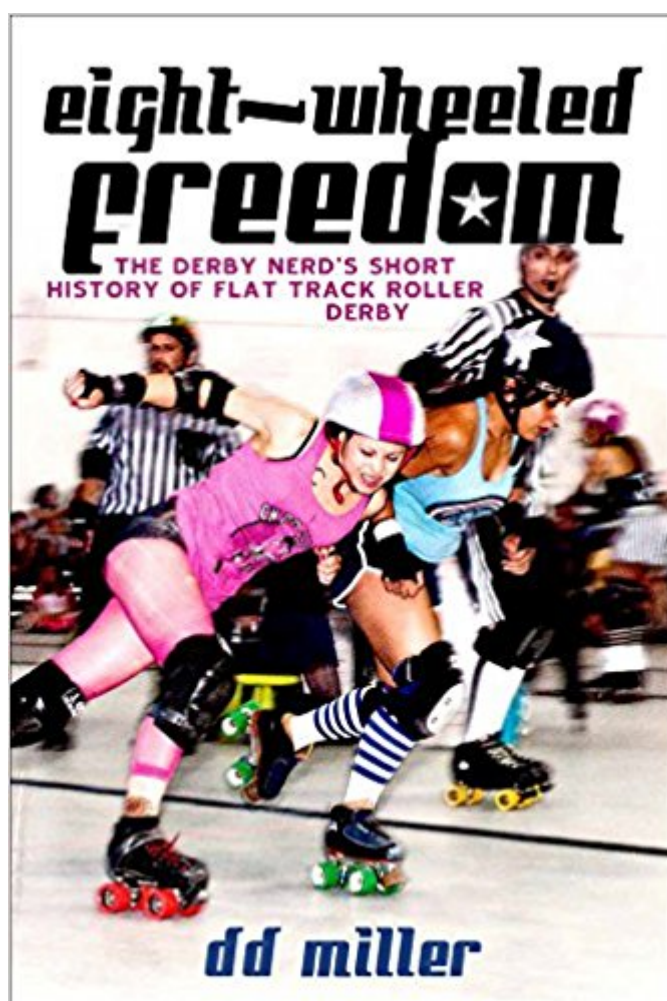


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# Eight-Wheeled Freedom: The Derby Nerd's Short History Of Flat Track Roller Derby



## Synopsis

D. D. Miller is fascinated by roller derby. As the Derby Nerd he has been covering roller derby since 2009, travelling to games across Canada and the United States, including two world championships, reporting back to an ever-growing audience the details of the sport. In this entertaining and thorough book he explains roller derby to newcomers and charts the sport's rise from small groups of women looking for people to skate with over the Internet to the world presence it is today. Along the way he considers roller derby's roots in Riot Grrrl and DIY culture, and the importance of the LGBTQ community both inside and outside of the sport. This is a warm, thoughtful look at a sport that Miller understands intimately, which takes us beyond the costumes and showmanship, into the heart of what he feels may be the first truly feminist sport.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The bright spots come when Miller gets personal, describing the scenes unfolding around him at big matches or interviews with some of the best players." - Toronto Star "In this fast-paced work of non-fiction, Miller explores roller derby's roots in Riot Grrrl, DIY ethos, the LGBTQ community, and the sport's presence today." - Hamilton Magazine

D. D. Miller is originally from Nova Scotia but has lived, worked and studied all across the country. His work has appeared in a number of journals and anthologies including The Malahat Review, The Fiddlehead, and Eleven Eleven: Journal of Literature and Art. His first collection of short stories

David Foster Wallace Ruined My Suicide and Other Stories was released in 2014. As the Derby Nerd, Miller is known around North America for his writing and commentary on roller derby, one of the world's fastest growing sports. He lives in Toronto.

While this book comes from a Canadian point of view and includes a lot of history of Canadian derby, it focuses on derby in general and also covers international and American derby. I've read a lot of other derby books, and what they all seem to miss is what is made clear here. Derby changed at the WFTDA 2009 Championships with the Oly Rollers coming out with a hyper-athletic team and Denver came out with slow derby, a huge strategic revolution. With this, derby became less theater and punk rock and more sport. For a male writer, Miller actually writes more about the feminist aspect of the sport than the other derby books I've read by female authors. Perhaps it's good that he's writing from a non-skater point of view (albeit as an announcer he has an insider perspective). Derby is such a fast growing sport, we need to document everything and this is missing from the sport. I'd like to know more about the history and evolution of the London and VRDL leagues, the LA league, Rose City, etc. How did VRDL come up with the tripod or did they take it from someone else? Who was the first to brace or backwards block? Who was the first to play offensive blocking? He also explained some oddities in the sport like taking a knee or lying on the track. I hope he writes a follow up book in a few years and keeps documenting derby history, and/or someone else comes along to write about it. As much as everything is photographed and videotaped, we still need experts to assist us in figuring out what we're seeing, what's important to watch, what the context and history is, etc. This book is a great first step.

This book is an informative, well-written, easy read, and should be added to every derby person's essential reading list.

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