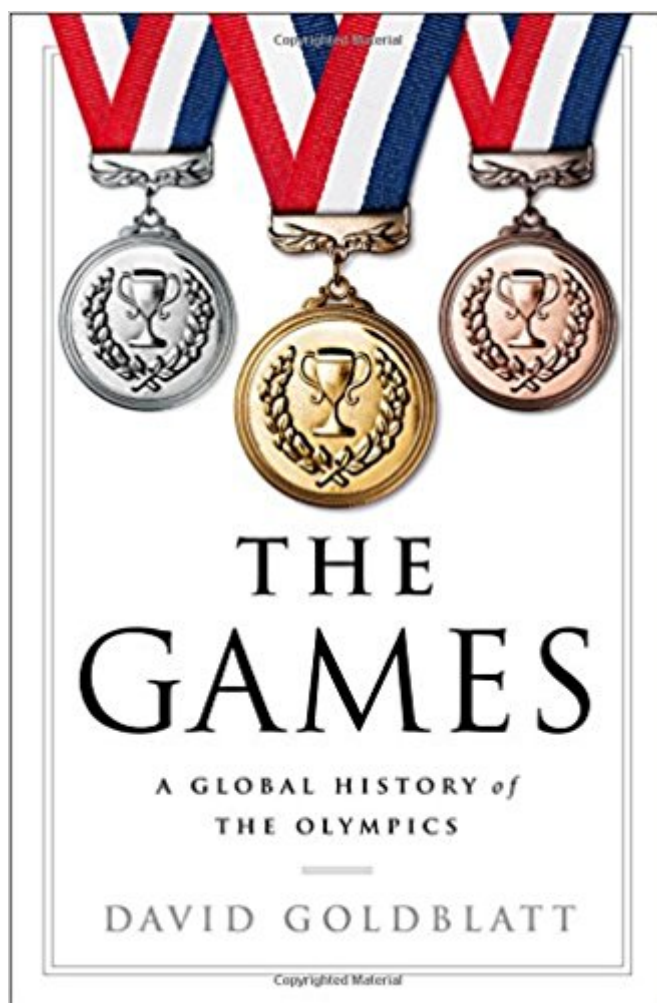


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The Games: A Global History Of The Olympics



Synopsis

The definitive sports and social history of the modern Olympic games—by a New York Times best-selling sportswriter. A Boston Globe Best Book of 2016 A Kirkus Reviews Best Nonfiction Book of 2016 For millions of people around the world, the Summer and Winter Games are a joy and a treasure, but how did they develop into a global colossus? How have they been buffeted by—and, in turn, affected by—world events? Why do we care about them so much? From the reinvention of the Games in Athens in 1896 to Rio in 2016, best-selling sportswriter David Goldblatt brilliantly traces their history through national triumphs and tragedies, individual victories and failures. Here is the story of grand Olympic traditions such as winners' medals, the torch relay, and the eternal flame. Here is the story of popular Olympic events such as gymnastics, the marathon, and alpine skiing (as well as discontinued ones like tug-of-war). And here in all their glory are Olympic icons from Jesse Owens to Nadia Comaneci, Abebe Bikila to Bob Beamon, the Dream Team to Usain Bolt. Hailed in the Wall Street Journal for writing about sports "with the expansive eye of a social and cultural critic," Goldblatt goes beyond the medal counts to tell how women fought to be included in the Olympics on equal terms, how the wounded of World War II led to the Paralympics, and how the Olympics reflect changing attitudes to race and ethnicity. He explores the tensions between the Games' amateur ideals and professionalization and commercialism in sports, the pitched battles between cities for the right to host the Games, and their often disappointing economic legacy. And in covering such seminal moments as Jesse Owens and Hitler at Berlin in 1936, the Black Power salute at Mexico City in 1968, the massacre of Israeli athletes at Munich in 1972, and the Miracle on Ice at Lake Placid in 1980, Goldblatt shows how prominently the modern Olympics have highlighted profound domestic and international conflicts. Illuminated with dazzling vignettes from over a century of the Olympics, this stunningly researched and engagingly written history captures the excitement, drama, and kaleidoscopic experience of the Games. 8 pages of photographs

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A people's history of the Olympics. . . . [Goldblatt] has taken on a challenge worthy of a marathoner." - Mary Pilon, New York Times Book Review

"Goldblatt has a particular eye for how the gung-ho competitiveness of Americans shaped international sport." - Aram Goudsouzian, Washington Post

"[A] bracingly debunking history. . . . Goldblatt writes about [the Olympics] with all his usual intelligence and social insight." - David Runciman, Guardian

"[An] outstanding book. . . . Illuminating, erudite, fair-minded and readable." - Matthew Engel, Financial Times

"A tour de force history of the Olympics in romanticized myth and political reality. . . . Gracefully written and compellingly argued, this is one of the best books of the year and one of the best sports books ever written." - Kirkus (starred review)

"Highly recommended. . . . [E]xplores the social and political history of the Olympic Games, from Pierre de Coubertin's neo-Hellenic vision as founder of the IOC to the expensive spectacles of the twenty-first century." - Library Journal (starred review)

"A magisterial history of the Olympics . . . chronicling classic moments of sporting achievements as well as the Games' significance in international conflicts." - Publishers Weekly

"[The Games] makes a significant contribution to sports history." - Booklist

David Goldblatt is the author of *The Ball Is Round*, a best-selling global history of soccer, and, most recently, *The Game of Our Lives*, which won the William Hill Sports Book of the Year Award. He has taught the sociology of sport at Bristol University, De Montford University, Leicester College, and Pitzer College in Los Angeles. He lives in Bristol, England.

I enjoyed this timely book about the history of the Olympics. The author did a great job pulling all of this material together in an interesting manner. The book is well researched and written. If you plan to watch the games in Rio you should read this book. Jack Kushner

Dry, and lacking any energy of the games themselves. Politics of the Olympics is interesting enough but needs the drama of the games to make the story come alive.

Among the finest researched and well presented critical books of the Olympic movement.

Totally engrossing and rich in historical detail.

This book is, at best, an overview of the origin of the Games and how cities win, conduct, and, most often, regret staging the Olympic Games. The book really fails to capture any of the drama of the Games themselves, and we learn little about actual competitors. Also, areas of emphasis are odd -- the massacre of Israeli athletes isn't given any more coverage than the evolution of judo in the Olympics. I think the book really lacks drama, which is sad, because the Games themselves, the competitors, and the politics surrounding it all, are filled with drama. Still, if you want an overview of the history of the Games and how they evolved, you may find the content interesting.

What a bunch of constipated trash. The writers bias against certain countries and individuals shines through on every page. As someone that's followed the Olympics for 45+ years, it was all too often transparent the writer tells half the story rather than giving all the facts. He does not even mention exactly when in 1896 the Olympics were held. Save your money!

My daughter loves the Olympics and this adds to her memorabilia.

Well written and documented.

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