

Alan Tomlinson and Garry Whannel (eds .), *Five Ring Circus. Money, Power and Politics at the Olympic Games.* Pluto Press, Sydney, 1984. pp. x + 116. \$7.95 paper,

Eight British, North American and South African authors have contributed brief articles (the longest is 18 pages) to this volume on the modern Olympics. The aim, according to the editors, is to develop a critical perspective 'as a useful antidote to hypocritical claims and counter-claims that will be an increasingly prominent feature...of the Olympics (x). Each chapter explores how both the ancient and modern games have always been tied up with money and power.

The contributors are well qualified to write on this subject. Editors Tomlinson and Whannel, who have written chapters on 'de Coubertin and the modern Olympics' and 'The television spectacular' are ably supported by noted academics in the fields of sociology

and cultural studies (Rich Gruneau, 'Commercialism and the Modern Olympic Games'), sports studies (Jennifer Hargreaves, 'Women and the Olympic Phenomenon'), sport history (Bruce Kidd, 'The Myth of the Ancient Games') and comparative and international sport studies (James Riordan, 'The Workers' Olympics'). Less well known are David Triesman ('The Olympic Games as a Political Forum') and Sam Ramsamy ('Apartheid Boycotts and the Games'), but both pieces are lucid and forceful.

The scope of the book, then, is very broad and divergent. Unfortunately, this leads to a lack of continuity and direction. Another significant problem with *Five Ring Circus* is that much of the social and political criticism of Olympism is based on a very cursory examination and analysis. It will certainly confuse rather than enlighten 'beginners' who are not familiar with other articles and books about the Olympics. It is a pity that this book was not much bigger so that the contributors could have expanded what are often controversial arguments and placed them in a more balanced context. It would have been helpful to have more acknowledgement of sources and an expanded guide to further reading.

However, all the chapters are interesting, enlightening and, - above all, challenging. *Five Ring Circus* should be consulted by all who are concerned with the question of sport and modern society.

Ian F. Jobling
University of Queensland