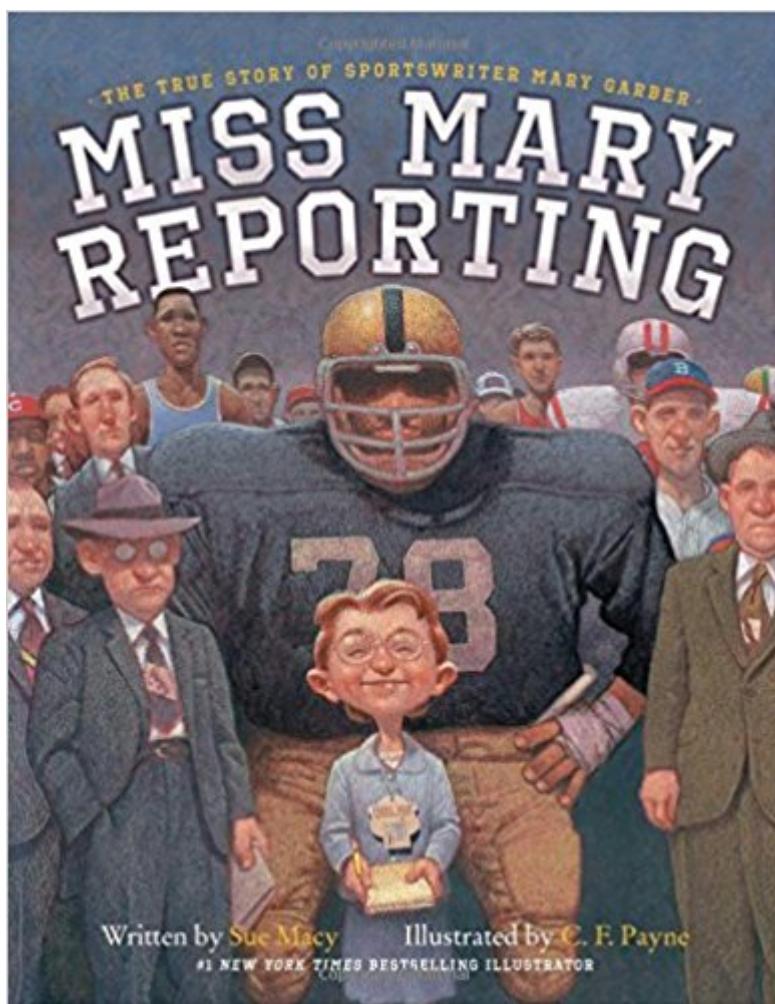


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# Miss Mary Reporting: The True Story Of Sportswriter Mary Garber



## Synopsis

“Macy introduces Garber as a person who followed her passion for sports despite her mother’s disapproval and did her job with purpose, integrity, and dignity. The narrative is swiftly paced, smoothly written, and filled with interesting details and quotes” A lively, memorable biography for younger readers. • Booklist (starred review)

“It’s an entertaining and accessible portrait of a generous-minded writer and a reminder of the value of telling people’s stories, whether pro player or soapbox racer. • Publishers Weekly (starred review) “A heartfelt, informative, and thoroughly engaging picture book biography about groundbreaking sports reporter Mary Garber. • School Library Journal (starred review) From beloved author Sue Macy comes an illustrated biography of Mary Garber, one of the first female sports journalists in American history! While sitting in the bleachers of a Soap Box Derby in the 1950s, Mary Garber overheard two African-American boys in the following exchange: “See that lady down there?” asked one boy. “That’s Mary Garber. She doesn’t care who you are, but if you do something good, she’ll write about you.” • Mary Garber was a pioneering sports journalist in a time where women were rarely a part of the newspaper business. Women weren’t even allowed to sit in the press boxes at sporting events, so Mary was forced to sit with the coaches’ wives. But that didn’t stop her. In a time when African-American sports were not routinely covered, Mary went to the games and wrote about them. Garber was a sportswriter for fifty-six years and was the first woman to receive the Associated Press Sports Editors’ Red Smith Award, presented for major contributions in sports journalism. And now, every year the Association of Women in Sports Media presents the Mary Garber Pioneer Award in her honor to a role model for women in sports media. Sure to inspire future journalists, athletes, and any child who has a dream, this illustrated biography of Mary Garber captures her feisty and determined spirit and brings her story to life.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 5 - 8 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 3

## Customer Reviews

Gr 2-4 •A heartfelt, informative, and thoroughly engaging picture book biography about groundbreaking sports reporter Mary Garber (1916-2008). Garber became a sportswriter at a time when there were few women in the field, when women were not welcome in the press box, in the locker room, or on the sidelines. Her love of sports, her fierce determination, and her independent spirit gave her the tools she needed to succeed. She became known for reporting on teams and people who were out of the mainstream, athletes whom other sportswriters wouldn't even consider, such as African American individuals and college teams. Her admiration of Jackie Robinson inspired her to face her detractors with stoicism and grace and to go about doing the best job she could. In Macy's adept hands, Garber comes to life, from her childhood antics on the football field to her important work giving a fair shake to kids and athletes she thought deserved more attention. Payne's mixed-media art lends itself well to the topic. His paintings fill the pages with movement and humor, and the characters' expressions draw the eye and complement the tone of the narrative. Pair this entertaining biography with a few about other women journalists, such as Nellie Bly, for a more in-depth examination of an area that is often overlooked in children's literature.

**VERDICT** An excellent and welcome addition to any elementary biography collection. •Jody Kopple, Shady Hill School, Cambridge, MA

As a child in the 1920s, Mary Garber played tackle football with the boys in her Winston-Salem neighborhood and learned to love the many sports she watched with her father. Later, determined to become a journalist, she reluctantly worked as a society reporter until, during World War II, she took over the sports desk, traditionally a man's job. • Jackie Robinson became a role model for the young woman, who endured her own discrimination at the ballparks: banned from

press boxes and locker rooms, she was seated with the players' wives. Garber earned a reputation for fairness, covering games at local black high schools, a departure from standard practice in the segregated South. She wrote her last article in 2002. In this well-researched picture-book biography, Macy introduces Garber as a person who followed her passion for sports despite her mother's disapproval and did her job with purpose, integrity, and dignity. The narrative is swiftly paced, smoothly written, and filled with interesting details and quotes.

Payne's soft-focus, mixed-media illustrations feature beautifully delineated period settings and a masterful use of composition for dramatic effect. Best of all, even in crowd scenes, people are portrayed with perception, individuality, and humanity—especially Garber. A lively, memorable biography for younger readers. (Booklist \*STARRED\* November 1, 2015) Macy's clear, anecdotal writing is backed with solid research and documented quotations. . . . A winning tribute to an important game-changer. (Kirkus Reviews November 11, 2015) This is a wonderful book with charming illustrations. As a fellow journalist whose also once wore credentials stating 'No Women or Children in the Press Box,' I don't think Mary Garber can be championed enough! (Lesley Visser, Hall of Fame Sportscaster, first female NFL analyst on TV) Mary Garber is an inspiration and role model to thousands, including me. This is the wonderful story of her remarkable and trailblazing life. (Christine Brennan, USA Today sports columnist, ABC News, CNN and PBS commentator, bestselling author)\* In the 1940s, Mary Garber entered the male-exclusive field of sports reporting, and Macy (Roller Derby Rivals) dives into describing the challenges she faced—such as her panic when reporting at a college football game and realizing there was no program to identify the players, or not being allowed to talk to the players in the locker rooms. After Jackie Robinson joined the Dodgers, Garber was moved both by Robinson's baseball prowess and "quiet dignity in the face of taunts and jeers." Payne's mixed-media artwork blends a soft, hazy quality with a hint of caricature, emphasizing Garber's diminutiveness, even as Macy makes clear the thoughtfulness, smarts, and determination she brought to her journalism.

It's an entertaining and accessible portrait of a generous-minded writer and a reminder of the value of telling people's stories, whether pro player or soapbox racer. (Publishers Weekly \*STARRED\*) "It seemed that Mary was born loving sports," writes Macy in this affectionate portrait of a pioneering journalist. Mary's father frequently took his three girls to sporting events, explaining the rules of the game ("He felt if you were a spectator, you ought to know what you were spectating") and fostering his middle daughter's interests in sports and reporting. As an eight-year-old growing up near Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Mary created her own family newspaper, the Garber News; later, fresh out of college, she

landed a society reporter gig at a real paper, Winston-Salem's Twin City Sentinel. But it was during WWII that Mary "got her big break," running the sports page while the (male) sportswriters were fighting in the war. For much of the next six decades, she worked in sports reporting, blazing trails for female journalists. Macy's succinct text is informative and engaging, her regard for her subject obvious. Of Mary's toughness as a young girl Macy writes, "[She played tackle] football with the boys over rough and rocky ground" and of course, she was the quarterback. Payne's soft, sepia-toned, mixed-media illustrations—part Norman Rockwell, part caricature—provide the perfect touch of nostalgia, playing with perspective to further develop character. Mary is placed next to much taller men to create a sense of her physical tininess, for example, or sometimes with her mouth and nose obstructed to highlight her too-big glasses and boyish haircut. An author's note, timeline, source notes, and "Resources for all ages" are appended. (The Horn Book Magazine January/February 2016) Gr 2-4 *œA heartfelt, informative, and thoroughly engaging picture book biography about groundbreaking sports reporter Mary Garber (1916-œ2008). Garber became a sportswriter at a time when there were few women in the field, when women were not welcome in the press box, in the locker room, or on the sidelines. Her love of sports, her fierce determination, and her independent spirit gave her the tools she needed to succeed. She became known for reporting on teams and people who were out of the mainstream, athletes whom other sportswriters wouldn't even consider, such as African American individuals and college teams. Her admiration of Jackie Robinson inspired her to face her detractors with stoicism and grace and to go about doing the best job she could. In Macy's adept hands, Garber comes to life, from her childhood antics on the football field to her important work giving a fair shake to kids and athletes she thought deserved more attention. Payne's mixed-media art lends itself well to the topic. His paintings fill the pages with movement and humor, and the characters' expressions draw the eye and complement the tone of the narrative. Pair this entertaining biography with a few about other women journalists, such as Nellie Bly, for a more in-depth examination of an area that is often overlooked in children's literature.*

**VERDICT** An excellent and welcome addition to any elementary biography collection. (School Library Journal \*STARRED REVIEW\* February 2016) Rating: 1-5: (5 is an excellent or a Starred review) 5

Genre: Picture Book Biography

What did you like about the book? Born in 1916, little Mary Garber loved sports, and even became the quarterback of her football team despite her small size and the fact that she was a girl. Combining her love of sports with an affinity for writing led Mary Garber to a career as a sportswriter that ran from the 1940s until 2002. This upbeat

picture book biography tells her story, often quoting Garber or others in her life to demonstrate the kind of person she was. Garber's big break came during WWII, when so many men went to war that the sports desk at her newspaper became available. Garber made it her practice to cover the games of the colored leagues as well as white. Simply by doing her job well, Garber broke through barriers holding back women from sports reporting and changed the tradition of keeping African-Americans out of her community's sports pages. An Author's Note provides a more details about Ms. Garber. End pages include a time line, resources for further information, a list of sources, and footnotes for each quote. Macy conveys well-deserved affection, respect, and admiration for her subject. Anything you didn't like about it? No. To whom would you recommend this book? This would work well as a read aloud along with other books on the theme of "girl power," the importance of following your dreams, or to demonstrate how one person can change the world. Who should buy this book? Elementary school libraries and public libraries Where would you shelve it? File with your other picture book biographies Should we (librarians/readers) put this on the top of our "to read" piles? Yes, it is very well done. (Mary Melaugh, Marshall Middle School Library, Billerica, MA Youth Services Book Review)

A winner of a book for all ages. Written beautifully and the illustrations will catch your eye.

Mary Garber was a sports reporter in the Piedmont of North Carolina for more than 50 years. She spent a very long career covering high school and college football, basketball and tennis. She was also my aunt. What was remarkable about her was not that she was the first woman to report sports. Nor was it her very long career. But it was her clear understanding that even though the stories of a high school or college game becomes yesterday's news in an instant, the individual coverage of an athlete's performance are important to the players. When we visited we would often be approached by a grey haired guy who would pull out his wallet and an ancient clipping of a story Mary wrote decades ago. Sue Macy has done an excellent job of telling her story for a young audience. The prose and the illustrations are well done. Mary got a lot of recognition for her ground breaking career but I think she would appreciate this book more than all the other coverage. It might just inspire a young person to achieve something that they might not have thought possible.

Mary Garber was one of the first female sports journalists in the United States. At a time when women were not newspaper reporters, Mary was a sports reporter. Her big break came during

World War II when the men were sent to war. After the war, Mary was moved to a news desk but then a year later permanent came back to sports. She was there to witness Jackie Robinson join the Brooklyn Dodgers. Mary herself was barred from the press box and forced to sit with the coaches' wives rather than the other reporters until her editor complained. Locker rooms were also a challenge. Mary continued writing about sports for more than 50 years, retiring in 2002. Along the way she garnered awards and honors and a reputation for being fair and unbiased. Macy captures the story of this groundbreaking woman beautifully. The tone is playful and humble with Garber's quotes often given credit and thanks to others rather than taking praise for herself. At the same time, one understands the courage it took for Mary to continue doing this job in such a male-dominated field. This story is inspirational in the best possible way. Payne's illustrations add to the playful feel of the title and the humor. Mary is shown as very petite, dwarfed by those around her. Yet she is clearly the center of attention on the page, her face lit from within by her big eyes and large glasses. Her short hair and can-do attitude mark her uniquely on the page as well. A great picture book biography to share with children who enjoy sports or writing. Appropriate for ages 7-9.

Extraordinary people do extraordinary things in the world on a daily basis and Mary Garber was no exception. She excelled in broadcasting sporting events as a sports writer from the smallest event to the largest and rose quickly to being beloved by fans everywhere. Her journey in what is seen as a "man's" world, gave her the notoriety as the first female sports writer. This book is exceptional in all aspects. A fun read and I even learned a few things that still make me smile. Written by Sue Macy, illustrated by C. F. Payne and published as a Paula Wiseman Book by Simon & Schuster. #PB #biography

I adored this book. It's the perfect example of how to write nonfiction that reads like the best story ever. Definitely worth reading if you're a sports fan or not.

Excellent book with great historical significance and gorgeous illustrations!

Right from the first line this book takes you on a journey with a girl who never gave up and who challenged the norm. What a great role model Mary was and it's a terrific read. The quotes throughout bring the reader even closer to Mary. I have read this so many times.

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