
WILCOX, RALPH C. ET AL., EDS. *Sporting Dystopias: The Making and Meanings of Urban Sport Cultures*. Sport, Culture, and Social Relations Series. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003. Pp. vi+292. Notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 pb.

The fourteen essays in this book come from a variety of disciplines, but most have a heavily sociological perspective. Synthia Sydnor Slowikowski, Steven A. Riess and Danny Rosenberg bring to the volume a perspective of historical methodology. By and large ethnographic studies, particularly of inner-city groups, dominate this volume that attempts to define or at least look at the meaning of "Urban" in sport cultures.

Subcultures have long been a topic of study among scholars. From the days of the Chicago school of sociology through modern academia, attempts to identify small groups within the massive scope of society have provided scholars a means of identifying meaningful groups which provide primary means of cohesion or in this case perhaps the reverse of cohesion, the dystopias. In this volume, those groups include Jewish athletes, ticket scalpers, homeless people living near major sporting events, soccer players in suburbia, and particularly inner-city basketball players.

Heavily oriented toward methodological analysis, *Dystopias* concludes that sporting subcultures not only still persist but may be even stronger today and that they still discriminate most heavily against those who have little control. The continued discrimination by white-oriented power brokers continues to hold "Urban," which has become a synonym for black inner city males, under the dominance of the predominant culture. C.L. Cole and Samantha King's look at "Hoop Dreams" and "Clockers," Gamal Abdel-Sheid's analysis of racism in Canadian national basketball and Andrew Thornton's look at basketball's meaning in Toronto society see the continual persistence of dominant culture defining and redefining the inner-city black male role, or in the words of the editors, the Dystopias.

For readability the Riess and the Rosenberg articles provide clear historical pictures of their subcultures, gamblers and Jews, and the roles they played over and against the dominant culture. Highly recommended also would be Andrews *et al.*, "Soccer, Race, and Suburban Space," for a lucid analysis of the current soccer craze and its nearly all-white clientele.

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