



Brazil's Dance with the Devil: The World Cup, The Olympics, and the Struggle for Democracy

By Dave Zirin

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One of the *Boston Globe's* "Best Sports Books of 2014"

As the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games approach, ordinary Brazilians are holding the country's biggest protest marches in decades. Sports journalist Dave Zirin traveled to Brazil to find out why. In a rollicking read that travels from the favelas of Rio de Janeiro to the fabled Maracanã Stadium, Zirin examines how athletic mega-events turn into neoliberal Trojan horses.

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Editorial Review

Review

"People think speaking truth to power is easy, but if it was easy everyone would do it. This book does it... It speaks truth to the powers that be, from Brazil to the US to FIFA to the IOC. It hits you like an uppercut that rattles your brain and sets it straight. I cannot recommend this book highly enough."

—John Carlos, 1968 Olympic medalist

"Dave Zirin is not just the radical brilliant sports critic but along with Naomi Klein *the* investigative journalist of our neoliberal era. He has figured out that sports operates at the the nexus of capitalism, race, class, sexuality, privatization and of course spectacle. That's why his work is so important to so many of us."

—Robin Kelley, author, *Africa Speaks, America Answers*

"Dave Zirin has long stood on the edge of the sports writing world, exploding topics many of his colleagues are scared to approach. With *Brazil's Dance with the Devil*, he puts to bed any notion that the IOC and FIFA have the best interests of their host countries at heart. Brazil is a special country and Dave Zirin honors its people and history while mercilessly going after those who would undermine its people. This book is a remarkable mix of investigative sports journalism and insightful social history."

—Glenn Greenwald, author, *No Place to Hide*

"In a sports journalism landscape where it sometimes seems there are only those who fawn and those who pander, where curiosity about the world at large is in short supply, Zirin is an altogether different kind of presence. He does care, until it hurts, and consistently delivers unique takes on the nexus of sports and race, globalization, politics and human rights. In *Brazil's Dance with the Devil*, Zirin's at his best, on familiar and fertile ground. Like so much of his work, it's incisive, heartbreakingly important and even funny."

—Jeremy Schaap, ESPN, author of *New York Times* bestseller *Cinderella Man*

"For years, FIFA and the Brazilian government have failed to understand the complexity of the Brazilian populace, that it's possible both to love soccer and to be outraged over the organization of the World Cup at the expense of the people. Dave Zirin, one of our great chroniclers of sports and society, spent time on the ground in Brazil interviewing those most affected by the Brazilian World Cup and Olympics, and he comes away with the truth of it all: That the brutal expense of these Mega-events isn't worth the investment of so much public money and historical memory. Everyone who watches the World Cup should read this book."

—Grant Wahl, senior writer, *Sports Illustrated*

"A vision from abroad about our Brazil from inside. It's a vision at once critical, smart, truthful, and free of prejudices, and not sparing any criticisms of his own country, the United States. Additionally it's a generous vision that uplifts the great Brazilian people. Enthusiastically recommended!"

—Juca Kfouri, columnist, *UOL Esporte*

"Dave Zirin offers a great, fast-paced primer for those who want to get up to speed with what is happening on the ground in Brazil as it prepares for the World Cup and Olympics. Zirin brings the reader through years of history in order to contextualize the tumult on the streets during the 2013 Confederations' Cup and offers perspective on what the world can expect during the World Cup and Olympics. *Brazil's Dance with the Devil* gives insight into the linkages between corruption, massive public spending and the folly of mega-event

planning in a country with huge wealth inequalities and major infrastructure challenges. Zirin has done his homework and fieldwork, consulting the classics and experts to bring together a fast-paced, focused read for an international audience."

—Juliana Barbassa, Former Rio de Janeiro correspondent, *Associated Press*

"Like everything Dave Zirin writes, this book is impassioned, deeply informed and very readable. It's also a necessary book, because Brazil is a poorly understood country entering a crucial period. Zirin backs up his opinions with good, honest reporting. Brazil has a good friend in him."

—Simon Kuper, author, *Soccernomics*

"*Brazil's Dance With the Devil*, is a powerful and haunting look at what's happening behind the scenes (oft-tragically) in a nation hosting both the World Cup and the Olympics. It's strong work."

—Jeff Pearlman, author, *Boys Will Be Boys: The Glory Days and Party Nights of the Dallas Cowboys Dynasty*

About the Author

DAVE ZIRIN is the sports editor for the Nation and the author of *Game Over: How Politics Has Turned the Sports World Upside Down*. Named one of *UTNE Reader's* "Fifty Visionaries Who Are Changing Our World," Zirin is a frequent guest on MSNBC, ESPN, and *Democracy Now!* He also hosts the weekly Sirius XM show *Edge of Sports Radio* and has been called "the best sportswriter in the United States," by Robert Lipsyte.

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