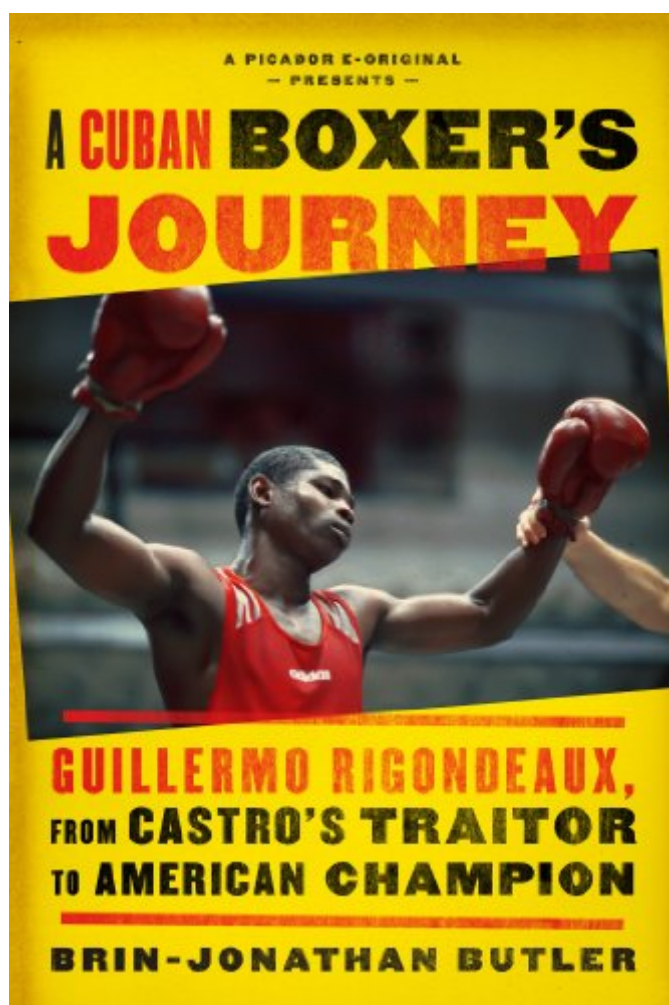


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# A Cuban Boxer's Journey: Guillermo Rigondeaux, From Castro's Traitor To American Champion (Kindle Single)



## Synopsis

THE STORY OF CUBAN BOXER AND POLITICAL PARIAH GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX'S HARROWING DECISION TO DEFECT IN HOPES OF REAPING THE REWARDS OF THE AMERICAN DREAM "What is one million dollars compared to the love of eight million Cubans?" This was the question posed by legendary boxer Teofilo Stevenson in the 1970s, crowned by many as the Muhammad Ali of Cuba, in response to an offer of five million dollars to leave his island to fight Ali. But not all Cubans have come to the same conclusion, let alone with such apparent ease. Guillermo Rigondeaux, two-time Olympic champion and heir to Stevenson's throne, sacrificed everything he had in his home country—his wife, his son, his government-subsidized car and house, as well as universal reverence among his fellow citizens—to try to make it in the mecca of big-money boxing, the United States of America. But has the chance to make good in America been worth the loss of his national identity and the love of his countrymen? And to what extent has he been corrupted by the promise of untold riches? In *A Cuban Boxer's Journey*, author, filmmaker, and journalist Brin-Jonathan Butler chronicles the fascinating and tumultuous career of Rigondeaux—moody, driven, and almost mythically talented—as he attempts to capture the elusive and often punishing American dream. See how this athlete's most daunting challenge becomes how he can survive the complex forces outside of the ring.

## Book Information

File Size: 2608 KB

Print Length: 192 pages

Publisher: Picador (June 3, 2014)

Publication Date: June 3, 2014

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00ID8G848

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #413,624 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #36

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## Customer Reviews

"A Cuban Boxer's Journey" describes Guillermo Rigondeaux as a "canary in the coalmine" as he ventures from elite status in Cuba as a two-time Olympic champion, to Fidel Castro's "traitor" after a failed defection attempt in Brazil of 2007. Then, in 2009, this story takes a profound turn as Rigondeaux steps onto a smuggler's boat as hugely lucrative human cargo and essentially shipwrecks into the American dream four years later when he routes boxing's 2012 "fighter of the year" Nonito Donaire. But whatever success Rigondeaux enjoys in America he's haunted by what Butler describes as Cuba's answer to "Sophie's Choice," whereby he abandoned his home and country and family to enjoy the riches of America. The decision that faced Rigondeaux is an all too ordinary Cuban impossible choice, but his own minefield entering one of the most distilled versions of capitalism with pro-boxing is enthralling. Rigondeaux is facing some of the most dangerous men inside a ring, yet outside that ring he's vulnerable to forces he's never encountered in his homeland. It's a comprehensive, daring, powerful tale that transcends sports and politics and finds the human beings held hostage and caught in the crosshairs. "Would you rather fight for Don King or Fidel Castro?" is just such a marvelous place to boil down Cuban and American culture and values. Very recommended.

Brin-Jonathan Butler is an astonishing young sportswriter. HeÃfÂçÃ â Ñ â„çs interviewed Mike Tyson in his home, got the last interview with Cuban boxing hero Teofilo Stevenson before his death, filmed renowned coach Freddie Roach and recorded beautiful, crazy human smuggler Gary Hyde, bringing a profound compassion for his subjects that seems to have opened many doors. Here, heÃfÂçÃ â Ñ â„çs entranced by boy-wonder Rigondeaux, and followed him all over the globe after he defected on a smugglerÃfÂçÃ â Ñ â„çs boat from Cuba. But this book is much more than the tale of an Olympic champion giving up his home for the American Dream. With a sure hand and a whole lot of courage, Butler takes the reader inside both the dream and the nightmare of America and Cuba, showing the cost in broken hearts on both sides. The writing bleeds bright red, despite the frequent wit and humor, and seeps into you and both warms and chills. Mainly, this book pulses with life and humanity, and is not to be missed. ItÃfÂçÃ â Ñ â„çs a whole lot of fun, too.

Excellent short book on Guillermo Rigondeaux, the Cuban boxing enigma. Built around the writers' interviews and interactions with Rigondeaux before his defection to after his triumph of defeating P4P list member Nonito Donaire, the book is well-written. Also included are interviews with several Cuban Olympian Gold medalists who stayed on the island. Highly recommended.

A really great read for any boxing fan. Rigondeaux is pound for pound one of the best fighters in the game yet he gets way too little recognition.

Butler dives deep into the darkness of human smuggling and comes back up for air with incredible clarity on the human cost of enormous profits behind Cuban athletes leaving island. Staggering work!

Incredible, incredible book. Looking forward to Rigondeaux's next fight and Butler's next book.

Devastatingly good. Could not put the book down. So well written and inspiring as fck.

Great e book on Rigo's journey.

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