

Finley, Peter. The sports industry's war on athletes, by Peter Finley and Laura Finley. Praeger, 2006. 198p index afp ISBN 0275991725, \$49.95 General William Sherman coined the phrase "war is hell" in reference to the Civil War, but that phrase could equally as well refer to the present title. The book includes nine chapters plus an introduction, and the typical chapter runs to 20 pages and includes 20 subheadings and 120 footnotes (the 1,200 endnotes take up 30 pages). Rather than thoughtful prose, arguments, and articulation, the authors offer what seems more like cutting and pasting from Google searches and newspaper accounts; this results in one "themed" paragraph after another and an endless concatenation that soon becomes mind-numbing. One finds much complaining, little explaining. Individual chapters treat ethics (or the lack thereof) in sports; use of performance-enhancing substances; eating disorders; playing in pain; recruiting scandals; academic fraud; hazing; racism, sexism, and classism (the use of the word "classism" should be fair warning); and the economics and politics of financing sports facilities. The final chapter--"Conclusions and Recommendations"--is an all-over-the-map set of personal prejudices and preferences, 95 Theses to be nailed to the corporate churches of the NFL, Nike, and the NCAA. This said, those who are interested in list-making will appreciate the useful factual litany of sins in the wicked world of sports. Summing Up: Not recommended. -- A. R. Sanderson, University of Chicago