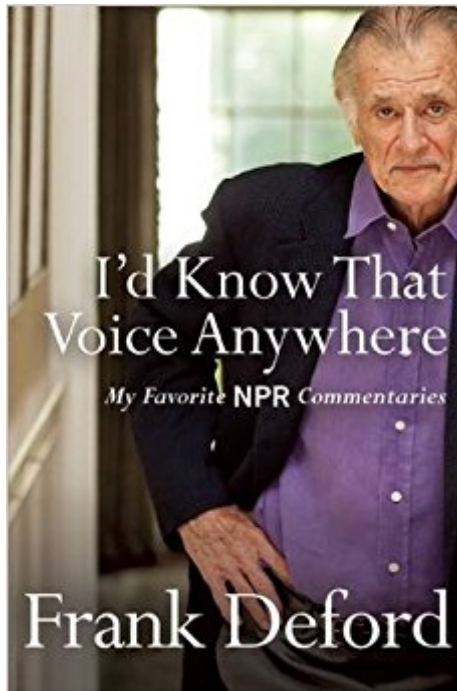




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I'd Know That Voice Anywhere: My Favorite NPR Commentaries



Synopsis

Frank Deford is one of the most beloved sports journalists in America. A contributing writer to Sports Illustrated for more than fifty years, and a longtime correspondent on Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel, these days, Deford is perhaps best known for his weekly commentaries on NPR's *Morning Edition*. Since 1980, Deford has recorded 1,600 of them, and in *I Know That Voice Anywhere* he brings together the very best, creating a charming, insightful, and wide-ranging look at athletes and the world of sports. In *I Know That Voice Anywhere*, Deford discusses everything from sex scandals and steroids to why, in a culture dominated by celebrity, sport is the only field on earth where popularity and excellence thrive in tandem. This page-turning compendium covers more than thirty years of sports history while showcasing the vast range of Deford's interests and opinions, including his thoughts on the NCAA, why gay athletes play straight, and why he's worried about living in an economy that is so dominated by golfers. A rollicking sampler of one of NPR's most popular segments, *I Know That Voice Anywhere* is perfect for sports enthusiasts as well as sports skeptics; and a must-read for any Frank Deford fan.

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Customer Reviews

Praise for *I Know That Voice Anywhere*: Named a Best Sports Book of 2016 by Buffalo News & Frank Deford definitely is worthy of a spot on the Mt. Rushmore of sportswriters . . . As always, Deford's writing is glorious, hitting all the notes from funny to emotional to

profound . . . Once again, his words make sports come alive. —Chicago Tribune
—“One of the all-time greats in sports journalism . . . Man, he’s
good. —Buffalo News (Best Sports Books for 2016) —“A sparkling sampler of
commentaries from celebrated sports journalist Frank Deford . . . This prime selection of
Deford’s most insightful NPR pieces offers a kaleidoscope of sports highs and lows . . .
I’d Know That Voice Anywhere is an eclectic joy to read, highly
recommended. —Midwest Book Review —Deford . . . has a wickedly droll
sense of humor, which, when coupled with his encyclopedic knowledge of sports, results in
commentaries that are incisive, amusing, touching, or incendiary in various combinations . . . A rich
collection for anyone interested in the sporting life. —Booklist —Wonderful . . .
Deford’s new book underscores his brilliance as a writer . . . Deford fans are well-advised
to check [it] out. —Poynter Praise for Frank Deford: —Deford . . . is the handsome,
swashbuckling man of sports journalism. For fifty years, he has been issuing perhaps the greatest
writing the realm has known. —Chicago Sun-Times —[Deford is] sports
writing’s Sinatra. —San Francisco Chronicle —Deford’s cred is
incredible, his accolades deserved . . . [Deford] has long been the genuine
article. —Los Angeles Times —Deford has seen it all, and boy, has he got
stories. —Dallas Morning News —Thank heaven for Frank
Deford. —San Antonio Express-News —One of the greatest writers of our
time. —Billie Jean King —Frank Deford is the best sportswriter I’ve ever
read . . . If there’s a Mount Rushmore of sportswriting, Deford is up there, purple ties and
all. —Tony Kornheiser —Of all the magazine writers of the last half-century, Frank
Deford holds a special place at the top . . . Not very bright, someone said of him long ago at
Princeton, and it was true —he has been brilliant instead. —David Maraniss,
author of When Pride Still Mattered and Clemente —Frank Deford writes the kind of sentences
you find yourself rereading for the sheer pleasure of it. —Jim Bouton, author of Ball
Four —Frank Deford is the best there is. —Buzz Bissinger, author of Friday Night
Lights —One of our best-loved and most gifted writers . . . A master
storyteller. —Jeremy Schaap, author of Cinderella Man and Triumph —Frank
Deford knows more baseball and writes with more graceful good humor than any man I
know. —Richard Ben Cramer, author of Joe DiMaggio: The Hero’s Life, on The Old
Ball Game —One of our more melodious sportswriters . . . Deford writes with a cunning sparkle
in his eye. —Kirkus Reviews, on The Old Ball Game (starred review) —A man

whose talent is every bit the equal of the great athletes whose stories he's revealed to us. Shelf Awareness; Deford is the Holy Grail. He's simply one of the greatest sportswriters of all time. Peter King, SI.com

In addition to his work at National Public Radio, Sports Illustrated, and Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel, Frank Deford is the author of numerous works of nonfiction, including *The Old Ball Game* and *Over Time*, as well as ten novels and two screenplays. He is a recipient of the PEN/ESPN Lifetime Achievement Award for Literary Sports Writing and the National Humanities Medal.

I have read everything by Frank Deford. This compilation is among his very best writings. Whether it's about sports or simply fiction, he doesn't disappoint!

Anyone who's heard Frank's morning column on NPR knows that he has a unique take on the world of modern sports. He writes with the same signature voice that he speaks with on the radio, a great addition to my library.

Wonderful short essays on various sports topics.

I'd know that writing style anywhere, and feel privileged to read it any time.

Frank's prose is so lively. I can hear him voicing each of these!

Frank Deford is one of America's great sports writers. As with so many other such great writers, he is conversant in many topics other than sports. But it is with sports that he makes his living. For several years he has had a weekly, now monthly, three minutes' commentary on NPR morning edition show. This book is a compilation of many of those stories. It is best to refer to his comments/collection as stories, because that is how he presents them both on the radio and here in print. Deford, whose recognizable voice provides for the title of this anthology, is a master story teller. Even when he is just discussing sports, a non-sports lover can appreciate the writer's use of phrases and humor. For example, when discussing his dislike for tie games he disparages the acceptance of tie games in international soccer, "How does the rest of the unexceptional world tolerate this? It's exactly this kind of thinking, I believe, which is why they can't fix the bloody euro. The dollar is a

winner. The euro is a tie. Get off the dime, Europe, and play to win. The stories are gathered not in the usual way of how they relate to particular topics such as football, baseball, etc. Instead, the writer confirms that he wanted to be like an old pitcher whose arm has lost its zip and to rely instead on a less predictable arrangement. Frankly, I would have preferred the alternative and that left me searching around the topics for what I was in the mood at that moment of reading. I was appreciative of his including material for which the topics remain mostly relevant.

I am sure that he could have discussed the Olympics from the 1990s, but he references the last games and the upcoming ones. Overall, this book is certainly more for the sports fans among us, but if you are not that type of person and you want to give it as a gift, you need not worry about having some of these stories related to you by your appreciative recipient. They do not require expert appreciation for any one sport and they are amusing enough for you to spare some of your patience as you hear a quick and intelligent opinion.

Long-time sport reporter Frank DeFord has written many sports-related books, and a few years ago he wrote his eagerly awaited memoir "Over Time". Perhaps DeFord is best known for his weekly contribution (on Wednesday morning) to NPR's Morning Edition. They are short pieces, 2 to 3 minutes, in which DeFord looks at a particular sports moment or sports-related item, to which he then serves his on-point, at times sarcastic, sometimes funny, thoughts. Now comes this book, which compiles about 100 of those NPR pieces. "I'd Know That Voice Anywhere: My Favorite NPR Commentaries" (2016 publication; 288 pages) collects about 100 of DeFord's NPR pieces. The book is not chronological or organized by topic, in fact I really can't make out any rhyme or reason as to why the pieces are presented in the order that they are. So early on we go from "Words the Play By" (from 1983) to "Our Indecent Toys" (from 2013), the latter kicking off with this intriguing premise: "This may sound far-fetched, but football reminds me of Venice", and how might that be? Just read! Later on, DeFord asks the question, in "Back In the Day" (from 2003), "What did all the people who devour this [sports] stuff do before there were sports? What did they talk about with their buddies? They could've talked about sex all the time, could they?", ha! DeFord's dislike, more outright aversion, of the NCAA's hypocrisy is well known, and several pieces in here talk about that, including the blistering "Stoodint Athaleets" (from 2010). A number of the pieces come along with a latter-day update, which is quite helpful to assess how much things have changed (or not) in certain aspects of sports (check 2003's "The Other Sports Violence" piece as just one example). If you have heard DeFord's distinguished voice on NPR's morning edition over the years, you will almost hear him say the words you're reading. This book is a quick read, and one that likely will

leave you smile a bit here and there. After doing the NPR pieces for 35 years, DeFord finally 'retired' more or less earlier this year, turning his commentary to a monthly event, rather than weekly. His voice is missed on Morning Edition, that's for sure. Meanwhile, "I'd Know That Voice Anywhere" is pleasant sport reading, nothing more, nothing less.

I received a free Kindle copy of this book courtesy of Net Galley and Grove Atlantic, the publisher in exchange for a review that is posted on Net Galley, and my blog. I also posted the review on my Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Google Plus pages. I requested this book based on reading and hearing some of Frank Deford's commentaries which I always found interesting. The book is engaging and a fast read. Due partly to the content and partly to the fact that the commentaries are short. The author covers a broad range of subjects, primarily sports, over a long period of time. Each commentary has the date it was recorded which makes it easier to adjust to the circumstances of the time. I would have preferred that the chapters were in chronological order instead of bouncing around the timeline. The only drawback is that the reader needs to have a working knowledge of the events taking place during the time period of the commentary. I recommend this book as a viewpoint to events that have taken place in our country over the past 20 plus years.

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