

# WVU Professors' Book Probes Race, College Sports

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For The State Journal

MORGANTOWN — Two West Virginia University professors have completed their fourth collaboration, a textbook that examines social justice in college sports management.

Ronald Althouse, professor of sociology, and Dana Brooks, dean of the School of Physical Education, co-edited "Diversity and Social Justice in College Sports, Sport Management and the Student Athlete," the first text in the country that addresses social justice for a sports management audience.

"Students are streaming through these sports management classes, and these students need an understanding of the foundation and consequences of racism," Althouse said.

The text and their other works have been published by Fitness Information Technology Inc. the press piece of the International Center for Performance Excellence at WVU.

"We wanted a text that showed problems and issues," Althouse said. "We wanted people with voices that were scholarly and thoughtful. These are original essays."

In the summary of "Diversity and Social Justice in College Sports," Brooks and Althouse said the purpose of the text is to give sports management students "the concepts necessary to better understand and analyze the culture that exists in the global sport market."

Brooks played collegiate basketball on a scholarship for a portion of his undergraduate days at a time when he said colleges were eager to recruit black athletes. He teaches classes in social justice at the

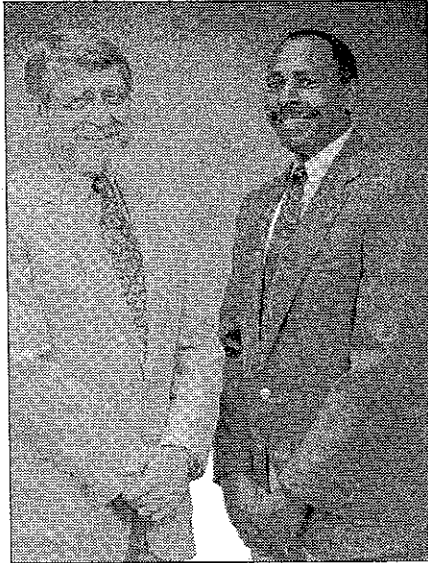


Photo courtesy of West Virginia University

**Ronald Althouse, left, and Dana Brooks co-edited "Diversity and Social Justice in College Sports" to help sports management students gain a better understanding of the foundation and consequences of racism.**

school of physical education at WVU. He sees the need to keep a dialogue going about racism and its consequences.

"These kids coming through are 18 or 19 years old. They say their world is fine," Brooks said. "My goal in the book and in my classes is to have a conversation. You can't really know what it is like to be another person. So you have to educate, educate, educate"

Brooks and Althouse said race has

become an inherent piece of the selection system in athletics.

Charlotte Westerhouse, National Collegiate Athletic Association vice president for diversity and inclusion, wrote the preface for the book. In it, she said that although more than 50 percent of all student athletes are black, only 18 black men have had coaching positions at division one schools since 1979, according to a 2004 study conducted by the Black Coaches Association.

Brooks also said few teams in the National Football League teams have black head coaches.

From horse racing to bicycling, racism has a rich history in sports. From colleges whose rules excluded black athletes to the quality of their experiences and education, racism has been both overt and subtle.

Coaching selections often are based on who is the best fit for a culture, not who is best qualified, Althouse said.

Topics covered in this book include African Americans and the Media, The Globalization of Sports, Racial and Athletic Identity and the possibility of pay for college athletes.

"This book includes noted African American female scholars who look at race and gender," Brooks said. "We are also talking about life after sports"

Brooks and Althouse became friends and colleagues when Althouse sat on Brook's doctorate dissertation committee. In 1993, they completed their first



book, "Racism in College Athletics," which was the first textbook in the country that tackled the topic. They also are working on a third edition of "Racism in College Athletics" that examines social justice and diversity for other minorities, as well as black athletes.

"The issues go from coast to coast, and we are finding questions that are new," Althouse said. "We have to look at a broader scope; it takes time to deal with this question."