

SPORTS, RELIGION, AND DISABILITY. Edited by Nick J. Watson and Andrew Parker. New York: Routledge, 2015. Pp. xviii + 238. Hardcover, \$160.00.

The pioneering duo of Watson and Parker, at the forefront of the valuable and overlooked intersections of sports and religion, have again made a fine contribution to a burgeoning field. In their newest co-edited text, they journey into a specific (and sadly marginalized) demographic by exploring theological and religious implications for disabled sportspersons. Their work is as innovative as it is needed and serves as "a useful stimulus and 'starting point' for thinking critically" about the needs of disabled sportspersons and contributions they offer as faith-filled members of a global community striving to move from the periphery. The introduction provides a view into the still "exploratory" and interdisciplinary scope of disability-sport research within religious contexts. Chapter 1 primarily explores the empowering role of intellectually disabled athletes as counter-cultural catalysts to challenge the status of the sporting world as "cultural idol," and to reorient sportspersons toward the originally benevolent intentions of sport. While Chapter 2 offers a spiritual appraisal of re-embodiment and "rebirth" for high-performance athletes who have become disabled, Chapters 3, 4, 7, and 9 aim to articulate a theology of disability-sport. Chapters 5 and 6 explore the experiential and methodological realms of the disabled athlete in terms of their rehabilitation and adjustment. Chapters 8 and 10-13 offer reflections, interpretations, and case studies of athletes with varying degrees of disability, including one that poignantly discusses AIDS-patient athletes in Zambia and the philosophical concept of *ubuntu*. An artfully, precisely assembled collection, this text will serve as a valuable resource for academics, practitioners, and/or disabled athletes alike.

Anthony Maranise ObLS.B.

*Catholic Studies Cohort: Rose G. Deal College of Arts,
Christian Brothers University*

Religion in Culture

whether a citizen has entered into a contract with a police officer). Set in Ukiah, California, the location of Jim Jones's first stab at utopia, *The Harder They Come* follows a sovereign farrier, Sara, and her lover, Adam, a modern mountain man who models himself off of free-men of the mythical western past and who hopes the opium poppies he has planted in the woods will "make him independent and never have to say *Yessir, Cap'n, to no man.*" He sleeps outside, eats dinner naked: he's physically tough, the sort of guy who sneers at SWAT teams and flicks off the security cams in the cabins he raids for alcohol and supplies. While these characters veer into the cartoonish, between Adam's hyper-masculine madness and Sara's pamphlet-like spouting of opinions on the gold standard and license plates, the novel nonetheless offers students something of the human complexities and stakes in the sovereign movement and how sovereign ideology links to our wider cultural moment.

Spencer Dew

Centenary College of Louisiana

WYTCHEs: VOLUME 1. Graphic novel. Story by Scott Snyder. Art by Jock. Image Comics, 2015. \$9.99.

A quick but potentially useful read for courses on folklore or myth, this comic could also open up interesting conversation in classes exploring conceptions of nature. In this story, even the stand of trees at the back of a suburban yard is wild, full of dark mystery. The "wytches" in question are grotesque humanoid creatures, dwelling in subterranean caverns and existing symbiotically with small-town society through a system in which humans "pledge" victims for the monsters to eat. Speculations about history abound: that these wytches represent an alternate branch of human evolution, that the ginger grown around entrances to their burrows is the source of "the myth of the witch in the gingerbread house." Such analysis, proffered by characters within the tale (one of whom is the author, in turn, of a fantasy story, snippets of