

Pedro Is Like the Rest of Us

Letter to the Editor by Harvey A. Silverglate

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I haven't bothered to read the sports pages since Walter O'Malley sold and moved my beloved Brooklyn Dodgers to Los Angeles in 1958, a move that powerfully demonstrated to me that baseball had become big business rather than sport.

But I see that Pedro Martinez's departure has become page one news and prompted Dan Shaughnessy to express shock over this triumph of lucre ("New Mat grabs for 'respect,' Sports, Dec. 14). Here's a lesson for Shaughnessy: Baseball is no worse than any other of the institutions of civil society that have foresaken values like loyalty and professionalism in favor of more money.

Physicians are becoming increasingly frustrated with the corruption of the doctor-patient relationship by the need to charge a sufficient number of reimbursable encounters with the consumer. Partners in law firms are now considered shareholders who can lose their entire careers if they don't attract enough clients or accumulate enough billable hours.

Hopefully at some point society's shock at the hollowness of some of its professional institutions will become more authentic than the shock of Dan Shaughnessy that Pedro Martinez has foresaken his team, his town, and his fans for a few extra bucks.