

**Zimbalist, Andrew. *Circus maximus: the economic gamble behind hosting the Olympics and the World Cup*. Brookings, 2015. 174p index afp ISBN 9780815726517, \$25.00.**

For years, sports economists have poked holes in the purported impact of any number of issues—including the value of a new stadium on a franchise’s performance and a city’s coffers and how much a Super Bowl actually benefits the host locale. Economists further afield have extended this type of analysis to pop balloons when it comes to the worth of hosting a political convention, building a new casino, or luring corporate headquarters. Into this fray jumps Zimbalist (Smith College), a sports economist, prolific author, and contributor to newspaper op-ed pages. In his book, Zimbalist confines his coverage to arguably the most important international competitions: the Olympic Games and the World Cup. In a relatively short volume with copious endnotes, the author traces the histories of these two mega-events, the politics behind International Olympic Committee and Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) selections, and short- and long-run economic impacts. Barcelona (1992), London (2012), Sochi (2014), and Rio de Janeiro (2014 and 2016) receive special treatment. There is not much new under the sun here, but the book is a valuable addition to the literature because it brings received wisdom and a wealth of information under one roof. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates and above; general readers.