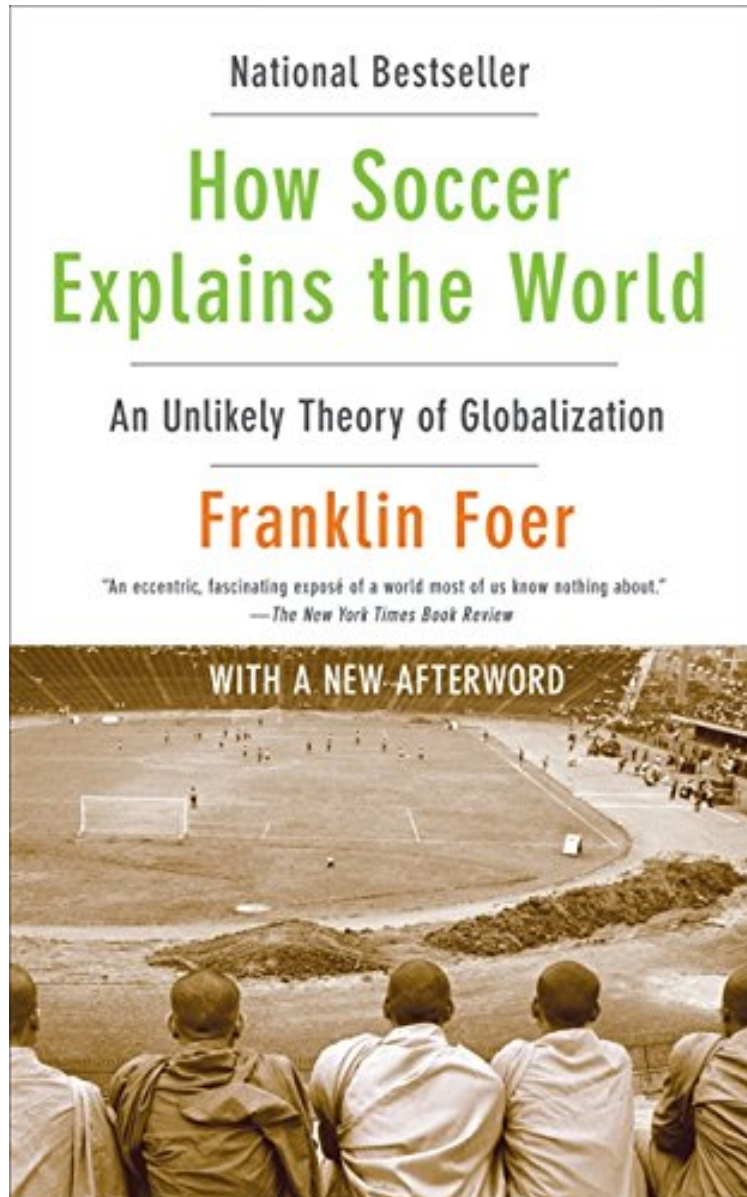


(Ebook free) How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization

How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization

Franklin Foer

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Franklin Foer : How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization:

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An eccentric, fascinating expos of a world most of us know nothing about. The New York Times Book Review "An insightful, entertaining, brainiac sports road trip." The Wall Street Journal "Foers skills as a narrator are enviable. His characterizations are comparable to those in Norman Mailer's journalism." The Boston Globe A groundbreaking worknamed one of the five most influential sports books of the decade by Sports IllustratedHow Soccer Explains the World is a unique and brilliantly illuminating look at soccer, the worlds most popular sport, as a lens through which to view the pressing issues of our age, from the clash of civilizations to the global economy.

.com The global power of soccer might be a little hard for Americans, living in a country that views the game with the same skepticism used for the metric system and the threat of killer bees, to grasp fully. But in Europe, South America, and elsewhere, soccer is not merely a pastime but often an expression of the social, economic, political, and racial composition of the communities that host both the teams and their throngs of enthusiastic fans. New Republic editor Franklin Foer, a lifelong devotee of soccer dating from his own inept youth playing days to an adulthood of obsessive fandom, examines soccer's role in various cultures as a means of examining the reach of globalization. Foer's approach is long on soccer reportage, providing extensive history and fascinating interviews on the Rangers-Celtic rivalry and the inner workings of AC Milan, and light on direct discussion of issues like world trade and the exportation of Western culture. But by creating such a compelling narrative of soccer around the planet, Foer draws the reader into these sport-mad societies, and subtly provides the explanations he promises in chapters with titles like "How Soccer Explains the New Oligarchs", "How Soccer Explains Islam's Hope", and "How Soccer Explains the Sentimental Hooligan." Foer's own passion for the game gives his book an infectious energy but still pales in comparison to the religious fervor of his subjects. His portraits of legendary hooligans in Serbia and Britain, in particular, make the most die-hard roughneck New York Yankees fan look like a choirboy in comparison. Beyond the thugs, Foer also profiles Nigerian players living in the Ukraine, Iranian women struggling against strict edicts to attend matches, and the parallel worlds of Brazilian soccer and politics from which Pele emerged and returned. Foer posits that globalization has eliminated neither local cultural identities nor violent hatred among fans of rival teams, and it has not washed out local businesses in a sea of corporate wealth nor has it quelled rampant local corruption. Readers with an interest in international economics are sure to like How Soccer Explains the World, but soccer fans will love it. --John MoeFrom Publishers WeeklyFoer, a New Republic editor, scores a game-winning goal with this analysis of the interchange between soccer and the new global economy. The subtitle is a bit misleading, though: he doesn't really use soccer to develop a theory; instead, he focuses on how examining soccer in different countries allows us to understand how international forces affect politics and life around the globe. The book is full of colorful reporting, strong characters and insightful analysis: In one of the most compelling chapters, Foer shows how a soccer thug in Serbia helped to organize troops who committed atrocities in the Balkan Warby the end of the war, the thug's men, with the acquiescence of Serbian leaders, had killed at least 2,000 Croats and Bosnians. Then he bought his own soccer club and, before he was gunned down in 2000, intimidated other teams into losing. Most of the stories aren't as gruesome, but they're equally fascinating. The crude hatred, racism and anti-Semitism on display in many soccer stadiums is simply amazing, and Foer offers context for them, including how current economic conditions are affecting these manifestations. In Scotland, the management of some teams have kept religious hatreds alive in order to sell tickets and team merchandise. But Foer, a diehard soccer enthusiast, is no anti-globalist. In Iran, for example, he depicts how soccer works as a modernizing force: thousands of women forced police to allow them into a men's-only stadium to celebrate the national team's triumph in an international match. One doesn't have to be a soccer fan to truly appreciate this absorbing book. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistAmericans are fond of jokes that play on our incomprehension of soccer, and, at times, this ignorance seems an apt metaphor for our intellectual disengagement from the world. But we ignore the world-- and its favorite sport--at our peril. In his wonderfully conceived treatise, journalist Foer uses soccer as an arena in which to examine world events, such as Balkan genocide (Serbian gangster Arkan helped form Milosevic's paramilitary troops from among Red Star supporters), and worldviews, such as U.S. culture wars (he uses the game as a metaphor for our divided attitudes about globalization, an issue that underlies our cultural split). Evenhanded and well reported, it's written in a

crisp and engaging style that will hook even readers who have no idea how the "beautiful game" is played. Perfectly timed to coincide with soccer's growing coolness (team jerseys are a hipster's must-have), this excellent book belongs with two other great soccer-outsider inquiries, Bill Buford's *Among the Thugs* (1992) and Joe McGinniss' *The Miracle of Castel di Sangro* (1999). Keir Graff Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved