women athletes from an incredibly wide variety of sports and life experiences. The impact of sport on the lives of these women is clear; whether it is Cassie Campbell (gold medallist hockey player from Canada) who reminds us that "A winner's strongest muscle is her heart" (p. 213) or Amy Love, publisher of Amy Love's real Sports Magazine who states: You will succeed if you believe it can be done; if you're willing to work hard while being smart about it; if you're willing to surround yourself with great people who will challenge you every day; if you're willing to take on the nay sayers as a challenge, and if you're willing to strive for excellence while recognizing each day is an opportunity to learn. (p. 185)

I believe these authors have succeeded in providing sources of inspiration from the stories of talented women who's lives have been touched by sport.

Reviewed by:
Linda K. Bunker, PhD
University of Virginia


Robert Sands proposes a new approach to studying the culture of sports by using ethnographic methods. Sands has an extensive history of publishing in the area of sport ethnography, with projects including junior college football players, collegiate sprinters, collegiate basketball players, and, most recently, surfers. With all of his ethnographic adventures, he fully participates in the sport as a known researcher in a method he terms "experiential ethnography." He draws extensively on examples from these research projects throughout the book and includes some action photos. Sands devotes chapters to the history of anthropology, getting into the field, defining culture, doing ethnography (collecting data), and analyzing and writing ethnography. Sands also gives attention to negotiating risk inherent in fieldwork and ethics.
The book does have some things to offer to students of sport, primarily in the form of raising intellectual questions and proposing an original variety of ethnography. Sands covers, though briefly, a wide range of relevant research topics, including theoretical approaches, types of data collection, and data analysis. He provides a particularly thought-provoking account of the impact of Bronislaw Malinowski's personal diary on the field of anthropology. Malinowski, one of the early positivist ethnographers and long-heralded as one of the best, was exposed as a racist and sexist when his wife published his personal diaries in 1966. This revelation caused the field to re-evaluate the role of objectivity in ethnography, a critical and on-going evaluation that is a central theme of Sands' experiential approach.

Despite the promise of the topic, there are a number of problems with the book. While Sands spends considerable effort explaining why it is important to fully participate in a sport while investigating it, he does not cover the complicated issues that derive from doing so. After making a compelling argument that the best ethnography takes time and immersion in another culture, Sands devotes a chapter (Ethnography for Hire) to his own contract work providing quickly gathered ethnographic data to businesses. His brief justifications contradict his overall approach and fall short of being convincing that this is an appropriate use of ethnography. At key points throughout, Sands' analysis is faulty, even glib. For example, he makes numerous references to the impact of technology and the Internet on the field of anthropology, claiming that with world globalization, there are few (non-Western) cultures left unstudied. While the Internet has drastically changed the exchange of information for some, the majority of people in the world are not surfing the web.

Sands' discussion of ethical issues and informed consent is also superficial. He states at one point that "doing ethnography does not harm the cultural members" (114). Sands does go on to recognize that products of ethnography might cause harm, but only if the researcher is unethical. This simplistic view of informed consent glosses over the very serious ethical violations by anthropologists and other social scientists over the years. In a major departure from recognized profes-