
BROOKES, ROD. *Representing Sport*. London: Arnold, 2002. Pp vi+172. Abbreviations, index. \$24.95 pb.

Brookes focuses on how sport and the media have made an impact upon each other as a result of globalization and commodification, and the results of his efforts are mixed. One positive is that Brookes presents his material in a well-organized fashion. The first section after his introduction is a section on professional wrestling. Wrestling provides the strongest example of the blurring of the lines between sport and media/entertainment, and it serves as a useful foil for professional sport. He describes what professional wrestling is—and is not—in order to contrast it with "true" sport. The appraisal of wrestling is followed by an interesting and informative look at the role of media in promoting sport and the role various sports have played in contributing to the success of certain media outlets. From there Brookes uses issues of globalization, commodification, national identities, race and gender as frames of reference for studying how the media covers sport.

In *Representing Sport* Brookes shows a thorough knowledge of the relevant scholarship—his list of sources is eighteen pages long for a book that has only 148 pages of text—and an apt sense of timing. Since 1999 at least two other books have come out regarding the relationship between sport and the media—David Rowe's *Sport, Culture and the Media* (1999) and Raymond Boyle and Richard Haynes's *Power Play: Sport, the Media and Popular Culture* (2000). Brookes sheds light on some interesting issues related to the topic. For example, he describes the growth in women's sport and the significance of women's increased opportunities in this area of society. While noting the gains in opportunities and coverage for women, he cautions against reading too much into this progress and assuming that the forces for equality should be satisfied on this front.

Overall, however, there are also some frustrating aspects of this book. For example, a minor problem is the apparent lack of a proofreader with common knowledge of games played in the United States. Brookes refers to "baseball players who have scored more than 3,000 hits" (p. 42): baseball players *get* hits; they do not *score* them. This kind of thing is unfortunate because it portrays Brookes, erroneously, as someone who is ignorant regarding certain areas of his subject matter. Another weakness can be found in at least one section in which Brookes sees racism where it might not have existed. In his last chapter, Brookes describes a situation in the 2000 Sydney Olympics involving the United States 4x100 relay team. The team had won their event, and in their euphoria they "strutted and postured for photographers using the stars and stripes as a prop" (p. 145). The men involved, all African Americans, were criticized in the media for their apparent disrespect for the flag. Though the men "seemed genuinely bewildered by the response" (p. 146), they were quick to apologize. Brookes perceived the media as being racist for portraying the team as being "incapable of thinking through the implications of their behavior" (p. 147). Brookes felt that the media was reinforcing a racist stereotype of intellectual inferiority on the part of individuals of African ancestry. Yet these men had said that they were surprised by the outcry. Was it racist for members of the media to report that the athletes said they did not understand something? It seems unfair to just presume racist guilt on the part of the media in this matter.

My concluding complaint is with the conclusion itself. In his introduction, Brookes states that he wants to examine the significance of sport to media in the changing times in which we live. Brookes's concluding sentence is long and convoluted, it seems to be missing a couple of key words, and it does not seem to wrap up the issue he was trying to address. The conclusion admonishes us to use specific examples when studying the role of sport in the media. While this was certainly good advice, it was a little surprising to see it offered as the closing line of the book, as if this was what the book was getting at all along.

Representing Sport is a worthwhile book for those studying the media, sport, and/or globalization, but there is little here of interest to the sport fan who is not a scholar in these areas. And even scholars might see room for improvement.

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