

# Moe Berg

— A Film by The Ciesla Foundation —  
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## THE COUNTDOWN BEGINS FOR OPENING DAY TO **"MOE BERG,"** A FILM BY AVIVA KEMPNER

**Award-Winning Documentarian Aviva Kempner  
in Production on "Moe Berg" for 2018 Release**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (August 16, 2017)** -- Moe Berg, the erudite Major League catcher who played on five different baseball teams in the '20s and '30s, spoke a multitude of languages, earned degrees from Princeton University and Columbia University Law School, attended the Sorbonne and was a spy for the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II, is the subject of **Aviva Kempner's** new film. The first feature-length documentary about the enigmatic and brilliant baseball player turned spy is scheduled to be released during the 2018 MLB post-season. The film will feature rare historical and spy footage as well as revealing interviews with celebrities and other individuals from the worlds of sports, espionage, history, and more.

Kempner admitted, "Ever since I finished my documentary on slugger Hank Greenberg I have been interested in making a film on Moe Berg because his courageous exploits in nuclear espionage on behalf of America during World War II were so little known. With the current threats coming from North Korea, the tales of Berg and the OSS in preventing the Nazis from obtaining nuclear capability could not be a timelier subject.

"I believe that Berg will finally get credit for his bravery after audiences see Ben Lewin's *The Catcher was a Spy*, a feature motion picture scheduled to come out this year on Berg based on Nicholas Dawidoff's book, and my documentary in 2018. Moe's swashbuckling adventures and his incredible role in hindering the Nazis from building an atomic bomb should be told time and time again."

Berg may have only have had a .243 batting average during his 15-year Major League career, but it was the stats he collected for the OSS that made him a most valuable player to his country during World War II. Berg grew up in an immigrant Jewish family in Newark, N.J. A utility player throughout most of his career as a catcher, Berg played for the Brooklyn Robins (which became the Dodgers), the Chicago White Sox, the Cleveland Indians, the Washington Senators and the Boston Red Sox during baseball's Golden Age. Berg also had a secret life spying on the Japanese during his playing days and later working for the OSS where he played a prominent role in the U.S. efforts to undermine the German atomic bomb program. After WWII, Berg remained elusive and later reclusive.

Kempner emphasized another reason why Berg's story needs to be told. "After what happened in Charlottesville over the weekend, a film on Moe's feats to stop the Nazis is also timely because Americans, especially the younger generation, need to be reminded how the Nazi racist philosophy of hatred threatened our democracy and has no place in our society today."

Based in Washington, D.C., Kempner, a director-writer-producer dynamo, boasts a resume of critically-acclaimed and award-winning documentaries, including: *Rosenwald*, *Yoo-Hoo*, *Mrs. Goldberg*, Peabody winner *The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg*, and *Partisans of Vilna*.

A child of Holocaust survivor Helen Ciesla and Harold Kempner, a U.S. Army officer, Kempner was born in post-World War II Berlin, Germany. Her family history inspired her to write, direct, and produce films about under-known Jewish heroes such

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as television pioneer Gertrude Berg, Hall of Fame baseball superstar Hank Greenberg, philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, and the Jewish resistance to the Nazis. Her films have received numerous honors and awards, including top honors from The National Society of Film Critics, the New York Film Critics Circle, the Broadcast Film Critics Association and the CINE Golden Eagle Award as well as the Peabody Award.

She is an avid voting rights advocate for the District of Columbia.

For more information on "Moe Berg," please visit [www.moebergfilm.org](http://www.moebergfilm.org).

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