroit’s Retro Ballpark, which was actually built to replace the Classic Era Tiger Stadium.
The purpose for avoiding the Stadium moniker was clear – a “stadium” was not a proper place in which to play baseball. This was expressed in an article about the retro ballpark built in Texas called The Ballpark at Arlington:

"For us, [the name “Ballpark”] was a term of art. If ballpark doesn't mean anything to you, then you don't understand baseball… Stadiums are where you do all those other things. A ballpark is where you play baseball."  

Avoiding the name Stadium symbolized the departure from a desire for size and originality seen in the Super Stadium Era and the Classic Era. "The Skydome in Toronto is a magnificent structure, but it's not a baseball park. It's an architectural wonder. It's not a baseball park.”

The second important feature that focused on propriety was the promotion of grass over AstroTurf. The Orioles new ballpark, built in 1992, was the first stadium designed with grass instead of AstroTurf in 24 years. All 17 of the Retro Era ballparks followed suit. Perhaps more interesting than the choice of the surface, was the way AstroTurf was relentlessly derided and grass was promoted. By the 1990s, team doctors had begun to notice that the AstroTurf playing surface was not ideal for an athlete’s joints. It was essentially like playing on a slightly cushioned concrete surface. However, instead of discussing the turf as physically damaging, it was discussed as unnatural and improper:

“There is just something romantic about playing baseball on grass, the way it looks and smells, I firmly believe that’s the way baseball is supposed to be played.”

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25 Luksa, Frank. (1994, April 1) The Ballpark is Everything It was Built to Be. *Dallas Morning News*, p. 6b, emphasis added.
26 Ibid.
27 Chicago’s New Comiskey Park was also built with grass and opened in 1991, but it was designed in 1989. Oriole Park at Camden Yards was designed starting in 1987 even though it opened later.
Similarly, All-Star Shortstop Jimmy Rollins captured grass’s authentic appeal by saying, “It just makes you feel like you're really playing baseball.”

In contrast to the previous eras’ emphasis on modernity, traditionalism became an important theme in the Retro Era. Where the ballparks before the Retro Era were focused on differentiating through the use of the latest updates in style and technology, the Retro Era parks often constructed a faux sense of the past with older technologies in order to present a ballpark that matched styles prevalent prior to the Stadium Era. For instance, scoreboards in the Retro Era ballparks were placed on the outfield fence instead of high above the crowd as in the Super Stadium era and some ballparks even celebrated their lack of technology by reintroducing manual scoreboards or poles that obstructed views. Where the earlier periods focused on how opening day at the new ballpark would mean new and unique experiences, much of the focus in the Retro era was on how these parks tied back to the history of baseball in the town:

“I can’t speak from personal experience, but in some way it must have felt like this on all the Opening Days of St Louis past. At Grand Avenue Grounds, Unicorn Park, League Park, Robison Field, Sportsman’s Park, and Busch Stadium.”

As discussed above, the prior eras seemed most interested in replacing existing structures to (re-)vitalize the city and used justifications that emphasized the ballpark’s ability to generate progress. This changed in the Retro Era, where coverage emphasized restoring past patterns seeking to recapture an idealized, historical urban landscape now lost to modernity. In his book *Retro Ball Parks*, Ken Rosensweig (2005) pointed out that

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30 Miklasz, Bernie. (2006, April 10) Take me out to the new ballpark, an urban paradise for Cardinals fans. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, p. A4
part of the reason these parks were built was to provide a connection with an idealized urban setting. Even though not all retro ballparks were built in the city, the explicit and direct connection to a surrounding urban landscape was a major theme in coverage of these new Retro Era ballparks. One way this was accomplished was by lowering the outer walls of the stadium and eliminating outfield decks allowing for a view of the outside urban landscape. This reinforced a link with tradition:

“Many of those coming for the game said they were particularly impressed by the open area beyond the left-center field wall, offering views of the Gateway Arch, the Old Courthouse and other downtown buildings… ‘The way it looks, it sort of brings back some old memories.’”

Second, the builders replicated styles from the Classic Era by building outfields with unique and asymmetrical shapes, incorporating nearby buildings and creating a (often false) sense of strong urban conditions or context.

**Comparison of Justifications Across Periods**

The foregoing quotes and discussion show that the Retro Ballparks were valued because of their link with a traditional authenticity. In order to more explicitly show that there is a clear shift in justifications from themes related to progress to those related to tradition, I compare counts of content coded articles across periods. The results from the article counts are presented below in Figure 3, and were focused primarily on four cities—Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and St. Louis—that each built ballparks during the three major moments of collective style adoption across the major leagues. For this analysis, I counted only those articles that were written up to a week before and up to a week after the new ballpark was built or the old ballpark was closed (N=221). I coded

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these articles by the types of justifications used in replacing the old ballpark or constructing the new one. In short, I coded articles that used statements that were comparative in nature giving reasons for why the new ballparks were valued over the previous style. Prototypical quotes were presented in the above discussion of the eras. If an article used a type of justification (e.g., tradition) it was counted once even if it used this theme many times throughout the article. A single article could be counted in multiple themes depending on how many themes it used to justify the ballpark’s style change. This process of analysis is similar to previous work using newspaper content analysis to evaluate changing patterns of justifications (Boltanski and Chiapello 1999; cf., Boltanski and Thevenot 2006). Appendix C shows the counts of these articles broken down by city, theme and period.

In coding these articles, I found justifications that fall into six major themes (as shown in the previous sections): size, modernity, city revitalization, propriety, tradition, and city restoration. While the themes of size, modernity, and city revitalization represent the progress emphasized in the first 90 years of the twentieth century, propriety, tradition, and restoring the city are themes that emphasize a more traditional authenticity and dominate discussion of the Retro Era ballparks. The Classic and Super Stadium Eras highlight size as a reason to value the ballpark 74.4% and 62.1%, respectively, while in the Retro Era only 5.8% of the articles mention size in a comparative way as a reason to value the ballpark. The Classic and Super Stadium Eras highlight modernity as a reason to value the ballpark 66.7% and 70.1%, respectively, while in the Retro Era only 13.0% of the articles mention modernity in a comparative way as a reason to value the ballpark. The Classic and Super Stadium Eras highlighted revitalizing or upgrading the city as a
reason to value the ballpark 56.4% and 66.7% of the articles, respectively, while in the
Retro Era only 18.8% of the articles mention this theme in a comparative way as a reason
to value the ballpark. Propriety, or articles citing a ballpark’s fit with “the way things
should be” is valued in 2.6% and 3.4% of the articles discussing the new ballparks in the
Classic and Super Stadium Eras, respectively. On the other hand, in the Retro Era authors
cited propriety in 62.3% of the articles about the new ballpark. Tradition and history is
valued in 2.6% and 11.5% of the articles discussing the ballpark changes in the Classic
and Super Stadium Eras, respectively. On the other hand, in the Retro Era authors cited
tradition and history in 68.1% of the articles about the new ballpark. Finally, restoring the
urban landscape is valued in none of the articles discussing the ballpark changes in the
Classic and Super Stadium Eras, whereas, in the Retro Era authors cited the importance
of the urban landscape and the features it creates in 55.1% of the articles about the new
ballpark. This comparison of article counts on justifications for ballpark styles shows a
clear shift from valuing the ballparks for the progress they make on established
dimensions to valuing it for the sake of its match with a traditional ideal.

In sum, through the analysis in the preceding four sections I have shown that 1)
each new ballpark style was valued as an emblem of progress along established
dimensions of value through the Super Stadium style, 2) an authenticity crisis arose in
response to the advent of free agency and the resulting public fight over the rewards, 3)
the Super Stadium style became re-defined as inauthentic as a result of this authenticity
crisis, and 4) the Retro Era ballparks were celebrated as an expression of commitment to
the domain along historical and traditional lines. While this evidence supports my
argument, there is one key counterargument that has yet to be addressed. In the next
section, through the use of the counterfactual case of the NFL, I will rule out the idea that this shift in value was the result of a broader zeitgeist, and further support my claim that the key force is a shift in prominence of rewards leading to an authenticity crisis.

V – Zeitgeist and the National Football League’s Modern Venues

The purpose of the preceding analyses was to show that the rise of retro fashion was welcomed as a call back to an era free from concerns of greed generated in the Super Stadium Era and, consequently, valued as an expression of traditional authenticity. Contrary to this argument, proponents of a zeitgeist type of argument could suggest that this return to a previously fashionable cultural form was only a product of its time and not a specific response to the particular cultural domain. Such an approach might suggest events such as the First Gulf War, an economic slow-down, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, racial unrest in the early 1990s, or even the fin de siècle effect (Stern 1992) as triggers for a more general return to retro symbols across many cultural domains in the United States. This would imply that the collective decision to turn back to a previous style is not domain specific, as I have been arguing, but instead is the result of shifts in culture exogenous to the domain in question. If this argument is valid, then we should find evidence of a tendency to return to the dominant fashion of an earlier period at the very least in other cultural domains that utilize a similar cultural form (i.e., stadium design) and have the same or similar audience with baseball during this time period (i.e., the 1990s).

In order to rule out this counterargument, I will compare the same type of data used to analyze the MLB shift while analyzing the counter-factual case of the National
Football League (NFL). Just as MLB was turning to retro styles for venue construction, the NFL had its own stadium construction boom in the 1990s. Unlike the retro ballparks in MLB, however, the new playing venues constructed for football teams (including those built in an area immediately adjacent to the contemporaneous Retro Era baseball parks as in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati) are distinctly and intentionally an upgrade of the previous Super Stadium model. Where baseball used bricks and ornate entrances that replicate long-discarded styles, football used modern materials like visible glass and metal, sharp angles, advanced playing surface technology, avant-garde dome arrangements and an overall futuristic look that made the now-supplanted Super Stadium structures look distinctly old-fashioned.

Along with the fact that these style trends happened at the same time, a fact that itself casts doubt on the zeitgeist model, the NFL is a useful comparison case for at least three reasons. First, as a major American-specific outdoor sport, it is under similar economic pressure to build playing venues that fans can reward and appreciate with attendance and, ultimately, monetary support. Second, as an American-specific sport with a playing season largely different from that of baseball there is a clear overlap in audience between the two industries. Personal interviews with various MLB and NFL executives confirm the idea that often NFL and MLB franchises view each other as complementary and not competing products. Furthermore, various national level surveys from the time in question (1980-1995), cite professional baseball and football as the only two sports for which the majority of Americans considered themselves fans, indicating that there is a clear crossover between the two fan bases (e.g., Harris 1984; Taylor 1993). Finally, when the team organizations and their city’s supporters discarded the Super
Stadium era parks in the 1990s, both the local NFL and MLB teams were replacing the *exact same stadium* with new versions of their own playing venues *at the same time*. Therefore, archival news coverage of justifications for these new NFL stadiums in cities that concurrently built a new MLB ballpark are important comparative data that controls for potential effects in differences caused by variance in the previous stadium, specific metropolitan conditions, and/or the local fan base. In addition, we are comparing the exact same element of the cultural domain—playing venues—that are potentially influenced by the same external forces (e.g., architectural trends and technological and material limits).

I use the same data and data collection methods in this section as in the sections covering MLB. The one difference is that *The Sporting News* only began to cover professional football in 1942, reducing the sample size from 118 years to 62 years. On the question of how these venues were justified, I focused primarily on three cities that shared venues with MLB teams—Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati. All three of these cities built modern football and retro baseball venues on the previous site of the shared Super Stadium. I also included Chicago and Baltimore as further validation that these three cities were not unique in the way they justified their venues.

*NFL vs. MLB: A Comparison of Concern for Economic Success*

Based on the sharp divergence in stadium styles, if the driver behind retro fashion is an authenticity crisis created by a concern over ulterior motives and lack of commitment to the domain, then we should be able to identify that there is also *no increase* in suspicion about authentic motivation for performance in the NFL relative to prior periods. There are reasons to believe that the NFL is less likely to experience an
increase in concern based on differences in the way baseball and football are organized economically (Leifer 1998; Yost 2006). In fact, national level surveys conducted at the time indicate that concern for greed was larger in baseball than in football (Harris 1986). In the same span of time that the MLB had eight work stoppages, the NFL had three (1974, 1982, 1987) and saw few games cancelled (only seven per team total over two strikes). Furthermore, factors like the existence of salary caps or limits constituted by the NFL, revenue-sharing across teams, and a much more limited form of “free agency” have reduced the NFL player’s ability to increase salary as dramatically as MLB players (Leifer 1998; Yost 2006). In fact, the NFL has rules in place (a so-called “franchise tag”) that essentially eliminate any chance that a star player could leave his teams through free agency. At the same time, while baseball player contracts are guaranteed, an NFL player, who is much more at risk of being injured, could essentially be cut at any time and not get paid.\(^{32}\) Finally, because professional football was organized in contrast to the more popular amateur collegiate football, the NFL players were always considered professionals. This means that the NFL would not see the same shift that baseball saw when fans realized, with the advent of free agency, that MLB players were not actually the amateurs they dreamed them to be.

To be clear, the usefulness of the NFL as a counterfactual case is not found in comparing mentions of greed across the sports, but instead the question I am concerned with is whether there is an authenticity crisis in football leading up to the 1990s building boom and popularity of modern styles. Figure 4 shows that at the same time audiences’ concern for greed in baseball saw a significant shift upwards, the concern for greed in

\(^{32}\) NFL players have only recently began to request portions of their contracts be guaranteed or paid even if they get cut for injury or other reasons.
football remained relatively unchanged over the period of coverage in the national sports journal *The Sporting News*. Table 3 shows the same negative binomial regression used above in the context of baseball, this time applied to coverage of professional football, predicting the number of articles covering football that negatively mention greed. Although there was a significant period effect for baseball on the amount of concern for greed, Table 3 shows that there was no significant period effect on the concern for greed in football.

These results rule out the possibility that the increased concern for greed in baseball was only due to a shifting *zeitgeist* that increased concern for greed among all audiences across cultural domains. Furthermore, these data validate the idea that a key difference between the two industries prior to their respective building booms in the 1990s was that while football’s concern for greed remained essentially the same leading up to this period, the baseball industry went through a shift in perceptions of authenticity, such that the audience were more concerned with the industry’s mercenary motive than in prior periods. This evidence supports the claim made in this paper that retro fashion will arise in domains with a marked increase in concern for ulterior motives of performance.

*Justifications for NFL Stadia (1992-2006)*

In addressing justifications used in stadium design for the NFL, it is first important to point out that the NFL, similar to MLB, had alternatives to consider when they collectively decided to go modern in style in the 1990s. The classic concrete bowls (e.g., Harvard Stadium, The Yale Bowl, The Coliseum in Los Angeles, and The Rose Bowl in Pasadena, CA), which often included gothic style pillars or grand archways in the entrances, as well as ivy on the walls, could have been redone to allow for the
important corporate boxes and larger seating capacity football demanded in the 1990s. These would have been akin to baseball’s turn to the Classic Era ballparks as they were built in a time well before Super Stadiums became the norm.

Comparing the coverage of these new NFL stadiums with MLB’s Retro ballparks built during the same time, shows that the NFL’s popular style was clearly not valued on the basis of its traditional authenticity. While baseball coverage focused on the inauthenticity of the Super Stadium’s turf and stark concrete exterior, the NFL continued to use the stadium upgrade justifications employed in the prior eras of the twentieth century. A majority (62%) of the articles used justifications for increased size based on the stadium’s ability to help the team compete economically. For example, Pittsburgh’s old stadium reportedly needed replacing not because it had departed from a traditional ideal, as the baseball coverage of the same stadium discussed, but because it was no longer able to fulfill a differentiated pricing model in support of the growing demand for revenue, which was needed in order for the team to compete on the field:

“It's still structurally sound, but it's been called economically obsolete, unable to generate the kind of money that flows from premium seating, personal seat licenses, retail stands and naming rights.”

“One of the things teams use stadium revenues for is player signing bonuses. While at Three Rivers, Steelers officials contended that they had a difficult time competing for free agents and keeping their own players because the stadium didn't generate enough revenue. A National Football League Players Association study showed that from 1993 to 2000, the Steelers spent the least on bonuses of any team in the league.”

While baseball media justified the new, Retro Era parks on the basis of traditionalism over function, 94% of the articles covering NFL stadiums used justifications of

modernity for football often focusing on the new uses of technology like heated playing surfaces. Some even went so far as to claim that traditional was “boring”:

“The Eagles' owner, Jeffrey Lurie, could have chosen any architectural style for his team's new $512 million home, the most expensive to date in professional football. But Lurie, who swooped in from Boston via Hollywood to buy the Eagles in 1994, decided to appeal to the boutique-hotel set rather than the Union League crowd. The result is a stadium... that forges far beyond the wood-paneled world of conservative Philadelphia and looks boldly into a dynamic future. ‘Traditional,’ Lurie explained in an interview, cutting to the chase, ‘completely bores us.’”

These data show that the zeitgeist argument is not a valid explanation for MLB’s valuing their Retro Era ballparks because of their authenticity. The fashion changes in venue design for the NFL and MLB went in different directions despite similar potential alternative models. This divergence in style cannot be explained by a broader shift in audience concern for authenticity in the time period as this would, at least, affect these two industries, which share a similar base audience.

To be clear, this evidence does not rule out the idea that if many domains happened to concurrently turn retro, due to their own authenticity crises, that these trends might influence the rate at which other domains facing an authenticity crisis would turn to retro cultural expressions. However, this evidence shows that a zeitgeist is not a sufficient condition for retro change in a particular domain. It is fair to argue that trends in other domains might catch an audience or producer's eye and in turn, might increase these expressions above how they would be valued in a vacuum. However, turning retro should always be a less valued option over building on the current popular trend when the domain is not facing its own authenticity crisis. This analysis supports this claim because the NFL did not go through an authenticity crisis and that MLB did. As discussed, the

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NFL lacked the same common knowledge generating events like labor stoppages and, as I have shown, the NFL did not have the same increased concern for ulterior motives leading up to their next change in stadium style. This is consistent with my argument that the necessary, and potentially sufficient, condition for retro fashion change is common knowledge of audience concern for lack of commitment to the domain.

**Discussion**

This evidence supports the claim that baseball’s retro turn in ballpark style arose in response to increased doubt about the authenticity of performance in the industry. While the spoils of increased success were hidden for many years by baseball’s labor practices, fans were awakened to the fact that players might actually be motivated by self-interest, once free agency was introduced. This shift in labor practices coupled with labor stoppages resulting from the constant battle between owners and players to capture more of the increasing economic pie resulted in an authenticity crisis in the domain in which the audience doubted the sincerity of the players’ commitment to the game over their own selfish interest. Concern about the ulterior, mercenary motive for performance became so prevalent during the era in which the Super Stadium style dominated ballpark design that this style became symbolically linked with this concern for greed. Even though the Super Stadium style had been the natural outgrowth from the fashion processes in the industry, and initially accepted as authentic for that reason, it was derided and could no longer lend legitimacy to styles that would incorporate some of its components as the next fashion evolved. Instead, fans demanded and rewarded reminders of tradition, which came in the form of Retro Era ballparks that physically and
rhetorically hearkened back to the Classic Era, a time that pre-dated this concern for greed. These historically popular cultural forms were welcomed as displays of commitment to the domain and its audience.

This analysis shows that the critical conditions necessary for a retro turn in a domain are audience rewards and common knowledge events that highlight general concern over these rewards. I would argue that the first condition, audience rewards, is a very general condition implicit in all fashion changes. Whether it is economic rewards, as shown in the case of MLB above, or social rewards like attention or status, audiences reward actors that can distinguish themselves and fulfill audience demand. For instance, in the case of 18th century women’s headwear, Robinson (1958:128–9) discusses how headdresses had become so large that seats had to be removed from carriages so that women could sit on the floor and fit their headdresses inside the carriage. The rewards in this context were not economic, but social. It is not hard to understand that wearing even larger headdresses would clearly be an attempt to increase attention at the expense of comfort. How this became common knowledge is less clear in Robinson’s observation.

The second condition, common knowledge events that trigger this return to past styles, is potentially less common. In the MLB case, it takes quite a buildup of these activities, in the form of strikes, lockouts, and journalist discourse, for owners to change. This is, at least, in part due to the fact that there were very few ballparks being built between 1975, the advent of free agency, and 1994 when the concern reached its height. Once organizations saw how much fans appreciated the first movers toward retro, like Baltimore, Texas, and Cleveland, it was an easy decision to emulate these styles with their own takes on the retro model (Loverro 1999; Richmond 1993). In domains
This paper contributes to scholarship about the relationship between the differing pressures of authenticity and trends in popular culture. “Authentic” expression is a tension-laden activity, fulfilled at times by displaying progress towards the ultimate expectations of a domain and at other times by displays that emphasize faithfulness to the foundations of a traditional template (Turner 1976; Trilling 1972; cf., Carroll and Wheaton 2009). The shift in demand for different playing surfaces (from grass to AstroTurf and back to grass) in ballparks discussed in this paper exemplifies the different ways in which authenticity can be used to justify a product or style. When AstroTurf began to replace the more traditional grass surface, this synthetic surface, and the Super Stadium style in which it was a fixture, was lauded as an advancement that would be instrumental in realizing an ultimate ideal in playing the game. Later, this same surface was called “unnatural” and grass was lauded as a representation of the traditional, the surface on which baseball “should be played.”

While previous work acknowledges the dialectic relationship between shifting definitions of authenticity and changes in what is valued, (Peterson 1997; Negro, Hannan, and Rao 2011), this work is often vague on when an audience will accept, or even demand, a return to the traditional style over the most recent updates along established dimensions of value. My argument and data help to clarify this puzzle by showing that an audience will demand traditional displays when there is an authenticity crisis in the domain, as audiences perceive that the actors are performing merely to obtain rewards instead of out of sincere commitment to perform for the audience.

An example of how this theory differs and adds to understanding on this dialectic pattern can be seen by considering Peterson’s (1997:esp. 221–233) aforementioned work on the country music industry. Peterson’s description of the soft-shell/hard-core dialectic lacks clarity about the conditions under which an audience will deride the dominant form as inauthentic and demand a representation of the traditional in its place. Peterson argues that the shift back to the traditional is a response to a subset of the genre’s producers and promoters who “bemoan the death of country music” and promote the return to more traditional or “hard-core” roots (Peterson 1997:229). A major objection to Peterson’s logic is that he assumes that audiences are mute actors willing to be guided by the whims of an industry’s producers. As such, this theory does not explain when an audience will accept these attempts to market traditional forms in lieu of the most recently popular pattern.

Conversely, my theory and case show that audiences are not mere pawns of the domain's dominant players. The matter of genuine or authentic performance is accepted or rejected by an audience and not merely constructed by the dominant producers in an industry (cf., Grazian 2005). When the audience doubts the sincerity of actors’ performances in the domain, the dominant cultural expression of the time becomes associated with this authenticity crisis, and cries for inauthenticity are more welcome and accepted by the audience. In fact, Peterson’s own work indicates that audience demand for the authentic is the consistent factor in this dialectic pattern by showing that a renaissance of hard-core took place even in cases pre-dating the emergence of music marketers and promoters (Peterson 1997:154–5). The cultural entrepreneurs discussed by Peterson can serve to speed up this process by facilitating the necessary common
knowledge that leads to collective action and increased demand for the traditional over the current trend, but they must ultimately play on existing audience concern, which is triggered by the increased prominence of an ulterior, mercenary motive for performance.

Finally, this work supports recent theories that suggest that cultural change is the result of forces internal or specific to the domain (Kaufman 2004; Lieberson 2000). Changing popularity in practices, products or styles are primarily the result of forces internal to any domain, rather than a changing *zeitgeist* or even producer whims, either of which could act independently of recent patterns or trends in a cultural domain. This paper shows that, along with concern for differentiation, shifts in audience perceptions of actors’ commitment to the domain, will influence whether the content of popular cultural forms will support continued differentiation along these established patterns, as the ratchet effect suggests, or whether they will shift back to historically popular, but discarded styles. This is not to say that external factors have no influence, as recent work indicates that rare events, such as China’s Cultural Revolution, can modify the influence of these endogenous forces (Obukhova et al. 2011). In all of these cases, actors are rewarded for successfully performing in ways that meet demand for differentiation and emulation. However, increased prominence of these rewards for performance can cause an audience to doubt the actors’ sincere motivation to serve the audience, and eventually lead to increased demand for more traditional forms as expressions of authentic commitment to a domain gone astray.
REFERENCES


Figures

![Graph showing mentions of greed in baseball articles from 1886 to 2003.](image)

**Figure 1** - Mentions of greed in articles related to baseball in *The Sporting News* from 1886 until 2003. Annual measure is the number of mentions of the word greed (or avarice or other synonyms) per page of content about baseball (excluding advertisements and number of pages covering other sports), per year.
Figure 2 - A graph of the decline and sharp rise of three features used in the Retro Era to replicate Classic Era designs: 1) Ornate brick exteriors and entrances that replaced minimalist concrete styles, 2) Grass playing surfaces that were replaced by and eventually replaced carpeted artificial surfaces, and 3) the practice of naming the venue “Ballpark”, “Field”, or “Grounds” initially replaced by the Stadium moniker.
Figure 3 – Percentage of articles by period that use justifications for the styles based on the various criteria. The size, modernity, and revitalization themes dominate the first 90 years of the twentieth century. The Retro Era styles, however, are justified in terms of their propriety, and match with tradition, as well as their role in restoring, as opposed to revitalizing, the city. This is a clear shift in theme to show that these retro ballparks were valued for their traditional authenticity as opposed to their progress along established dimensions of value.
Figure 4 - Comparison of articles covering the greed of baseball (red) with articles covering the greed of NFL (black) since The Sporting News began covering the NFL in 1942. The comparable trend lines show that while concern for greed in MLB spiked in the period starting in the mid 1970s, concern for greed in the NFL changed very little.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Pre-Classic</th>
<th>Classic Ballpark</th>
<th>Stadium</th>
<th>Super Stadium and Dome</th>
<th>Retro Ballpark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Ballparks</td>
<td>Many</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterior</td>
<td>Ornate Wood and Brick</td>
<td>Ornate Brick</td>
<td>Ornate and Minimalist Concrete</td>
<td>Minimalist Pre-Fab Concrete</td>
<td>Ornate Brick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Building</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Brick, Concrete and Steel</td>
<td>Concrete and Steel and Reinforced Concrete</td>
<td>Reinforced Concrete</td>
<td>Brick, Concrete and Steel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outfield Dimensions</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Asymmetric</td>
<td>Asymmetric and Symmetric</td>
<td>Symmetric</td>
<td>Asymmetric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing Surface</td>
<td>Grass</td>
<td>Grass</td>
<td>Grass</td>
<td>AstroTurf</td>
<td>Grass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seating Arrangement</td>
<td>Grandstand</td>
<td>Double-Decked Grandstand and Outfield Bleachers</td>
<td>Multi-Decked Grandstands and Decked Bleachers</td>
<td>Complete Wrap Around Multi-Deck Seating</td>
<td>Double-Decked Grandstand and Outfield Bleachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naming Practice</td>
<td>Ballpark or Field</td>
<td>Ballpark or Field</td>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Ballpark or Field</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 – This table shows the different style eras and primary features of ballparks throughout the twentieth century. The Classic Era and Retro Era ballparks are highlighted to show just some of the primary features of the Classic Era replicated by the Retro Era designs.
Table 2 - Negative binomial regression predicting the number of articles mentioning greed by year in the Sporting News. Coefficients are incidence rate ratios and z-scores are reported in parentheses below the coefficients. This analysis supports the claim that there is a clear and positive period effect in the amount of greed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period Effect</th>
<th>Incident Rates</th>
<th>Incident Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Post 1975)</td>
<td>(1.03)</td>
<td>(0.99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Stoppage</td>
<td>1.387</td>
<td>(0.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of pages of coverage</td>
<td>1.005 ***</td>
<td>1.005 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% coverage by sport</td>
<td>0.000 ***</td>
<td>0.000 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi2</td>
<td>22.43</td>
<td>22.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R</td>
<td>0.0929</td>
<td>0.0949</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 - Negative binomial regression predicting the number of articles mentioning greed by year in coverage of professional football (NFL) in the Sporting News. Coefficients are incidence rate ratios and z-scores are reported in parentheses below the coefficients. When compared with the similar regressions on baseball, these results support the claim made in this paper that an increase in greed and concern for authenticity is not the result of a shifting zeitgeist, but is the result of industry specific behaviors that increase concern for ulterior motives.
## APPENDIX A - MLB New Stadium Construction History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Ballpark Name (at opening)</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Teams</th>
<th>Year Opened</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Baker Bowl</td>
<td>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Phillies</td>
<td>1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Sportsman’s Park</td>
<td>St. Louis, Missouri</td>
<td>Browns</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Shibe Park</td>
<td>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Athletics, Phillies</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Forbes Field</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Pirates</td>
<td>1909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>League Park</td>
<td>Cleveland, Ohio</td>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Comiskey Park</td>
<td>Chicago, Illinois</td>
<td>White Sox</td>
<td>1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>National Park</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>Senators</td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Fenway Park</td>
<td>Boston, Massachusetts</td>
<td>Red Sox, Braves</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Crosley Field</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
<td>Reds</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Navin Field</td>
<td>Detroit, Michigan</td>
<td>Tigers</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Polo Grounds</td>
<td>Manhattan, New York City</td>
<td>Giants, Yankees, Mets</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Ebbets Field</td>
<td>Brooklyn, New York City</td>
<td>Dodgers</td>
<td>1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Wrigley Field</td>
<td>Chicago, Illinois</td>
<td>Cubs</td>
<td>1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Braves Field</td>
<td>Boston, Massachusetts</td>
<td>Braves</td>
<td>1915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Yankee Stadium</td>
<td>Bronx, New York City</td>
<td>Yankees</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Cleveland Municipal Stadium</td>
<td>Cleveland, Ohio</td>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>1931</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Milwaukee County Stadium</td>
<td>Milwaukee, Wisconsin</td>
<td>Braves, Brewers</td>
<td>1953</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Memorial Stadium</td>
<td>Baltimore, Maryland</td>
<td>Orioles</td>
<td>1950</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Kansas City Municipal Stadium</td>
<td>Kansas City, Missouri</td>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>1955</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Candlestick Park</td>
<td>San Francisco, California</td>
<td>Giants</td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Metropolitan Stadium</td>
<td>Bloomington, Minnesota</td>
<td>Twins</td>
<td>1956</td>
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<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Dodger Stadium</td>
<td>Los Angeles, California</td>
<td>Dodgers, Angels</td>
<td>1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Shea Stadium</td>
<td>Queens, New York City</td>
<td>Mets</td>
<td>1964</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stadium/Dome</td>
<td>Astrodome</td>
<td>Houston, Texas</td>
<td>Astros</td>
<td>1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Anaheim Stadium</td>
<td>Anaheim, California</td>
<td>Angels</td>
<td>1966</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Oakland Coliseum</td>
<td>Oakland, California</td>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium</td>
<td>Atlanta, Georgia</td>
<td>Braves</td>
<td>1966</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Busch Memorial Stadium</td>
<td>St. Louis, Missouri</td>
<td>Cardinals</td>
<td>1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>San Diego Stadium</td>
<td>San Diego, California</td>
<td>Padres</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Riverfront Stadium</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
<td>Reds</td>
<td>1970</td>
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<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Three Rivers Stadium</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Pirates</td>
<td>1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Veterans Stadium</td>
<td>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Phillies</td>
<td>1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Kauffman Stadium</td>
<td>Kansas City, Missouri</td>
<td>Royals</td>
<td>1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium/Dome</td>
<td>Olympic Stadium</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
<td>Expos</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium/Dome</td>
<td>Kingdome</td>
<td>Seattle, Washington</td>
<td>Mariners</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium/Dome</td>
<td>Metrodome</td>
<td>Minneapolis, Minnesota</td>
<td>Twins</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium/Dome</td>
<td>Sky Dome</td>
<td>Toronto, Ontario</td>
<td>Blue Jays</td>
<td>1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadium/Dome</td>
<td>Florida Suncoast Dome</td>
<td>St. Petersburg, Florida</td>
<td>Rays</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>Oriole Park at Camden Yards</td>
<td>Baltimore, Maryland</td>
<td>Orioles</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>Jacobs Field</td>
<td>Cleveland, Ohio</td>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>Rangers Ballpark in Arlington</td>
<td>Arlington, Texas</td>
<td>Rangers</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>Coors Field</td>
<td>Denver, Colorado</td>
<td>Rockies</td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>Turner Field</td>
<td>Atlanta, Georgia</td>
<td>Braves</td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>Edison Int'l. Field of Anaheim</td>
<td>Anaheim, California</td>
<td>Angels</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro/Dome</td>
<td>Chase Field</td>
<td>Phoenix, Arizona</td>
<td>Diamondbacks</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro/Dome</td>
<td>Safeco Field</td>
<td>Seattle, Washington</td>
<td>Mariners</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>Comerica Park</td>
<td>Detroit, Michigan</td>
<td>Tigers</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>Pacific Bell Park</td>
<td>San Francisco, California</td>
<td>Giants</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>The Ballpark at Union Station/Enron Field</td>
<td>Houston, Texas</td>
<td>Astros</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro/Dome</td>
<td>Miller Park</td>
<td>Milwaukee, Wisconsin</td>
<td>Brewers</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>PNC Park</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Pirates</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>Great American Ball Park</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
<td>Reds</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>PETCO Park</td>
<td>San Diego, California</td>
<td>Padres</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retro</td>
<td>Busch Stadium</td>
<td>St. Louis, Missouri</td>
<td>Cardinals</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX B – Archival Newspaper Data Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Opening/Closing</th>
<th>Ballpark</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Collection Process</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Redland Field (Crosley Field)</td>
<td>Classic Era</td>
<td>4/1-4/10/1912</td>
<td>Cincinnati Enquirer</td>
<td>Library of Congress Archived Newspaper collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closing</td>
<td>Crosley Field Closing</td>
<td>Classic Era</td>
<td>1968-1972</td>
<td>Cincinnati Enquirer</td>
<td>Cincinnati Public Library Search System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Riverfront Stadium</td>
<td>Super Stadium Era</td>
<td>1968-1972</td>
<td>Cincinnati Enquirer</td>
<td>Cincinnati Public Library Search System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Shibe Park</td>
<td>Classic Era</td>
<td>1908-1910</td>
<td>Philadelphia Inquirer</td>
<td>Philadelphia Library Online Newspaper Archive Search</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Veterans Stadium</td>
<td>Super Stadium Era</td>
<td>4/1-10/15/1971</td>
<td>Philadelphia Inquirer</td>
<td>Philadelphia Public Library Newspaper Archive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Philadelphia Daily News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Philadelphia Daily News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Three Rivers Stadium</td>
<td>Super Stadium</td>
<td>7/1-7/30/1970</td>
<td>Pittsburgh Post-Gazette</td>
<td>Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Newspaper Archive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>PNC Park</td>
<td>Retro Ballpark</td>
<td>4/1-15/2001</td>
<td>Pittsburgh Post-Gazette</td>
<td>Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Newspaper Archive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Sportsman's Park</td>
<td>Classic Era</td>
<td>4/1-4/10/1909</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Library of Congress Archived Newspaper collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closing</td>
<td>Busch Stadium (Sportsman's Park)</td>
<td>Classic Era</td>
<td>5/1-5/15/1966</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Library of Congress Archived Newspaper collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Busch Memorial Stadium</td>
<td>Classic Era</td>
<td>5/1-5/30/1966</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Library of Congress Archived Newspaper collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Busch Stadium (III)</td>
<td>Classic Era</td>
<td>10/1-10/30/2006</td>
<td>St. Louis Post-Dispatch</td>
<td>Library of Congress Archived Newspaper collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Dodger Stadium</td>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>4/6-4/14/1962</td>
<td>Los Angeles Times</td>
<td>ProQuest Historical Los Angeles Times (1881-1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Comiskey Park</td>
<td>Classic Era</td>
<td>1909-1911</td>
<td>Chicago Tribune</td>
<td>ProQuest Historical Chicago Tribune (1849-1988)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Appendix C – Article Counts By City, Theme, and Style Era**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Articles (N)</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Propriety or “the way things should be”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Super</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>87.5% (8)</td>
<td>71.4% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>75.0% (12)</td>
<td>65.2% (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>66.7% (12)</td>
<td>52.0% (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>71.4% (7)</td>
<td>61.1% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>74.4% (39)</td>
<td>62.1% (87)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 - Percentage of articles by “Era” and city that make a comparative statement using Size or Propriety to justify the new ballpark. For comparison sake, only those articles that were in the newspaper up to one week before or after were included in the sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Articles (N)</th>
<th>Modernity</th>
<th>Tradition/History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Super</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>75.0% (8)</td>
<td>57.1% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>58.3% (12)</td>
<td>78.3% (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>75.0% (12)</td>
<td>76.0% (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>57.1% (7)</td>
<td>66.7% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>66.7% (39)</td>
<td>70.1% (87)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 - Percentage of articles by “Era” and city that make a comparative statement using Modernity or Tradition and History to justify the new ballpark. For comparison sake, only those articles that were in the newspaper up to one week before or after were included in the sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Articles (N)</th>
<th>Revitalizing the City</th>
<th>Restoring the City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classic</td>
<td>Super</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>87.5% (8)</td>
<td>71.4% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>58.3% (12)</td>
<td>52.2% (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>41.7% (12)</td>
<td>64.0% (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>42.9% (7)</td>
<td>83.3% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>56.4% (39)</td>
<td>66.7% (87)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 - Percentage of articles by “Era” and city that make a comparative statement using language that seeks to revitalize the city or to restore the city in order to justify the new ballpark. For comparison sake, only those articles that were in the newspaper up to one week before or after were included in the sample.