



Sport, Dance and Embodied Identities

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Sport and dance command the passions and devotion of countless athletes, dancers and fans worldwide. Although conventionally thought to reside within separate social realms, these two embodied cultural forms are revealed in this benchmark volume to share a vital capacity to constitute and express identities through their practiced movements and scripted forms. Thus, the work of choreographers and coaches along with the performances of dancers and athletes offer not merely entertainment and aesthetic accomplishment but also powerful means for celebrating existing social arrangements and cultural ideals or, alternately, for imagining and advocating new ones.

Drawing on a wide selection of sport and dance activities from around the world, this book elucidates the ways in which embodied performances both mirror and reshape social life. It traces, for example, how football, salsa and tango can each be employed to articulate or rewrite national and gender identities. Also examined are children's sport and the dynamics by which immigration and cultural integration, along with the socialization of children and youth, may be directed through the organization of community sport.

The volume investigates the marshalling of sport and dance in settings from Africa to Ireland as vehicles for framing moral issues that revolve around the appropriate use, protection and exhibition of the body. This innovative study establishes the paradoxical fashion in which dance and sport can unite certain people and communities while at the same time serving exclusionary and nationalistic purposes.