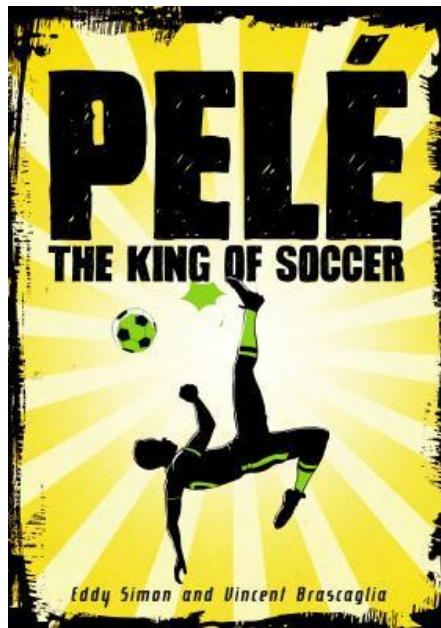




Pelé: The King of Soccer

Eddy Simon , Vincent Brascaglia (Illustrator) , Joe Johnson (Translator)

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Edson Arantes do Nascimento, known to his schoolmates as Pele, grew up in poverty in the Sao Paulo region of Brazil. He was too poor to afford a real soccer ball, so he played with a ball of newspaper tied together with string. Yet he dominated the youth leagues and signed his first professional soccer contract at the age of fifteen. Within two years he was celebrated internationally, when he led Brazil to victory at the world cup. Known by his fans as -O Rei- (The King), Pele is widely regarded as the greatest soccer player of all time. But he's more than just an athlete: he also traveled the world as goodwill ambassador for UNICEF. Pele is the living symbol of a sport he dubbed -the beautiful game---a game that brings people together regardless of race or nationality.

Pelé: The King of Soccer Details

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From Reader Review Pelé: The King of Soccer for online ebook

First Second Books says

Known by his fans as "O Rei" (The King), Pelé is widely regarded as the greatest soccer player of all time. But he's more than just an athlete: he also traveled the world as goodwill ambassador for UNICEF. Pelé is the living symbol of a sport he dubbed "the beautiful game"—a game that brings people together regardless of race or nationality. In the graphic novel *Pelé: The King of Soccer*, Eddy Simon and Vincent Brascaglia beautifully depict Pelé's rise from the slums of Brazil to the national stage.

Lola says

I'm not a soccer fan. I did play a little when I was younger with my brother, and I enjoyed it, but only because I didn't play fair and kept hurting my brother in the shins.

And yet, he never, ever complained. I think he liked playing period, whatever the consequences.

So because, as you can see, I don't know much about playing soccer or the soccer players themselves, I had no idea who Pelé was before starting this graphic biography. But I enjoy learning more about people who make great influences, so I was curious about his life.

In this book is illustrated Pelé's path to glory, with many obstacles along the way. The focus is on his professional career. His family and loved ones are featured from time to time, but not enough to say that his personal life is very detailed.

Though I didn't expect to learn everything about the people around him, so I'm okay with that, and if you are too, there shouldn't be a problem in that area.

The true story is in chronological order (thank goodness) so it's fairly clear, although it does get more complicated towards the end, when we get to his adult life, because there are suddenly new political and economical factors at play.

The main problem for me, however, was that I felt disconnected from Pelé himself. The narrator is not him, so we really are just a couple of outsiders peering at Pelé's life without being invited. That's how I felt most of the time, anyway.

Perhaps I would have felt differently if it had been narrated from the first-person point of view. It's a guess.

Would still recommend it to fans!

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Debra says

I'm not a really a soccer fan but I do enjoy biographies and memoirs so I thought this might be interesting. Parts of it were good but overall it just didn't hold my interest. It was just OK for me. I think it would be

much more enjoyable for someone who is a big fan of soccer and of Pele. I will pass it on to someone who will hopefully get more enjoyment out of it and ask them to review it when they are done.

I won this book in a Goodreads giveaway.

Tanja says

A quite detailed biography in graphic novel format which provides the reader not just with an overview of the soccer legend's life but also gives insights into Brazil's modern history, its socio-economic and political struggles and challenges, all the way through to 2014. It is of course a special treat for all soccer fans. Dormant readers will especially appreciate the sparse, yet informative text. I am not an expert on Pelé but this biography feels and reads like a very honest account, not leaving out the legend's weaknesses -for example with regards to women. Due to some more mature content, I find the book most suitable for older readers (middle grades up).

Linda V says

Thank you Net Galley for the ARC in exchange for a fair review.

Even though I have very little knowledge about soccer, I was excited to read this Graphic Novel about Pele. His accomplishments as an athlete and a humanitarian, are so amazing that even someone as soccer-uneducated as me has heard of him!

I thoroughly enjoyed this Graphic novel and learned so much about Pele's life from childhood through adulthood, while picking up some soccer basics. The political climate in Brazil was a driving force in the world of soccer during Pele's career, and impacted his decisions along the way. When addressing the struggles the country was dealing with it was done in a straightforward manner that was very informative.

This is a great read for anyone, especially soccer fans, in middle grades and up.

Amy says

I should begin by stating that I only read this book because I flipped to a random page which discussed Pele's womanizing, resulting in the birth of a child out of wedlock, whom he refused to recognize. This made me question whether the book I had just purchased was appropriate for the elementary school environment it was intended for. Read in context, I was happy to find that this was not a glorification of his behaviour, the consequences this had on his family life probably could have been touched on a little more if the author felt it was necessary to include this information in a book intended for kids. Definitely going into the young adult section of my library.

I liked this book more than I thought I would, considering I have zero interest in sports. It was the backdrop of Brazilian politics that really drew me into the story. The author did a great job demonstrating how much of an impact this political climate had on Pele's life and career trajectory.

In some ways, I felt that the story tried to cram in too details, and at times this made for some disjointed

reading. There would be one or two panels that would illustrate some random event, such as all of Pele's jerseys being stolen, and I would keep reading, waiting for it to tie in somewhere to the rest of the story, but it would never come up again. I noticed that this was first published in French, so I'm wondering if this is a translation issue.

Also, I was hoping for a more informative conclusion after learning of Pele's vilification by the Brazilian people because of his (reluctant) ties to politics around the time of the 2014 World Cup. Like, what is he doing now? Have attitudes changed? A brief biography or fact sheet at the end could have resolved this. I think it was a missed opportunity not including an informational section at the end of the book.

Kristin says

I definitely learned more about Pele's life and career through this graphic novel and appreciated the authentic vocabulary used (with footnote translations) throughout the text. However, the writing didn't flow for me; it seemed very choppy and disjointed. Plus, for a book geared towards 3-6 graders, I wish the story didn't continue to go back to Pele's infidelity and illegitimate child whom he refused to recognize. I get that's a part of who he is, but with a story geared at younger readers in a graphic novel format, I would think that part of his life could have been left to a biography aimed at older readers. Do we need to have drawings of him going to a hotel with a woman with text that reads, "And even though he's madly in love with Rose, it's sometimes difficult to resist the advances of the occasional Belle," when the book is aimed at third graders? The focus on his escape from poverty, devotion to his family and country, his soccer tribulations and triumphs, his work with youth soccer, Special Olympics, UNICEF, etc. was enough to fill an entire book.

Dana says

This book should not be considered a children's book. I understand it is graphic novel, but should be considered teen. Quotes such as "Hey, Girls, you know I've got skills with every part of my body" and "'I'm pregnant' 'No way! Are you certain it was me?'" could have been left out of this book since it's classified as Children's. It was not fun trying to explain to my 8 year old soccer loving daughter what those things meant.

Nicola Mansfield says

I have no interest in soccer whatsoever but I do know who Pele is. I usually enjoy biographies about a wide assortment of people no matter their claim to fame as long as the book is about the person, his life, personality, etc. This book didn't succeed in capturing my attention. It started off well enough with young Pele growing up in poverty and showing himself to be an exceptional soccer player. However, once he joined the sport even semi-professionally the book simply became a game by game replay of his life according to soccer. There were sentences and footnotes: oh he got married, oh he cheated on his wife, oh he had a kidney removed. I was totally bored with all the soccer parts which make up 90% of the story. Most recommended for soccer or Pele fans rather than the general biography reader.

Alyssa says

I'm not a huge sports fan, but a lot of my students are, so I was excited to read this graphic novel. While I might still buy it for my library, I was disappointed. I found the font too small, the pictures a little flat (maybe it was the color scheme?), and the story a bit disjointed. I also felt like his less stellar moments (such as womanizing and denying paternity) were mentioned but glazed over. I almost wish if they were going to bring it into the story that they had unpacked these problematic aspects of his life a little more.

Anne says

This is the biographical account of Pele's life in graphic novel format.

He was born and known as Edson Arantes do Nascimento in Sao Paolo Brazil. His family was poor but he shared the love of playing soccer with his father (who had to retire early from the sport due to injury). Edson grew to fame quickly and persevered despite some difficult circumstances. Some people regard him as a hero, but the book does a good job of portraying a balanced look at his life where there are both favorable and unfavorable aspects of his life. For example, he had a weakness for women and cheated on his wife and had children outside of wedlock. On the other hand, he was an ambassador, has worked for the United Nations, and Special Olympics.

There are some images of players in locker rooms in their underwear, references to marital infidelity, but there is nothing violent or obscene. Gear towards grades 4 and up, however.

Dan says

A graphic novel about the greatest soccer player of all-time? Yes please! ?

This fantastic biography will sure to be popular with an ever-growing number of soccer playing students in my classroom.

Becky B says

A graphic novel biography of Brazilian soccer player, Edson Arantes do Nascimento, better known by his nickname, Pelé. The graphic novel covers his life as a poor village boy in Brazil who got a love of soccer (and solid training) from his father whose own pro career was cut short by an injury. It then follows his rise to a pro player and national team member for Brazil to his pro years in the US and his years afterward in government and relief aid work.

I went into this knowing nothing about Pelé except that he was a famous soccer player from Brazil. His meteoric rise from street soccer to national team is quite amazing. Like most people, he has his admirable qualities, like his passion for kids and aid work, and his not so admirable qualities, like his weakness for women and unfaithfulness to his wife. This book shows both sides, his moments of brilliance and his faults, applauding the first and bemoaning the latter, but keeps the content appropriate for middle grade readers. The book covers a lot of soccer history and Brazilian history in addition to telling Pelé's story, so I feel like I learned quite a bit from just 140 pages. Soccer is hands down the most popular sport among the students at our school, add to that the fact that this is a graphic novel with attractive illustrations and you've got yourselves a bestseller. I can definitely see kids who never usually touch books devouring this. Our school library definitely needs this book, the question is how many copies will I need to order to keep the masses happy.

Notes on content (based on the ARC): Maybe five mild swear words. It is mentioned that Pelé has a weakness for women and fathers some children out of wedlock, but sex is never mentioned and only a kiss is shown. There are clear repercussions for his life style, his wife eventually divorces him and the creators don't paint this in a positive light. A couple illustrations show guys in the locker room in their underwear, and an incident is mentioned when fans stripped Pelé of his clothes; he is drawn naked BUT has his hands/arms strategically placed so it doesn't show anything. Only violence is some on the field rough play shown and some events in news mentioned but not shown.

I received an ARC of this title from the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Kellee says

Pelé: The King of Soccer by Eddy Simon and Vincent Brascaglia is the name I have heard for years because soccer is by far the most popular sport at my school, but I hadn't know much about him until this graphic novel, and I loved learning about the man that many of my students call a hero.

Koozebane says

3.5 stars. I received a copy as part of a Goodreads First Reads giveaway.

The exposition feels a little clunky in the early chapters, but picks up once Pele begins his career in earnest. The soccer elements are compelling, but there's a clear struggle between the tendency to lionize the athlete from a sociological standpoint and figuring out how to explain his rather messy personal life and extramarital affairs. (Generally Simon is evenhanded, though one Studio 54-inspired panel seemed a bit too lighthearted for my taste.) I wanted to know more about the rise and fall of Garrincha, and a few other plot points are invoked and then dropped (such as Pele's reunion with his first girlfriend Illena in Sweden). The book ends rather abruptly as well. Even so, a lot is covered in 139 pages, and this would be a good jumping-off point for those intrigued by the athlete or soccer in general.
