

AARP Segunda Juventud

A bilingual magazine

welcome!

english

español

home

games

food NEW

presence

Rx drugs

social security

trends

health

finance

travel

sports

entertainment

contact us

reader services

AARP en español

AARP Puerto Rico



PHOTO: PHOTO FILE/MLB PHOTOS ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

Roberto Clemente

A Legendary Pirate

BY CARLOS J. QUEIROS

April/May 2006

It's October 1971, and the Pittsburgh Pirates have just edged out the Baltimore Orioles 2-1 in the seventh game to win the World Series. With millions watching and listening, MVP Roberto Clemente speaks: "*En el día más grande de mi vida, para los nenes, la bendición mía y que mis padres me echen la bendición.*"

After 17 seasons, this was Clemente's moment—and it was Spanish that flowed instinctively from him, words blessing his sons and asking his parents for their blessing.

"That moment was the essence of Roberto Clemente and symbolizes why he is so revered in all of Latin America," said David Maraniss, the author of *Clemente: The Passion and Grace of Baseball's Last Hero* (April 2006 in English, July 2006 in Spanish), in an interview.

But the biography is about more than baseball. With the same attention he gives to play-by-play accounts of the Pirates' 1960 and 1971 World Series victories, Maraniss delves into Clemente's character. What he unearths is not only a complex view of a hero but a vivid portrait of the cultural landscape of the United States.



"I tried to write a universal story through Clemente, who is a universal character," said Maraniss, a Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer.

The arc of Clemente's life was high and short, like a pop fly to the infield. At 38, on New Year's Eve 1972, he died in a plane crash while delivering aid to earthquake victims in Nicaragua. His body was never found. In his brief life, he rose from poverty to become immortalized as the first Latino player to reach baseball's Hall of Fame. Readers will walk away with an understanding of the myth and the man who, in the words of the author, "became, in death, larger than life."

Find articles from current or past issues »



or search

94

Subscribe

Sign up for the free AARP Segunda Juventud.org eNewsletter

Su email

Subscribe

Get the Magazine

Not an AARP member? [Join now](#) and start receiving AARP Segunda Juventud magazine at home, plus other great benefits. [Join now »](#)

Already an AARP member? [Click here](#) to start receiving AARP Segunda Juventud magazine in your home.

ADVERTISEMENT