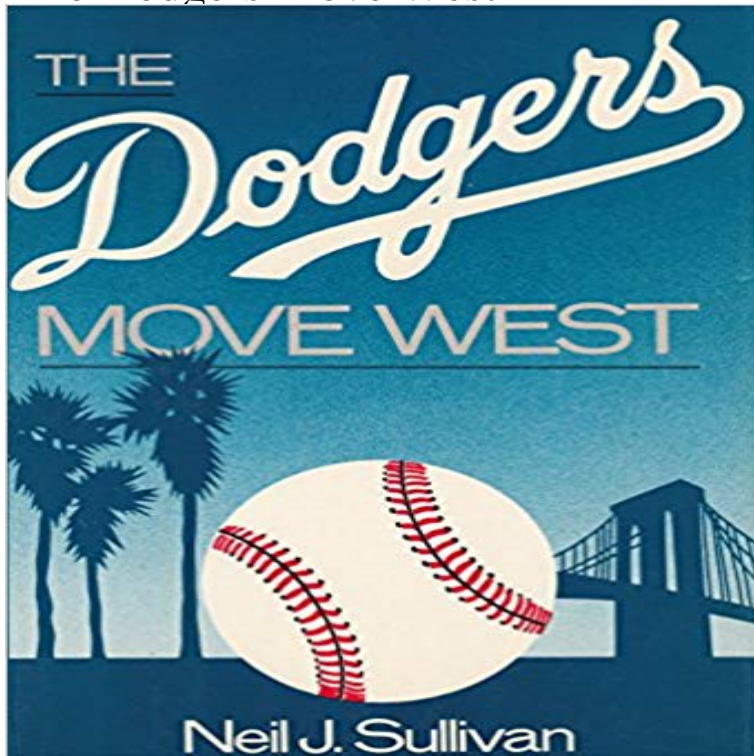


The Dodgers Move West



For many New Yorkers one of the most traumatic events since World War II was the removal of the Brooklyn Dodgers, one of the most popular baseball teams of all time, to Los Angeles in 1958. In this controversial new look at a story that has reached almost mythic proportions in its many retellings, Neil Sullivan shifts responsibility for the move onto the local government maneuverings that occurred on both sides of the continent. Conventional wisdom has it that Dodgers owner Walter O'Malley cold-heartedly abandoned the devoted Brooklyn fans for the easy money of Los Angeles. The truth was actually more complicated. O'Malley had, in fact, wanted to stay in Brooklyn and build a new stadium. Ebbetts Field was obsolete, situated in an increasingly unsafe neighborhood and without parking facilities (it had been built in the days of the streetcar, hence the name Dodgers). But he was stymied by an uncooperative New York City administration spearheaded by Robert Moses who blocked O'Malley's use of an ideal site at the Atlantic Avenue Long Island Railroad terminal. A political battle over the Dodgers move erupted in Los Angeles too. The new stadium site at Chavez Ravine, suggested by Mayor Poulson, had been designated for public housing and a bitter fight broke out over the issue. But a telethon campaign that enlisted the help of celebrities like Groucho Marx, George Burns and Ronald Reagan helped to win the referendum in favor of the deal. Despite playing until 1962 in the Los Angeles Coliseum, where the right field looked directly into the sun, the Dodgers soon bounced back winning the 1959 World Series and went on to become one of the most successful franchises in the country. Set against a backdrop of sporting passion and rivalry, and coming thirty years after the Dodgers last season in Brooklyn, this engrossing book offers new insights into the workings of power in the

nations two largest cities. It ends by drawing important conclusions about the proper relationship between sports franchises and the public purse.

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