

*The Wax Pack*

Book Club Discussion Points and Questions

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In *The Wax Pack*, I set out to answer a very simple question—what happened to the baseball players I grew up idolizing in the 1980s? My vehicle for this quest was a single pack of Topps baseball cards from 1986 that, for almost 30 years, had miraculously never been opened. Whatever random assortment of cards were in the pack, those would be the quarry for my hunt.

I combine multiple genres—sports, travel, memoir—to produce what I not-so-modestly hope adds up to the offspring of *Field of Dreams*, *Wild*, and *Almost Famous*.

I was never interested in writing a sports book. I wanted to write something that transcended the genre and that appealed to general narrative nonfiction readers through the exploration of universal themes. I hope you'll crack the cover to see if I succeeded.

Below is a list of questions meant to guide discussion in book clubs and classrooms. As a professor myself, this was fun to put together:

1. How would you describe the narrator's voice?
2. What surprised you about the Wax Packers? How did they meet, exceed, or defy your expectations?
3. If you had to sum up the meaning of the book in just 1-3 words, what would it (they) be?
4. How would you describe the character arc/development of the narrator from the beginning to the end of the book?
5. How does the road trip change the narrator's feelings towards/about nostalgia?
6. One of the themes of the book is the danger of having expectations. What role do expectations play in your own life?
7. What does the narrator mean when he concludes at the end of the book that you have a lot more in common with professional ballplayers than you realize?
8. What were your favorite and least favorite chapters, and why?
9. One of the book's central themes is loss of innocence, something that we all experience in our own lives, albeit at different times and in different ways. What is your own personal history with this theme, and how were you different as a result?
10. How is masculinity defined and explored in the book?
11. What imagery stands out as most pronounced in the book?
12. I like to think that this book is a giant endorsement for risk-taking. Has it inspired you to take any risks in your creative and personal lives?