



Fight Sports and American Masculinity: Salvation in Violence from 1607 to the Present

Christopher David Thrasher

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Throughout America's past, some men have feared the descent of their gender into effeminacy, and turned their eyes to the ring in hopes of salvation. This work explains how the dominant fight sports in the United States have changed over time in response to broad shifts in American culture and ideals of manhood, and presents a narrative of American history as seen from the bars, gyms, stadiums and living rooms of the heartland. Ordinary Americans were the agents who supported and participated in fight sports and determined its vision of masculinity.

This work counters the economic determinism prevalent in studies of American fight sports, which overemphasize profit as the driving force in the popularization of these sports. The author also disputes previous scholarship's domestic focus, with an appreciation of how American fight sports are connected to the rest of the world.

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