



# Playing Fields: Power, Practice, and Passion in Sport

*Mariann Vaczi*

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"Playing Fields" presents the profound reflections of a group of international scholars on how games, sports, and motor practices interact with global-local processes, inequality, gender relations, identity, representation, performance, and emotion through varied modes of analysis, approaches, and styles. Sport here is treated with disciplinary eclecticism featuring sociology, anthropology, history, philosophy, and motor praxeology. The book is structured around three main themes: power, practice, and passion. Part 1, "Power," considers playing fields as an arena of power and addresses what Joan Acker would call "inequality regimes" in sports. Gender discrimination; "hard" and "soft" essentialism; the concept of justice in sports; gendered collective embodiment and public agency; countercultural grassroots sports practices; and local-global dynamisms, Americanization, and hegemony are all discussed. The second part, "Practice," focuses on the practice of games as, in the words of Pierre Parlebas, "a type of academy in which social connections are experienced by the body." Through the study of motor praxeology—the relation of motor practices to the cultural and social context of the bodies that practice them—these chapters delve into the intellectual history of motor action; conceptualizations of the body; and the internal logic of games and how it influences risk-taking attitudes and the experience of emotions. Part 3, "Passion," looks at the affective dimensions of sports and explores how collective desires are communicated through the emotion that playing fields generate. In the final chapter, a kind of codas and reflection on the entire experience of the remarkable group of scholars who share their work here, Jennifer Hargreaves reflects on her work and life in sport studies.

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