

Unit 3: I can analyze how sports have been used as a social and political platform for larger issues in society and the world.

Sports as a Social & Political Platform

The Big Picture

- Sports are not isolated from other parts of society.
- Athletes, teams, and coaches often use their role in sports to open a discussion on a larger social or political issue.
- Some choose this role, others it is chosen for them.

What do you think?

- When have you seen sports being used as a platform for a larger political or social issue?

Olympics

- The largest international sporting event.
- Not just about sports
- Think back to the beginning of the semester and the *Real Olympics* documentary.
 - What were some examples of the Olympics as a stage for political or social issues?

Berlin 1936: The 'Nazi Olympics'

Background

- Nazi Germany used the Olympic Games for propagandistic purposes.
 - Desired Image of Germany:
 - New
 - Strong
 - United
- Hid anti-Semitism, racist policies, and growing military



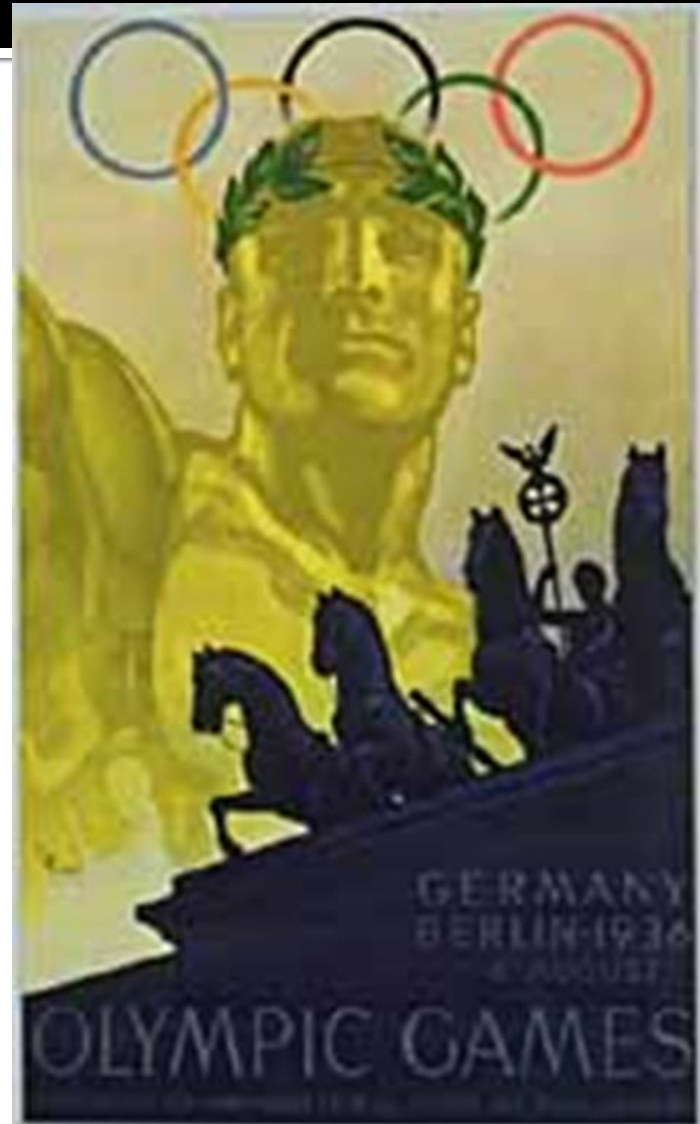
Decision to Give Germany an Olympics



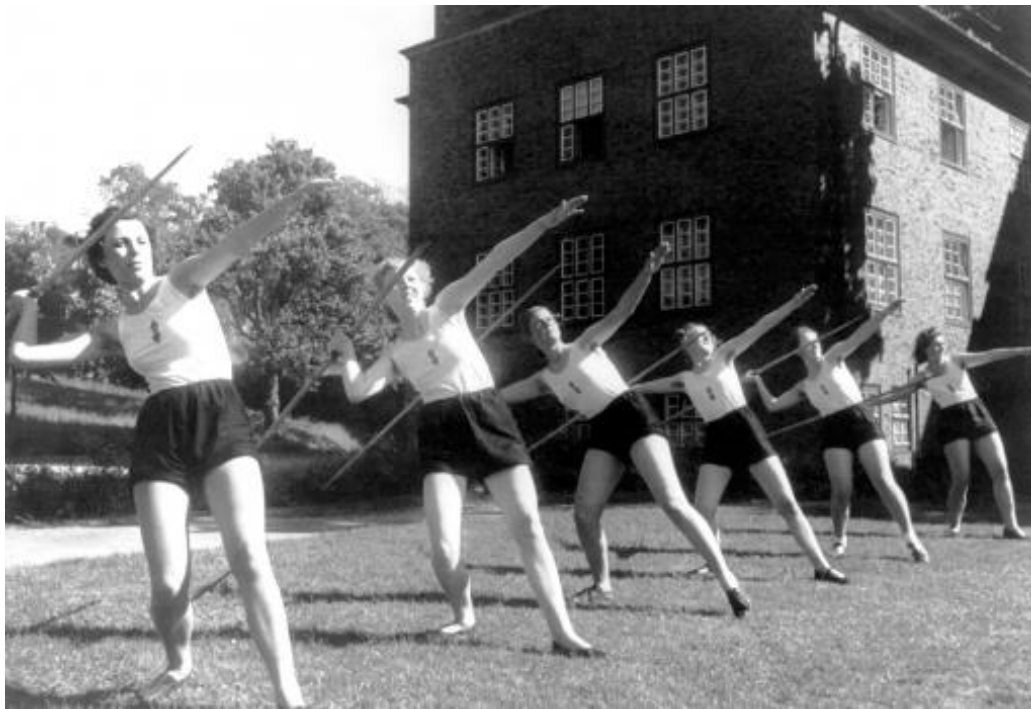
- Decided in 1931
- Way to welcome Germany back to the global community, post WWI
- Hitler became Chancellor two years later
 - Democracy turned to Dictatorship
- Persecuted:
 - Jews
 - Roma Gypsies
 - Political Opponents
- Persecution extended to sports

Aryans as the 'Ideal' Athlete

- Myth of racial superiority & physical prowess
- Physically fit
- Heroic



Aryans as the 'Ideal' Athlete



- April 1933: Aryans only in German sports
- Jewish athletes and other persecuted groups were excluded
- Forced to turn to underfunded, segregated facilities

Boycott Movement

- First time there was a movement to boycott an Olympics
 - Basis was the poor human rights record in Germany
- Movement failed, 49 countries (including US) participated in the Olympics
- Set the precedent for the future
 - Call world's attention to human rights abuses in Olympic host country.



SPORT RAYS

By HAL STRAIGHT

EVER since the time King Nebuchadnezzar II deported the Jews to Babylon, I think it was about 587 B.C., this race has been sort of booted around and about so that even now they are still a racial football.

At random I recall from my school days fetchin' up that the Spanish, during the middle ages, would have none of these keen business men; then the Plantagenet Kings tried to throw them out of England but when they up and took all their cash with them England was so poor they allowed them to come back again.

Before the war the Russians wouldn't allow the Jews even a job as a Volga boatman or sulphur digger in Siberia and now, after all these years of persecution, Germany takes a crack at this scattered but sensational race and hangs a smallpox sign on all of them.

This is not an excuse to prove that those long hours after school to eradicate undone homework for Historian R. R. Kersey really brought results. It is an entree to the Olympic Games question where Germany has decided all Jews are on a blacklist and won't be tolerated.

Shylock wanted a pound of flesh and now in a day, of what is supposed to be advanced civilization, Germany wants a whole race of it.

It has come to pass that the Jew has been accepted in most all countries, particularly English speaking countries. They are firmly established, very firmly. They vote, and generally they are quite ordinary citizens.

Their cliques no doubt are resultant of years of persecution and disrespect, but that is neither here nor there.

Americans Naturally Hollering Loud

Neither is it here nor there that you may or may not care for this race. The point is they have been accepted in our affairs and in the United States, where you have a mixed sort, their prominence has entered into sport so that a great part of the Yankee Olympic games' attack will be Jewish.

So naturally the American are making an awful holler about Germany's threat to blackball the Jews from the games. This holler has been going on in the press for some time. Up till now this department has heeded the Jewish question not, because big sport affairs nowadays have a hab't of stirring up controversy for publicity reasons and the past has proven that neither feelings nor race is spared.

However, it appears Herr Hitler is not fooling when he says the Jews must stay away from his door. In addition all the controversy in the States regarding boycott by them of the Olympic games, both pro and con, is serious.



Herr Hitler

The Olympics Don't Belong to Hitler

Personally, now, I think it is a serious affair myself. No doubt you do, too. A game is a game, no matter the color or creed. All men are equal at the start of a game, and have always been considered so in the Olympics.

In addition, the first purpose of the Olympic games—now rather obsolete it seems, as it is only an excuse for international advertising—was to further athletics. The Olympics were supposed to supply incentive to young blood streams and thus induce more to take part in health giving exercises.

So for this reason alone there should be no exclusion of the Jews at the Olympics in Germany next year. Primarily they are as good as their athletic ability.

Then, too, we have accepted the Jews in everyday life. If they fit in with our scheme of things, no matter what is their status in Germany, who is Herr Hitler to say they should be excluded from the games? The Olympics do not belong to Hitler, nor Germany. They belong to the world and are just being staged in Germany at that country's request because it brings great beneficial returns. Hitler is being done a favor.

Beautiful Tradition Calls for Boycott

So in conclusion of this subject, which I dislike dealing with, I suggest all the flags be put together, made into a nice bright blanket and wrapped around Herr Hitler's head, thus boycotting his athletic plans and waiting for the Olympic games until another year.

Nobody has the right to interfere with such a beautiful tradition as the Olympics.

A. C. H.—Did Frank Boucher ever play professional hockey in Vancouver?

Boucher played for Frank Patrick's Vancouver team until they were all sold to the East and has been with the Rangers ever since.

E. J. J.—Is Arnold Henderson, former Varsity basketballer, coach of Edmonton Grads?

Henderson at present is assistant coach of the Grads. He will help Percy Paige until after the Olympic games when Paige will quit. He just wants another trip. Incidentally, Henderson is doing okay with Paige.

Hidden Racist Policies

- Most anti-Jewish signs were removed during the games
- Newspapers toned down anti-Semitic rhetoric

ANTI-JEWISH SIGNS DOWN FOR OLYMPICS

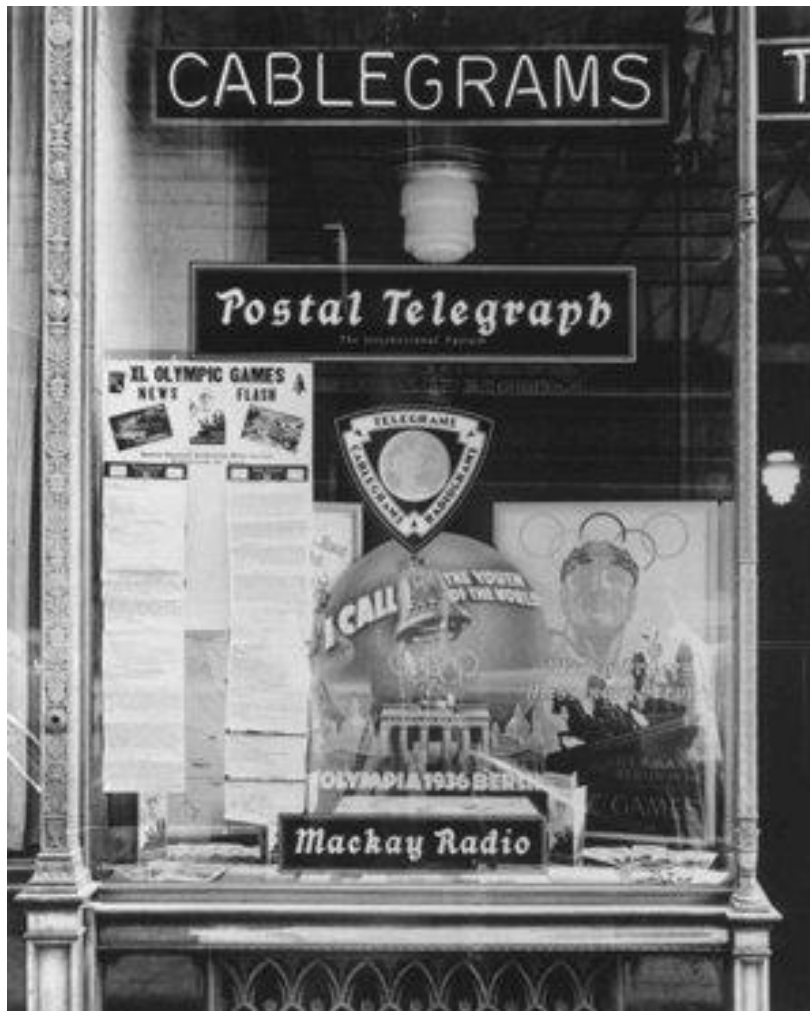
Hitler Promises to Remove the
Placards During the Winter
and Summer Games.

AMERICAN GROUPS SCORED

Baillet-Latour Calls the Move
Not to Compete Political
and 'Based on Lies.'

Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

Using the Olympics for Politics



- Propaganda
- Germany wanted to use the Olympic Games to present a false image of Germany as a peaceful and tolerant
 - Attempt to convince tourists and foreign journalists

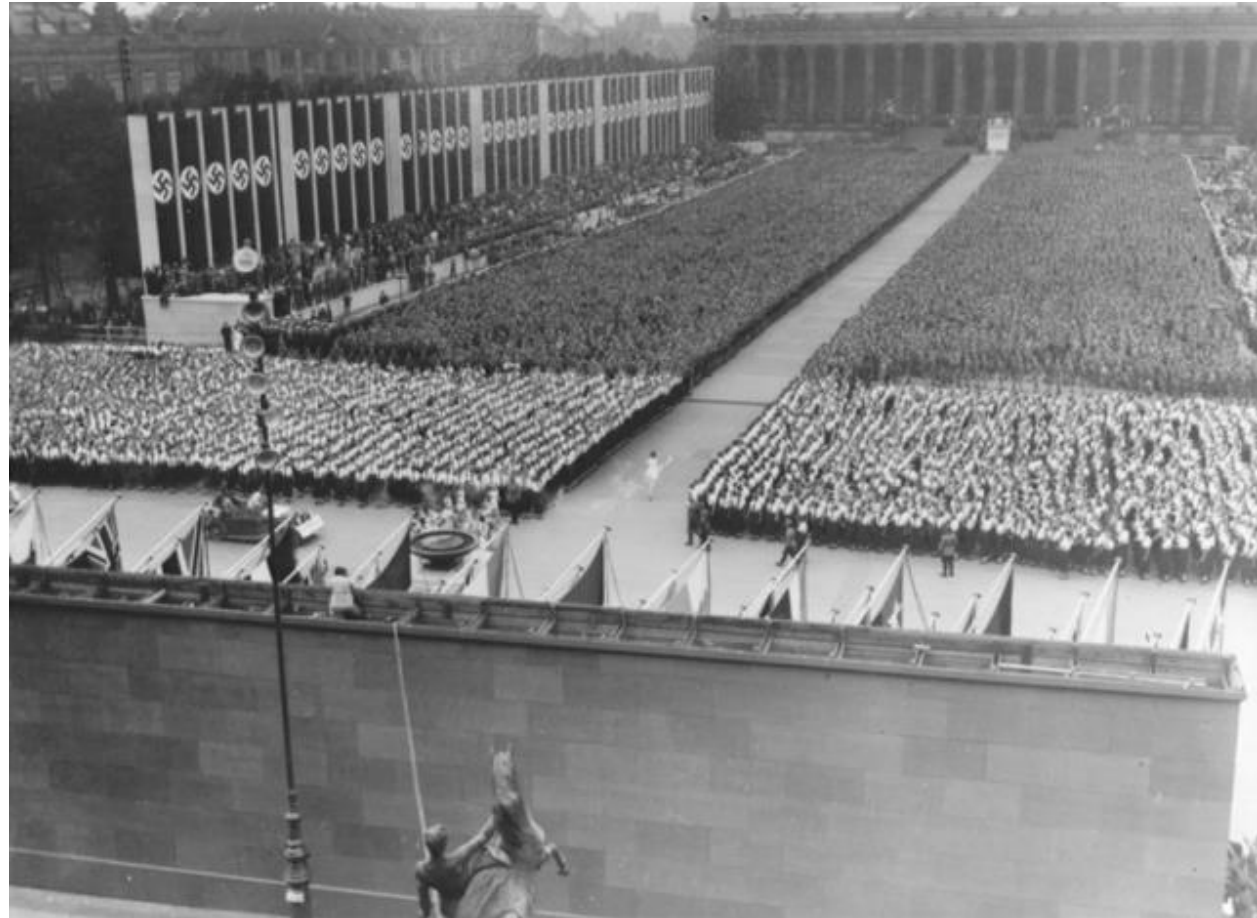
Using the Olympics for Politics

- Preparations for the Games:
 - New Sports Complex
 - Olympic flags and swastikas
 - 800 gypsies were arrested and removed from Berlin the month before the Games began



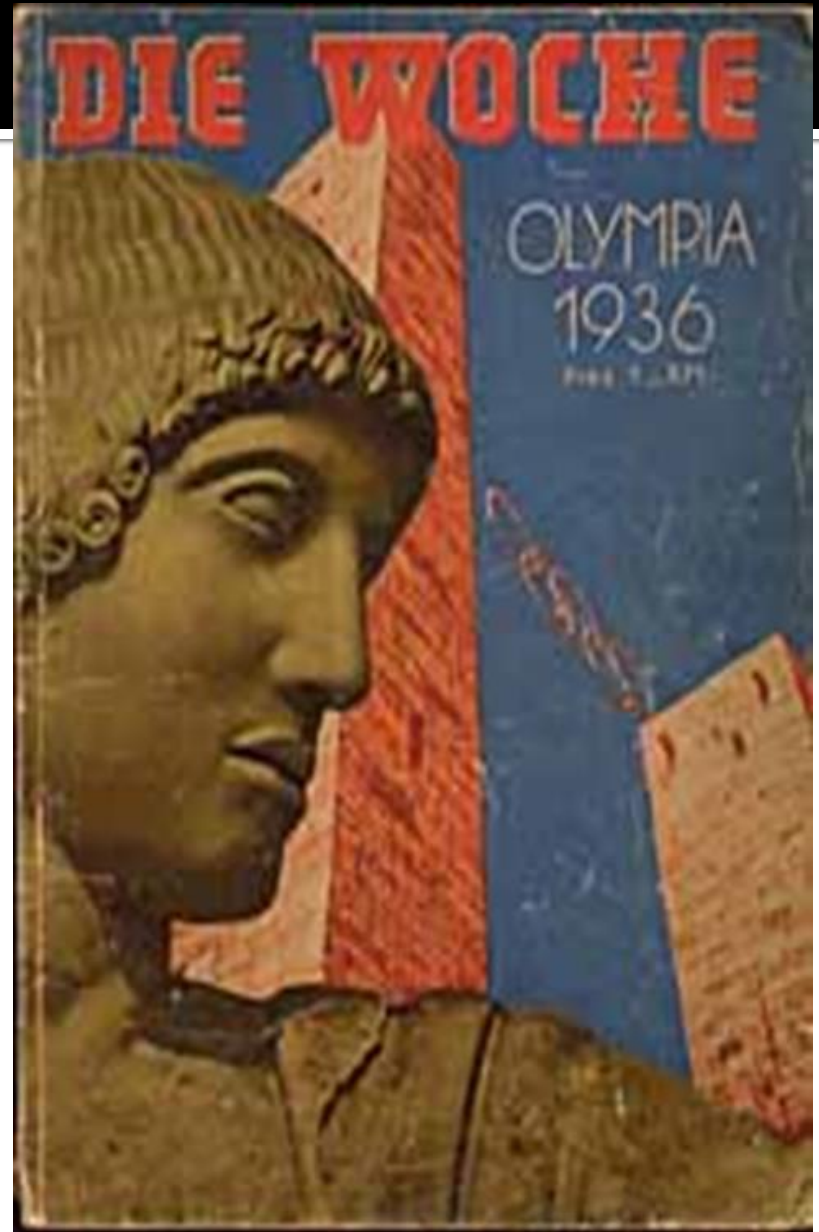
Beginning of the Games

- Hitler opened the games
- 49 nations marched in alphabetically
 - Largest Olympics yet
- New tradition:
 - Olympics torch relay



German Propaganda within the Games

- Promoted Olympics with colorful posters & magazines
- Imagery drew link between Ancient Greek and German Athletes
 - Symbolized Nazi myth that Germany was rightful heir to 'Aryan' culture
 - Emphasized ideal of heroic, blue-eyed blonds



Jewish Athletes at 1936 Olympics

- Helene Mayer
 - Part Jewish, allowed to represent Germany
 - Germany's attempt to placate international opinion
 - Silver medal in fencing
 - Gave Nazi salute on the podium
 - Only Jewish athlete allowed to compete for Germany



Jewish Athletes at 1936 Olympics



- Nine Jewish athletes won medals at the 1936 Berlin Games
- Many European and American Jewish athletes were pressured to boycott the Olympics

African American Athletes

- It was thought that victories by African American athletes would undermine German racism
- Also hoped it would foster a new sense of black pride at home



African American Athletes



- America sent 18 African American athletes to Berlin
 - 16 men, 2 women
- 3x the number who had competed at the Los Angeles Games in 1932

African American Athletes

- African American Athletes suffered discrimination at home
- Opportunities in sports were limited at college and professional levels
- Journalists criticized the irony in opposing discrimination against foreign athletes, but not caring about it at home
- All African American athletes who competed came from:
 - Northern Universities
 - Mostly White Universities
 - Showed the inferior equipment and facilities found at black colleges.

African American Athletes

- Won 14 medals in Berlin
- Jesse Owens
 - Hero of the Olympics
 - 4 gold medals
 - 100 & 200 meter dash, long jump, and 4x100 relay
 - Olympic record in Long Jump



German Victories

- Won the most medals of any nation
- German organization and hospitality won praise from visitors
- Most newspaper reports echoed the idea that Germany was “more human again”



German Propaganda after the Games



- “Olympia” 1938
 - Controversial documentary released internationally
 - Directed by German filmmaker & nazi sympathizer Leni Riefenstahl
 - Commissioned by the Nazis