John Hoberman — *Darwin's Athletes: How Sport Has Damaged Black America and Preserved the Myth of Race*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. Pp. xxvi, 341.

John Hoberman's book is ground-breaking in the exploding field of the history of the body. Hoberman succeeds splendidly in following the injunction of historians Elliot J. Gorn and Michael Oriard in their article "Taking Sports Seriously" (*Chronical of Higher Education*, March 24, 1995, p. A52; reprinted in Steven A. Reiss, *Major Problems in American Sport History* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997], pp. 3–5). He does, indeed, study bodies in all their "palpable" concreteness, something not often done in histories of the body, either in terms of sport or the more commonly studied subjects of gender and sexuality. In this book of 16 densely packed and cogently argued essays, Hoberman elaborates on his essay "Darwin's Athletes: The 'Savage' and 'Civilized' Body" in his earlier and equally provocative book, *Mortal Engines: The Science of Performance and the Dehumanization of Sport* (New York: The Free Press, 1992). His basic thesis is that Darwin's theory of natural selection has been transformed, both by scientists and lay observers, into a "law of compensation" whereby mental and physical capacities are seen as mutually exclusive. This idea has become assimilated into Western society and accounts, in great measure, for the way in which white society has viewed African American athletic accomplishment over the last 50 years. Although Hoberman is aware of the explosiveness of the topic, especially when undertaken by a white academic such as himself, he rightly believes that the issues must be brought out into the open in a systematic fashion rather than remain part of "racial folklore".

The book is divided into three sections. The first, "Shooting Hoops under the Bell Curve", explores what he believes to be an African-American "fixation" on sports. The second, "Prospero and Caliban, Sport as Racial Competition", explores the rise of the African-American and African athlete and the decline of the white athlete. The third section, "Dissecting John Henry", not only analyses "the search for racial athletic aptitude" but also the manner in which there has been an "athleticizing" of the African-American criminal. No summary can do justice to the mass of data that Hoberman has culled from the diverse fields of history, sociology, literature, physiology, biology, and psychology.

In essence Hoberman tackles one of the great — and still largely unexplored — achievements of cultural and sports history over the last 70 years: the rise of the athlete of African heritage. In many of the most prestigious and high-profile international sports such as track and field, boxing, and basketball and such American pastimes as baseball and football, black athletes have achieved a virtual hegemony. African, Afro-Caribbean, and African-American runners and jumpers have achieved such a lock on the medals at the Olympics that running magazines have featured articles entitled "White Men Can't Run" (inspired, no doubt, by the movie "White Men Can't Jump"). Moreover, in the United States and Canada, African-Americans now comprise 80 per cent of the National Basketball Association, 70 per cent of the National Football League, and over 50 per cent of the stars (while only 17 per cent of the total players) in major league baseball. Certainly, the rise of the black athlete is one of the great success stories of the twentieth century.

While unquestionably admiring this achievement, Hoberman reveals the tragic aspects of this success. He argues that the integration of sport has not been, as many liberals hoped, the first step in black integration into the rest of society. Indeed, the disparity between the high percentage of African-Americans in sports contrasts tragically with the tiny percentage they comprise of American doctors, lawyers, and scientists. Hoberman believes that sport has produced a "theatre of pseudo-reconciliation" which has been substituted for the social and economic programs that would be needed to end centuries of racial discrimination. Indeed, he makes the provocative point that basketball and football are now being resegregated as whites no longer choose to participate. He also discusses the way in which scholars and writers have begun to explore how whites compartmentalize African-American athletic success in such a manner that they can cheer a Michael Jordon on the court and yet remain bigoted in regard to blacks in the workplace.

One of the most important services Hoberman provides is to show how proponents of African intellectual inferiority — such as *The Bell Curve* authors Charles Murray and Richard J. Herrnstein — use the evidence of African-American and African athletic success as a foundation for their theories of racial difference. According to the molecular biologist Vincent Sarich: "If you can believe that individuals of recent African ancestry are not genetically advantaged over those of European or Asian ancestry in certain athletic endeavours, then you could probably be led to believe just about anything." In the hands of authors such as Murray, Herrnstein, and Sarich, African athletic prowess becomes prime evidence of racial difference and, by extension via the law of compensation, intellectual inferiority, a tendency to criminality, or both. Hoberman's thorough overview of recent studies on the African body over the last century, however, reveals that physiologists have still not proven, to any degree of certainty, that African athletic success is due to racial differences.

In such a ground-breaking and fearless book it is not surprising that many questions are left unanswered or unexplored. Although Hoberman shows an extraordinary grasp of the literature on sport, physiology, biology, and colonialism, he does not always provide a clear chronology or a sense of the broader historical evolution. Much more, for example, needs to be done on notions and valuations of physical prowess among the various European nations throughout their history. Moreover, the notion of a disparity between mental and physical abilities long predates Darwin. See, for example, the distinction between the "natural slave" and the "natural masters" in Aristotle's *Politics*, the distinction between barbarian and Roman in Caesar's *The Conquest of Gaul*, and the justification of using Africans as slaves (due to their "robustness") in the writings of Bartolome de las Casas.

In addition, by showing some overlap between the discourse of slave masters and sportscasters, Hoberman indicates, but does not explicate, how sport reinforces white racism and domination. He does not explore (but then, no one else really has, either) the simple proposition that African-Americans excel in selected sports because they work harder than other groups. How many young whites work as hard, this reviewer wonders, at perfecting their basketball skills as the African-American youth in the movie "Hoop Dreams"? My guess would be that the number is minis-

cule. Nor does Hoberman explore sufficiently whether the opportunities for African-Americans are expanding or contracting in contemporary America. Recently one of the foremost African-American critics of sport, Harry Edwards, has argued that, in an era when affirmative action is under attack and more African-American males are in prison than in college, sport may be the only option available.

This book will become an indispensable starting point for the ongoing study of sport and race in much the same way that Hoberman's earlier *Sport and Political Ideology* has become essential in its field. Unless we can sustain the type of cross-cultural and cross-racial dialogue that this book promotes, the twenty-first century could well be even more one of racial division than Du Bois considered the twentieth century. Hoberman shows us that conceptions of Africans as having bodies fundamentally different from those of whites or Asians can have nefarious consequences even when these conceptions are not specifically linked to notions of African intellectual inferiority. Over 40 years ago anthropologists such as Claude Levi-Strauss effectively refuted the notion that "savage" thought differs in any important way from "civilized thought". It is time now for scholars to do the same for the human body, that is, to show that there is no distinction between the "savage" and "civilized" body but simply a human body that different cultures shape according to their own cultural imperatives and incentives. Hoberman's book may be a first step in the demystification of the "savage" African body. Reinforcing the essential unity of humanity in the face of a renewed emphasis on biological and genetic determinism can prevent the emergence of a caste society in which each race seems to have its own "preordained" set of occupations.

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Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock — *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998. Pp. 661.

This voluminous study offers two books in one. The first is a closely textured, well-conceived narrative of Canadian immigration policy, spanning the centuries between 1497 and 1995. Readers embarking on this historical journey will appreciate the nuanced discussions of immigration policies, the intelligent organization of material, and the reliable index, all of which comprise an excellent reference tool even though the specialist will find little new here. It is in the "second book" that the authors make their most original contribution. Embedded in the general overview, they provide a judicious analysis of immigration legislation.

In dissecting the ideological underpinnings of immigration practices and rules, the authors point to two concepts that have framed public policy debates: liberty and community. From the libertarian perspective, "aliens" should be free to move to Canada "provided that, in doing so, they do not violate the rights of anyone by imposing involuntary burdens on others" (p. 5). By contrast, communitarian values