



Celebration Capitalism and the Olympic Games (Routledge Critical Studies in Sport)

Jules Boykoff

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The Olympic Games have become the world's greatest media and marketing event—a global celebration of exceptional athletics gilded with corporate cash. Huge corporations vie for association with the "Olympic Image" in the hope of gaining a worldwide marketing audience of billions.

In this provocative critical study of the contemporary Olympics, Jules Boykoff argues that the Games have become a massive planned economy designed to shield the rich from risk while providing them with a spectacle to treasure. Placing political economy at the center of the analysis, and drawing on interdisciplinary research in sociology, politics, geography, history, and economics, Boykoff develops an innovative theory of "celebration capitalism", the manipulation of state actors as partners that drives us towards public-private partnerships in which the public pays and the private profits. He argues that the Athens Games in 2004 marked the full emergence of celebration capitalism, with London 2012 representing its quintessential expression, characterized by a state of exception, unfettered commercialism, repression of dissent, questionable sustainability claims, and the complicity of the mainstream media.

Controversial, challenging, and forthright, this book opens up a fascinating new avenue for understanding the contemporary Olympics in the context of global capitalist society. It is essential reading for anybody with an interest in the Olympic Games, the relationship between sport and society, or global politics and culture.

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