Sex, Violence & Power in Sports: Rethinking Masculinity

By Michael A. Messner & Donald Sabo (former College at Brockport faculty member).

"The authors, both academics and former athletes, examine the culture of male sports and its relation to concepts of masculinity. The basic premise is that male-dominated sports foster homophobia and the denigration of women. This is not new news for anyone who has spent time in an adolescent male locker room. What is news, however, is the authors' linking of locker-room mentality with data indicating that on some college campuses a third of all reported rapes involve male athletes, who represent less than a third of all males on campus. The authors hold that this sort of data--numerous studies are cited revealing the same trend--exposes the inherent flaws in traditional male sports culture. Sports, they say, breed intolerant males more prone to violence, domestic abuse, and homophobia and less likely to sustain a long-term relationship with a woman. This premise may or may not be entirely valid; further research is clearly needed. Still, the authors' findings--especially in context of the O. J. Simpson case--raise points of serious discussion regarding athletes and violence."--Booklist

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