

SCRATON, SHEILA AND ANNE FLINTOFF, EDs. *Gender and Sport: A Reader*. London: Routledge, 2002. Pp. 311. Index. \$31.95.

As an increasing number of institutions realize the importance of mounting courses in gender and sport, it is helpful to have edited volumes of readings available for students. *Gender and Sport* is designed for such a readership and offers a selection of seventeen articles, some quite dated, for this purpose. One can always take exception with others' selections of key readings, and in particular the categories selected to highlight particularly important arenas related to gender and sport issues. For the most part, the editors provide a very useful but fairly conventional set of categories to cover a broad agenda: feminist theory and gender analysis, history, media, race and ethnicity, masculinity, sexuality, physicality, policy and politics and most—if not all—of the articles have been written by sociologists informed by feminist thought.

I like the effort to provide an introduction to each section, but I think that the editors missed a golden opportunity to provide a broader, more substantial overview of current work in each area. The preface, introduction, and entries to each section are disappointingly brief, suggesting adherence to the current trend to throw out selections of already published articles to "catch the tide" of sports studies in higher education—this in spite of an outpouring of excellent new work in the area of gender and popular culture. All of the articles have been published before and are readily available to students who know how to access them from journals and libraries. Some of them have appeared many times in other contexts and date back well over a decade.

That said, the editors have made a good effort to organize the articles in each section by selecting a theoretical base and complementing it with more studies of practical, contemporary policy-related issues. Ann Hall's early work on the theoretical discourse of gender and sport is a good starting point to move toward a practical discussion of feminist thought in our understandings of the complex issues around gender and sport. Dworkin and Messner's 1999 abridged piece nicely updates their analysis and uses a materialist, structural analysis of institutions to show how the centrality of the body in sport practice and ideology provides numerous opportunities to examine critically the social construction of gender. They provide a brief description of men's sports and then offer three examples to explore the extent to which bodily agency by athletic women represents resistance to oppression: Title IX and the struggle for sex equity in educational institutions; corporate sponsorship of women athletes; and the contradictory meanings surrounding muscular female bodies. Using these contexts, they are able to illuminate a variety of attempts to understand and change the current gender order in sport, which must be struggled with like any other institution. Scraton and Flintoff complete the theory section by "taking a journey through contemporary feminist thought" and estimating its impact upon sport policy and practice. They point out the lack of a black feminist perspective in sport and the under-theorization of the relationships among gender, race and ethnicity. They add a post-structuralist perspective, briefly glancing at

Foucault's conceptions of power and discourse, but they say relatively little about theory-practice relationships.

These are drawn out in subsequent sections, but space permits me to address only some of them. The historical section is disappointingly brief, highlighting a classic piece by Jennifer Hargreaves on the force of Victorian familism in constraining the early development of women's sport, and then introducing a useful, albeit truncated piece concerning the development of women's football in four national arenas in Europe. Since the ten lines devoted to Spain simply tell us that little is known about the subject, it is difficult to see how that national experience can be a useful focus for comparative analysis at the moment or provide support for the statement that the ideology of motherhood was especially strong in Spain. Similarly, given the evidence provided, the declaration that "universal ideologies of masculinity and femininity cut across culture and nation" seems preliminary. However, comparative studies clearly hold a key to greater understanding of the complexities surrounding gender and sport, and this is a very useful beginning.

Race and ethnicity throw another set of curves into our efforts to understand gender relations in sport. Three chapters offer a series of perspectives on the topics, highlighting the problematic arena around ideas of difference and diversity—for example, does too much emphasis around difference unnecessarily risk re-invoking categories of difference? Sharon Wray's piece on mid-life Muslim Pakistani women and their physical activity experiences supports an increasing amount of literature that demands that female identity and ethnic identity must be treated as being interconnected. It also highlights the importance of local context. Through the prism of the exercise class, Wray shows how the meanings and significance attached to health and fitness discourse differ in relation to ethnic and cultural locality, rendering dominant Western scientific approaches to health and exercise highly problematic. Ben Carrington's 1998 article on sport and black masculinity adopts C.L.R. James's seminal perspective on the role of sport as a form of cultural resistance and examines the role of cricket in Leeds as a form of cultural resistance to white racist ideologies. He, too, points to the importance of context, showing how regional identity can easily become conflated with notions of nation and race. And, in his final analysis, he underscores the complexities related to forms of black cultural resistance through sport. What we are missing in this section is some much-needed attention to policy-related issues, for by now the complexities and problems of race, ethnicity, and gender in relation to sport and exercise have become achingly familiar.

In the section on men and masculinities, which flows well from Carrington's piece on black masculinity, Connell reminds us once again that questions about men, boys, and gender have ceased to be a concern to only a small group of intellectuals and have moved to the public arena. What we know, therefore, about how we talk about the development of boys has large effects on every area of public life. This includes sport and physical education, although his discussion is not specifically focused upon these areas. The critical message here is that bodies are the arenas for the making of gender patterns, and that masculinities are configurations of practice within gender relations. Timothy Curry then refocuses the reader on sport and the display of masculinity in the male

locker room, and this is placed against Griffin's well-known article on homophobia in sport, which introduces the next section on sexuality.

Following are three chapters related to power and embodiment, including important attention to violence against sporting women, the final section concludes with some useful insights into policy processes and their implementation, and the implications these have for gender equity and sport.

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