A Performative Feel for the Game

How Meaningful Sports Shape Gender, Bodies, and Social Life

- Uniquely combines ethnography, media studies, and sociology to explore understandings of cultural dynamics and diversity
- Challenges dominant discourse in critical sports sociology by applying anthropological and performance theories
- Sensitive to both the minutiae of social life as well as media-driven national narratives around sport

Applying a cultural sociology of performance, this book interrogates how the meaning of sport intersects with gender. Trygve B. Broch points out uncertainties in the causal arguments made by key figures in the cultural studies tradition, instead advancing a meaning-centered study of sports as involving both a social and an athletic performance. Sports not only reflect or reverse social realities, but capture and keep our attention when we use and experience them as a means to reflect on social life, injustice, and hierarchy. More specifically, blending approaches from media studies with ethnography, Broch explores the women-dominated sport of handball in Norway, a country that considers gender equality a basis of democracy. As such, the analyses here show how broadly available meanings about sameness and equality are mediated and experienced through a performative feel for the game.