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## **Book Review - Fair Territory**

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In the fall, the days grow shorter and the season comes to an end. The baseball season that is. Two truths that every fan knows. Some relate seasonal affective disorder or SAD to the fewer hours of sunlight. Perhaps, but every fan has to feel that emotional tug that comes with the close of the season. That feeling that is best summarized in A. Bartlett Giamatti's *The Green Fields of the Mind*. I think it is no coincidence that this period overlaps the SAD time of year.

It is during that bleak period between the final out of the season and opening day for the next one that fans like me look for any chance to feed our poor ravenous baseball souls. I found such an opportunity in *Fair Territory*, where poet and baseball enthusiast Jilly Dybka has fashioned her collection of baseball sonnets into a splendid winter diversion.

*Fair Territory* is a chapbook of 22 delicious takes on the game of baseball with some history, a dash of trivia, as well as a view of the poet's own memories related to baseball.

I'm not one who must have my poetry delivered to me in strict form but I am open to such writing if it holds my attention and speaks to me. Dybka succeeded on both accounts.

My personal favorites from the book are *Mudball* (with it's analogy between dirty little baseball lore and

roughing up the balls before every game with ball prepping goo) and *New Haircut*, looking back through a child's eyes. Plus *Opening Day* has a brilliant politically humorous twist that I also loved.

*Fair Territory* is chapbook that will pack a therapeutic punch each off-season. I plan to keep it handy on those nights that I long for the smells of grass and beer and hotdogs under the lights.

*Fair Territory* is published by Bear Shirt Press.