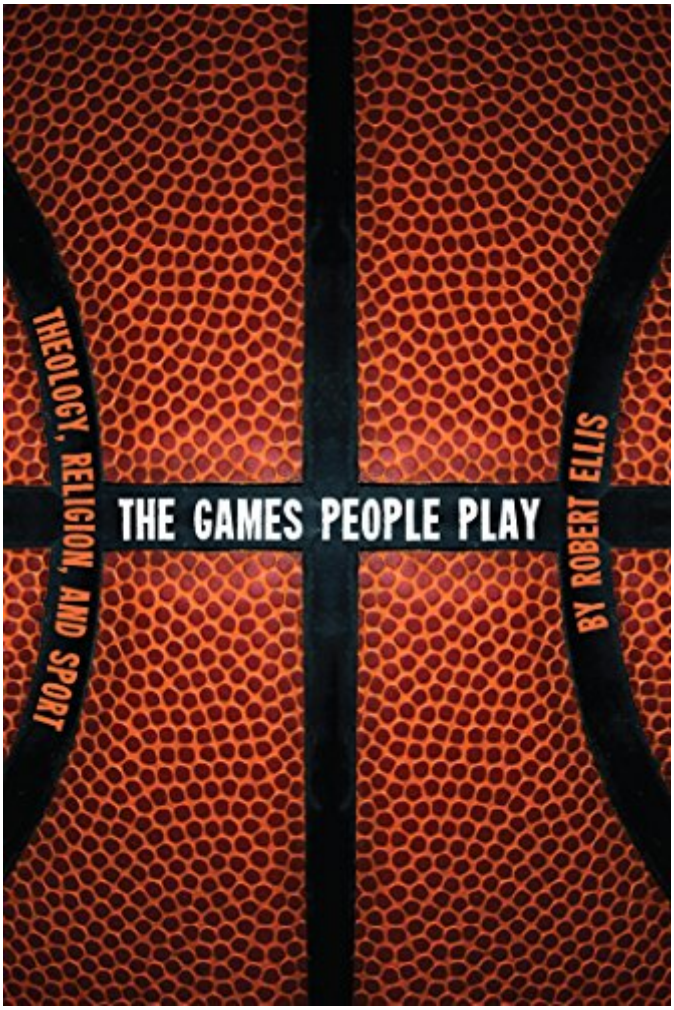
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The Games People Play: Theology, Religion, And Sport



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Synopsis

In The Games People Play, Robert Ellis constructs a theology around the global cultural phenomenon of modern sport, paying particular attention to its British and American manifestations. Using historical narrative and social analysis to enter the debate on sport as religion, Ellis shows that modern sport may be said to have taken on some of the functions previously vested in organized religion. Through biblical and theological reflection, he presents a practical theology of sport's appeal and value, with special attention to the theological concept of transcendence. Throughout, he draws on original empirical work with sports participants and spectators. The Games People Play addresses issues often considered problematic in theological discussions of sport such as gender, race, consumerism, and the role of the modern media, as well as problems associated with excessive competition and performance-enhancing substances. As Ellis explains, "Sporting journalists often use religious language in covering sports events. Salvation features in many a headline, and talk of moments of redemption is not uncommon. Perhaps, somewhere beyond the clichÃƒÂ©d hyperbole, there is some theological truth in all this after all." "Ellis convincingly argues that humans at play reach outward and upward, signifying and participating in God toward our playful destiny. Ellis moves deftly between historical considerations of sports and thick descriptions of sport practitioner and spectator motivations, attitudes, and experiences; analysis of theological themes (sin and salvation); and contemporary social, moral, economic, and political matters which Christians must examine as citizens whose loyalty is ultimately to God's will and way on earth as it is in heaven."--John B. White, George W. Truett Theological Seminary, Baylor University, Waco, TX"The way Ellis takes concepts based on play, salvation, and sin . . . and applies them to sport, arguing that participation in sport can be seen as a participation in God's playful creativity, is groundbreaking."--J. Stuart Weir, Verite Sport, Oxford, England"[Ellis] masterfully weaves a thread through the church's inconstant history with sport, dissects sport as a modern cultural phenomenon, and armed with a prodigious arsenal of evidence, dares to ask whether the transcendent moments of sport might actually be experiences of God. A must-read for anyone hoping to understand how sport fits within the Christian tradition."--Shirl James Hoffman, Kinesiology Today, American Kinesiology AssociationRobert Ellis is Principal of Regent's Park College, Oxford, and a member of the Faculty of Theology and Religion in the University of Oxford. He is the author of Answering God: Towards a Theology of Intercession.

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Customer Reviews

A fantastic work that should be read by anyone interested in the sports and religion conversation

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