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Contested Fields: A Global History of Modern Football by
Alan McDougall (review)

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period, Longoria and Iber discuss a history that would be familiar to most academics of the twentieth century, with stories from an era in which participation in war and wartime changes brought about opportunities for equality. However, the advancements in equality for Latinos were not without contestation from recalcitrant whites. One enlightening story that brings Latino discrimination to the forefront of post–World War II analysis is the El Paso Bowie Bears baseball team. During a state championship run, the Bowie Bears were forced to sleep on cots under the stadium bleachers at the University of Texas because no hotel would provide rooms to the team. This is just one of many enlightening anecdotes that explain the prejudice Latinos encountered in playing sports in high school, college, and professional leagues. As Longoria and Iber point out, “Even success on the fields of athletic competition and of battle in World War II were not sufficient to overcome the negative perceptions of many Texans” (68). Serving your country and showing your prowess in America’s popular past times did not provide the full path to equality for which Latinos had hoped.

Throughout the chapters, Longoria and Iber weave the stories of individuals and then highlight some in separate biographies at the end of each chapter. Through the narratives of Latinos playing football, we learn not just about their lives on and off the gridiron but also how those who identify as Latino and Hispanic in the United States need to be better represented in national histories. While the analysis is interwoven into the stories of individuals and teams, more insights about what Latinos did or did not accomplish for equality through football could be provided. However, as the authors note, not much has been written on the topic of Latinos and American football. This synthesis can be the starting point in the underdeveloped topics of sports and Latino history, in particular, for others to write more analysis of what football meant for Latinos and what Latinos meant for football. *Latinos in American Football* and the subsequent works it will no doubt inspire will help academics of sports and race better understand how underrepresented groups in the United States saw a connection between sports and avenues for equality.

—Jacynda Ammons
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McDougall, Alan. *Contested Fields: A Global History of Modern Football*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020. Pp. xvi + 239. Appendix, bibliography, index. \$48.75, hb. \$26.95, pb. \$21.95 eb.

In *Contested Fields*, Alan McDougall offers a substantial synthesis of international scholarly works. The author pays tribute to fellow researchers who have contributed to the field of sport history and, more largely, the historiography of contemporary history. The result is a brilliant book.

The book is divided into eight distinctive chapters: “Migrations,” “Money,” “Competitions,” “Gender,” “Race,” “Spaces,” “Spectators,” and “Confrontations.” At first sight, this segmentation could be seen as disconcerting for historians, who, of course, will sometimes, if not frequently, find repetitions of names or arguments in several different chapters, such as in “Competitions,” “Spaces,” “Spectators,” or “Confrontations.” But it ultimately proves

to be a convincing choice. In fact, McDougall is cautious about his selection and never forgets to point out when a topic or illustration occurs twice. Moreover, the use of various examples succeeds in illustrating different levels of playing, administrating, managing, and watching football. This gives visibility to different kinds of players, trainers, and executives and provides readers, even nonhistorian or neophytes in football, a good degree of understanding. In many respects, *Contested Fields* helps us realize why and how football has achieved such an enduring appeal and has become a global game, which crossed borders through transnational connections.

Its eight chapters increasingly explore the complexities of different topics, which enlighten the developments of football history. It contributes to forging a better comprehension about how each actor's or community's attempt for recognition seems to produce everlasting struggles on political, social, economic, and cultural dimensions, be it through the will to play, the search for new spaces, or the planning of events. From this perspective, each chapter compares numerous paths followed worldwide by women and men, regardless of their race or gender, to claim the right to play football at every level against sometimes unlikely opponents.

One of the original angles of this book is that it goes beyond simply focusing on elite football and gives opportunities to learn about lesser-known territories. This includes areas in the Faroe Islands, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, and New Zealand, for example. This allows more visibility to still understudied populations or communities, like LGBT players, as well as amateur and lower-standing leagues.

A substantial and, obviously, multinational bibliography is dedicated to each chapter and gives recognition to strong specialists of peculiar topics. A FIFA member association appendix also helps locate events in terms of chronological landmarks. It is useful to provide context and to highlight comparisons between events, venues, and actors. Some illustrations turn out to be very moving, such as Primo Levi's testimony or the memory of games played in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Others are dramatic, like the 1989 Hillsborough disaster or the 1979 "Football War" between El Salvador and Honduras (178).

While the main part of a whole chapter is dedicated to women, McDougall does not neglect their contribution to football history elsewhere in other parts of *Contested Fields*. Of course, star players get their due. We can learn about the likes of Di Stefano, Pelé, and Beckham. But their trajectories are largely complemented by a bunch of anonymous players coming from the five continents. It shows the respective contributions of both stars and unknowns to "transnational histories of economic and cultural exchange" (47). Trainers, executives, and politicians are not forgotten either from the different aspects of economic, political, and racial boundaries, which transcended the development of football. Prominent roles of some characters like Joao Havelange, FIFA president since 1974, are underlined in several chapters as well, but they never overshadow the value of more obscure actors. In any event, the study of spaces, spectatorship, money, competitions, and confrontations can never escape the growing influence of television, which has allowed football to become global because of its ability to adapt so successfully to the screen age. This is another central point in the book.

In summary, McDougall recalls the international features of football and reflects on the making and the evolution of modern society. He also invites scholars to address some

weaknesses or blindspots of transnational research: amateur levels, both in playing and watching the game; gay athletes; and women. One possible addition could be studies about the history of youth football. However, *Contested Fields* achieves its goal to deepen our knowledge about a transnational approach of a multifaceted sport characterized by cultural transfers. This book will motivate scholars to pursue transnational studies about football's various topics.

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Salazar-Porzio, Margaret N., Adrian Burgos Jr., and Robin Morey. *¡Pleibol! In the Barrios and the Big Leagues / En los barrios y las grandes ligas*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Scholarly Press, 2020. Pp. vi + 141. Acknowledgments, bibliography, author bios, index. \$27.50, hb.

¡Pleibol! In the Barrios and the Big Leagues / En los barrios y las grandes ligas is a collaborative work from Margaret Salazar-Porzio, Adrian Burgos Jr., Robin Morey, and other contributors that spotlights the many ways that baseball has served as a suitable vehicle to examine the cultural and social experiences of Latinas/os in the United States. This dual-language text accompanies a new exhibit at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History (NMAH), which “blend(s) together the major league stories and the community stories in order to name our extraordinary, everyday heroes of the game” (116). Laden with several sources from the exhibit’s collection of artifacts, oral histories, newspapers, scrapbooks, and player testimonies, *¡Pleibol!* merges the exhibit’s artifacts and narratives together with the authors’ scholarly perspectives about how baseball helped forge Latina/o community, citizenship, and identity.

The authors proceed thematically, sharing stories of the project’s artifacts and narratives to reveal how the sport helped shape the lives, identities, and experiences of Latinas/os within both professional and community baseball. They consider the diversity that exists within the Latina/o label, paying attention to differences in region, nationality, citizenship status, labor, race, and temporality, which all contribute to the breadth of Latina/o experiences over the past century and a half. The opening chapter discusses two pioneers in Latina/o professional baseball, Roberto Clemente and Marge Villa. Clemente is idolized by many Latinas/os, especially those who share his Afro-Latino and immigrant identities, known among fans for his stellar tenure with the Pittsburgh Pirates and commitment to humanitarian work and as someone who overcame significant challenges to find success in the sport. Similarly, Villa joined the short-lived All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL) in the 1940s as the only Mexican American out of eleven Latina players. The significance of Villa’s career, as noted by Sandra L. Uribe, was her ability to assert “autonomy, cultural pride, and athleticism” in the sport by testing “socially constructed notions of femininity” (39). One of the strengths of this text is its attention to the role of women in the sport. Chapter 3 includes the contributions of women such as Olympian softball player and broadcaster Jessica Mendoza, Colorado Rockies owner Linda Alvarado, and community players like Carmen Lujan. Scattered throughout these analyses are photographs, artifacts, and oral