I asked some of my pals in the world of professional sport to comment on the study (assuring them, for purposes of a contained reaction, that it was not a parody; colleagues, please pardon the deception), with special regard for the assumption that high uniform numbers are a form of discrimination:

"Well, if the author is serious, he is liable, as is the SARR chap, of that permitted the paper to be presented, to a class action defamation suit for implying that a particular class of MLB players would not catch on to the discrimination: even middle relievers are smarter than that."

--- Tony LaRussa, famous attorney

"This must be a satire, for a key premise is backwards: a class discriminated against would be given low numbers, on the supposition that they could not count very high."

--- George F. Will

"White men can't think." --- Harold Baines

"Is this guy Jewish? He sure sounds Jewish. Lots of these are guilty of nothing." --- Mario Lemieux

"Jeez, and they call us catchers dumb." --- Carlton Fisk

"What a Newfie loser! Grant Fuhr (goalie of color) and I had a few beers and figured, maybe, you know, this writer's a goalie, so he can't help it, eh?" --- Wayne Gretzky

"That's almost as silly as trying to get Roger Maris into Cooperstown." --- Ozzie Nixon, Ozzie Smith, Bop Roberts, Devon White, Lance Johnson, Brian Jordan, and Glennallen Hill, AGA The Coalition of Seven Black Guys Whose Uniform Numbers Average 1.571

SUCH A DEAL! SEMIOTIC SILLINESS

Once again, the annual MLB poll of managers rates Tom Kelly highly. This must be the longest-running practical joke in baseball. Surely his colleagues can see that there is no there there. They see through Cito, know him in "Tragora" as "The Mummy". The Blue Jays won two World Series despite Cito, and you Twins fans should remember that one of your Series titles is due to Cito's ability at handling a pitching rotation in a seven-game event. Speaking of that, Kelly's fellow managers say rate him highly because of his self-induced handicap.

Dick Such, the typographical error waiting to happen. One would imagine that, given the manic humor of baseball players, that, once having chosen the nickname that he now ignobly attempts to implement, Such would have changed his last name. Failing that, he could have chosen any other shortened first name: Dick, Rich, R.J., Snuffy ... perhaps he was attempting to attract Baseball Annex.

Equally inexplicable is the now-retired son of journeysman actor Peter Marshall, who actually, after having been given an alternative, reverted to the true family name. Look it up if you have to. At least he used Pete, not Peter.

GENDR OR PARTICIPLE? ONLY THE TRAINER KNOWS

Someday dictionaries may contain...

Rocking: chopping or flailing aimlessly and ineffectively, e.g. "he wasn't really hitting, just rocking at the ball, so the best he could do was a soft tap back to the pitcher."

HOW TO PAY FOR YOUR SEASON TICKET

Not that baseball needs another scandal, but the tire races on the Metrodome display screen are fixed. A season ticket holder learns the pattern without trying, and can win money from gullible Iowans by betting on the tire races. It would not be a good idea, however, to test Sporty Tire for drugs.

NOTICE: The annual parade of right-wing humorists was canceled this year. Jerry Falwell couldn't make it, and Dr. Hawkins refused to march alone.