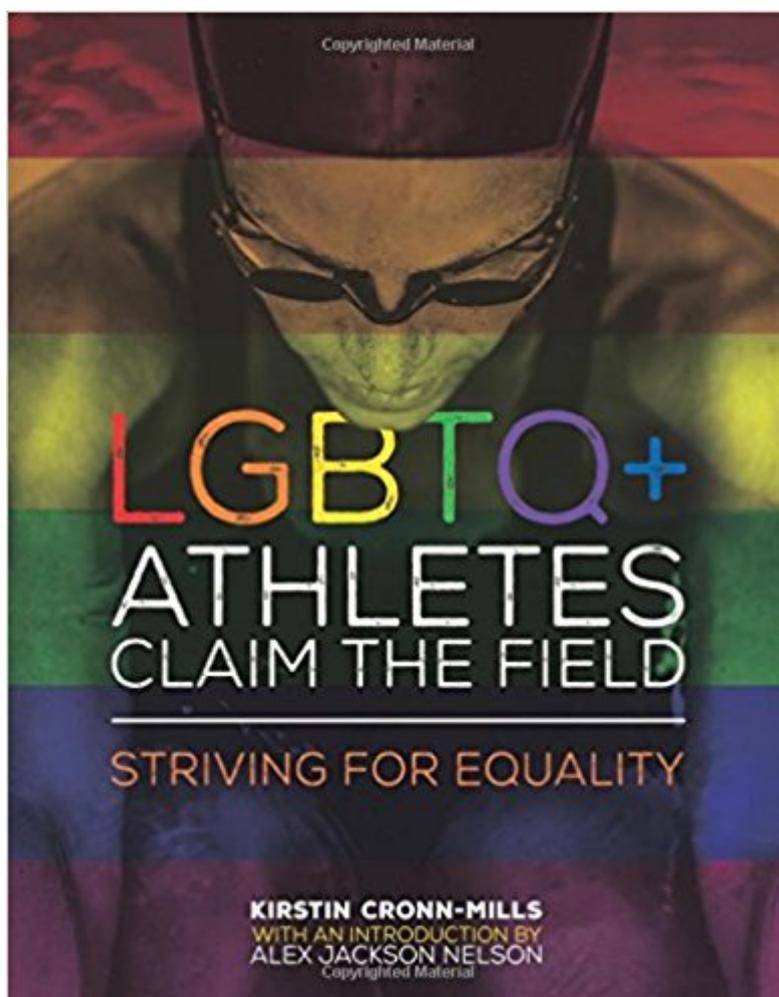


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# LGBTQ+Athletes Claim The Field: Striving For Equality



## Synopsis

A Minnesota Book Award Finalist In 2015, the world watched as soccer star Abby Wambach kissed her wife after the US women's World Cup victory. Milwaukee Brewers' minor league first baseman David Denson came out as gay. And Caitlyn (born Bruce) Jenner, an Olympic decathlete, came out as transgender. It hasn't always been this way. Many great athletes have stayed in the closet their whole lives, or at least until retirement. Social attitudes, institutional policies, and laws are slow to change, but they are catching up. Together, athletes, families, educators, allies, and fans are pushing for competitive equity so that every athlete, regardless of identity, can have the opportunity to play at their very best.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 6 Up **Gr 6 Up** • This brief and up-to-date overview highlights the struggles of numerous LGBTQIA amateur and professional athletes across a wide variety of sports. The text is divided into five broadly thematic chapters that somewhat necessarily overlap: stories of athletes coming out, for instance, are woven throughout the text, not just in the "Athletes Come Out" chapter. The section on transgender and intersex athletes is the most focused and includes high-profile Olympians like Caitlyn Jenner and Caster Semenya as well as lesser-known but similarly pioneering individuals in college athletics, Ironman competitions, tennis, and martial arts. While all of the stories of these athletes are individually compelling, a few organizational stumbles interrupt the flow. The connections between sidebars and the larger text are not always clear and can often be quite tenuous. For instance, one sidebar, "Child M's Story," in the chapter "The Gatekeepers," discusses

a gender-fluid child in a way no more related to gatekeeping than any other story. Furthermore, the story does seem better suited for the "Athlete Bodies, Athlete Genders" section. Since the text is not chronologically arranged, the detailed time line in the back matter more effectively communicates a narrative of major events and progress over time. Crisp color photographs, usually of athletes on or off the field, enhance the text throughout and visually reinforce the message that athletics are for everyone. VERDICT For libraries with strong interest in sports history or LGBTQIA topics. — Sarah Stone, San Francisco Public Library

Kirstin Cronn-Mills, PhD, teaches writing, literature, and critical thinking at South Central College in North Mankato, Minnesota. She writes fiction, poetry, and nonfiction books and articles. Her first young adult novel, *The Sky Always Hears Me and the Hills Don't Mind*, was a Minnesota Book Award finalist. Her second *Beautiful Music for Ugly Children*, a coming-of-age story about Gabe, a trans\* music geek was a Lambda Literary Award finalist and the 2014 Stonewall Book Award winner for best children's and young adult book about the gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender experience. Alex Jackson Nelson, MSW, LGSW, NIC lives in St. Paul, Minnesota. He has worked in and for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and Intersex (LGBTQI) community since 1997. Alex is also a nationally certified American Sign Language interpreter.

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