

MORE THAN JUST **GAMES**

Canada & the 1936 Olympics

TEACHER'S GUIDE



VANCOUVER
HOLOCAUST
EDUCATION CENTRE



The content of this teacher's guide is based on the exhibits *More Than Just Games: Canada & the 1936 Olympics* and *Framing Bodies: Sport & Spectacle in Nazi Germany*, produced by the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre, © 2009.

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Cover image: A Berlin street during the 1936 Summer Olympics. – *Carl and Liselott Diem Archive*

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MORE THAN JUST GAMES: CANADA & THE 1936 OLYMPICS

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FRAMING BODIES: SPORT & SPECTACLE IN NAZI GERMANY

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INTRODUCTION

In 1936, Adolf Hitler's regime camouflaged its racism and militarism while hosting the Winter and Summer Olympics. To coincide with the significant "teaching moment" presented by the 2010 Vancouver Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre (VHEC) proudly developed two innovative exhibits — *More Than Just Games: Canada & the 1936 Olympics and Framing Bodies: Sport & Spectacle in Nazi Germany* — examining the controversies, achievements and consequences related to Canada's participation in the 1936 Olympic Games.

As one of the first points of intersection between Canada and the Nazi state, these Olympics provide a rich topic of study for teachers and students across Canada, and beyond the duration of the 2010 Games. The exhibits and companion website offer insights into the Nazis' antisemitic and exclusionary policies, Canada's participation in the Games, its response to the international boycott debate and the experiences of individual athletes. The relationship between athletics, politics and visual culture during the 1936 Games is also explored.

The lessons in this teacher's guide, which can be adapted for grades 6 to 12, provide links between the online exhibit and the classroom. Five lessons - which can stand alone or grouped as a unit - provide an excellent complement to the

study of the Holocaust and Canada's response to Nazism, as well as a consideration of individual and collective moral decision-making.

Several of the activities facilitate student engagement with the dilemmas of individual Canadian athletes — Jewish, non-Jewish and Afro-Caribbean — and the stories of German athletes barred from competition because of Nazi racial ideology. The writings of Matthew Halton, a Canadian journalist who wrote about Nazi Germany for the *Toronto Daily Star* in 1933 and 1936, are featured throughout the resource.

An investigation of primary source material fosters historical thinking, critical thinking and media literacy skills in students, with objectives corresponding to six concepts integral to historical thinking outlined by the Benchmarks of Historical Thinking Project: *historical significance, evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspective and ethical dimensions of history*.

For more information about these historical thinking concepts, please visit: www.histori.ca/benchmarks.

Additional Holocaust education resources can be found on the VHEC's website: www.vhec.org.

THE NAZI STATE

OBJECTIVE

Students learn about the Nazis' early policies of persecution and consider what the reports of one Canadian journalist reveal about the Nazi state.

Links to Historical Thinking Concepts:

- *Use Primary Source Evidence* - Students respond to Matthew Halton's eyewitness reports. What do they convey about Nazi Germany?
- *Analyze Cause & Consequence* - How did the Nazis' early persecution of Jews contribute to the Holocaust?
- *Take Historical Perspective* - How is our understanding of Halton's reporting and warnings affected by to our knowledge of the Holocaust that followed?

A SILENT CONVERSATION

Let students explore this section of the website or pre-assign *Student Reading: The Nazi State*, which provides contextual information for Halton's reporting.

Introduce Matthew Halton to students and explain that they are going to read excerpts from his reports about Nazi Germany.

Before the "silent conversation" activity begins, explain that, for the first two parts of this process, there is to be absolute silence. All communication will be done in writing. Students should be told that they will be given time later to speak in pairs and as a class. Ask students if they have questions before the activity starts to minimize interruptions once the silence has begun.

Students work in pairs. Distribute a copy of *Document: Matthew Halton Reports* to each pair, as well as a large sheet of paper. Each student will also need a marker or pen.

Pairs read the text in silence. After both students in each pair have read, they comment on the text, and ask questions of each other by writing on their paper. The written conversation should first focus on the text but can stray to wherever students take it. Students should be given approximately 15 minutes for this step.

Still working in silence, students leave their partners and walk around reading the other sheets of papers. Students bring their marker or pen with them and write comments or further questions on other students' papers. The length of time for this step should be based on the number of groups and your knowledge of the students' learning styles.

The silence is broken. The pairs meet back at their own paper. They should look at any comments written by others. Now they can have a free, verbal conversation about the text, their own comments, what they read on other papers, and comments their fellow students wrote back to them.

SECTION 1

THE NAZI STATE (CONTINUED)

CLASS DISCUSSION

Debrief the process with the class. The discussion can touch upon the process (the difficulties of remaining silent, for instance) and delve deeper into the content by using the prompts on the sheets of paper to elicit students' thoughts.

Additional questions to consider:

- What do Halton's writings contribute to our understanding of Nazi Germany?
- How do you imagine Canadians reading Halton's articles in the *Toronto Daily Star* in 1933 and 1936 responded to his reports?
- Based on Halton's writings, do you think Canada should have participated in the 1936 Olympics? Why or why not?
- Are there any events covered in the media today that are comparable to Matthew Halton's coverage of the 1936 Olympics? How do you react to these reports?

WRITTEN REFLECTION

In 1933, Halton wrote: "What else is in store for them [the Jews of Germany], apart from what the history of this year has already recorded will soon be known."

At this time, it was impossible to know that the outcome of the Nazis persecution of Jews would be the Holocaust - the murder of six million men, women and children. Yet signs of persecution were evident, and reported by Halton for Canadian newspapers.

Students write a journal entry in response to Halton's warning. Suggested prompts:

- Based on Halton's reporting and the background reading, how do you think the Nazis' persecution of Jews between 1933-36 contributed to the Holocaust?
- In what way did events reported by Matthew Halton forewarn of the Holocaust?
- How does knowing about the genocide that followed affect your reading of Halton?

EXTENSION: EYEWITNESS & JOURNALIST

Students write a news report about a social justice issue in their school or community. They should incorporate first-hand observations and make a case for why it important for people to be aware of their issue.

LESSON 1

STUDENT READING: THE NAZI STATE

A poster intended to generate excitement about the Berlin Olympics shows Adolf Hitler and Reich Sports Office Director Hans von Tschammer und Osten studying the site of the 1936 Berlin Summer Games. – USHMM, courtesy of John Loaring



In 1931, the International Olympic Committee chose Germany to host the 1936 Winter and Summer Olympics. The decision symbolized Germany's return to the international community after its defeat in the First World War.

The liberal democracy of the Weimar Republic collapsed shortly afterwards. By January 1933, National Socialist (Nazi) leader Adolf Hitler had been appointed Chancellor. On March 23, 1933, the Enabling Act was forced through the Reichstag, the German parliament, turning the fragile democracy into a fascist dictatorship.

According to Nazi ideology, Germans and those of northern European descent were considered "Aryans" and members of the "master race." Jews, along with Roma and Sinti ("Gypsies") and Africans, were classified as "inferior" and declared enemies of the German state.

Hitler did not initially want Germany to host the Olympics because he disagreed with the Olympic ideals of international cooperation and peace. However, the Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, convinced Hitler that the Olympics were an opportunity to gain international approval for the Nazi government. Hitler became a strong supporter of the Olympic Games, while the Propaganda Ministry set up a special committee to promote the Olympics.

Meanwhile, Hitler's government created laws and policies that excluded Jews from all areas of public life, including sports:

- On April 1, 1933, the Nazis declared a boycott of Jewish businesses, with guards standing in front of Jewish-owned businesses and stores to prevent customers from entering. This was an attempt to remove Jews from the cultural and commercial life of Germany and cultivate popular acceptance for further anti-Jewish measures.
- On April 7, 1933, the government created the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service to exclude Jews and political opponents from university and governmental positions. More laws were created during the following weeks to remove Jewish lawyers, judges, doctors and teachers from their posts.

STUDENT READING: THE NAZI STATE (CONTINUED)

- On April 25, 1933, the Nazi Sports Office ordered public sport and gymnastic organizations to implement an “Aryans only” policy. Jewish athletes were excluded from German sports clubs and not permitted to compete against non-Jews.
- In the fall of 1935, the Nazi government implemented the Nuremberg Laws. The laws classified Jews as a race, instead of as a religious group, and stripped them of basic civil rights. Even non-practicing Jews or those who had previously converted to Christianity were defined as Jews by the Nuremberg Laws.

Aryan: Term perverted by the Nazis to mean a so-called master race. The idealized “Aryan” was blond, blue-eyed, tall and muscular. The original term refers to a people speaking an Indo-European dialect.

Boycott: A form of activism involving the act of abstaining from using, buying, or interacting with a person, organization or country as an expression of protest, usually for political reasons.

Fascism: Ideology supporting a form of government based on a one-party dictatorship, militarism, ultra-nationalism, absolute conformity, and intolerance for civil and human rights.

International Olympic Committee (IOC): Founded in 1894, the IOC is an international, non-governmental, non-profit organization that is in charge of the organization of the Summer and Winter Olympic games.

Nazi: A member of the National Socialist German Workers’ Party (NSDAP) founded in 1919 and brought to power in 1933 under Adolf Hitler. It can also be used as an adjective to describe something of or pertaining to the Nazis.

Propaganda: A form of communication designed to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes or behaviour of its audience. Promotes biased information, ideas or practices and is transmitted in speeches, slogans, posters, newspapers, films, etc.

Weimar Republic: The parliamentary democracy that was established in Germany in 1919 (after Germany lost the First World War) and ended in 1933 when Hitler passed the Enabling Act to change the German government into a dictatorship.

DOCUMENT: MATTHEW HALTON REPORTS

Matthew Halton traveled to and wrote about Nazi Germany for the *Toronto Daily Star* immediately after the Nazis came to power:



Matthew Halton, 1930s. - Collection of David Halton

“I saw a parade of hundreds of children, between the ages of seven and sixteen, carrying the swastika and shouting at intervals, ‘The Jews must be destroyed.’ ”

“My guess is...that Hitler has come to stay until he is displaced by assassination, civil war or a disastrous foreign war.”

— March 30, 1933

“The least that a Jew in Germany can suffer today for the crime of being a Jew is the loss of the ordinary rights of citizenship. What else is in store for them, apart from what the history of this year has already recorded, will soon be known.”

— October 27, 1933

He also wrote about the 1936 Winter Olympics:

“They were so true to the Olympic ideal that before the games started they took down all those anti-Jewish signs which once you could see from the train when travelling from Munich south.”

— February 29, 1936

“The most notorious Jewbaiter of Germany is the unspeakable Julius Streicher...His newspaper, *Der Stürmer*, is full of obscene attacks on the Jews...For the period of the winter games this paper was toned down in South Germany, and in Garmisch-Partenkirchen I couldn’t buy it at all. But here in the Saar you can see *Der Stürmer* on every street corner, pick it up in every cafe and beer-room.”

— March 6, 1936

While covering Berlin Summer Games, Halton slipped away from the Olympic events to meet and interview individuals who had been in concentration camps. One of those Halton interviewed was a Jewish piano player:

Jewish piano player - “There is nothing of the essential me that they could hurt with all their rods.”

Halton - “Why do you speak so carelessly? Aren’t you afraid you’ll go back to a concentration camp?”

Jewish piano player - “I know I’ll go back, I know that a year from now I’ll be dead. That’s why I speak my mind.”

THE BOYCOTT DEBATE

OBJECTIVE

Students examine primary sources reflecting different perspectives on the Canadian debate to boycott the 1936 Olympics in order to develop an understanding of the issues at stake.

Links to Historical Thinking Concepts:

- *Analyze Cause and Consequence* - Students discuss the effects of boycotts as a form of activism.
- *Use Primary Source Evidence* - Students analyze a political cartoon, a petition and an op-ed piece conveying different perspectives on Canada's participation in the 1936 Olympics.
- *Take Historical Perspective* - Students consider the boycott debate from the perspective of Canadians in 1935/6.
- *Understand the Ethical Dimensions of History* - Was Canada's decision to attend the 1936 Games justifiable?
- *Identify Continuity and Change* - What other Olympics have been the subject of boycotts and controversies?

THINKING ABOUT BOYCOTTS

As a class, brainstorm a definition of boycott: *a form of activism involving the act of abstaining from using, buying, or interacting with a person, organization or country as an expression of protest, usually for political reasons.*

Discuss boycotts, using the following questions as a guide:

- Can students think of any examples of boycotts?
- Have any students engaged in a boycott?
- What are the motivations of boycott movements?
- Are there risks associated with boycotting something?
- Do students think boycotts are effective? Why or why not?

JOURNAL ACTIVITY

Let students explore this website or pre-assign [Student Reading: The Olympic Movement](#) which provides contextual information for the activity.

Copy and distribute [Documents: The Canadian Boycott Debate](#). Each student should have one document, each representing a different perspective on the boycott debate:

1) the Canadian Left, 2) the Canadian Jewish Congress and 3) pro-participation.

In journals, students reflect on the point of view represented by their document. What is the argument being presented? Is the argument persuasive? Why or why not? Which argument does the student find the most persuasive and why?

Students form groups of 2 or 3 to discuss their journals.

As a class, debrief the different perspectives reflected by the document collection.

LESSON 2

THE BOYCOTT DEBATE (CONTINUED . . .)

CLASS DEBATE

In early November 1935, a widely reported debate at the University of Manitoba addressed the issue of Canada's attendance at the Olympics. Re-stage this debate in the classroom, as a "4 Corners Debate." Students are to engage in the debate as if they are in November 1935.

Present students with the statement: *Canada should participate in the 1936 Olympics.*

Ask students if they agree or disagree, and to write a paragraph or list of points explaining their opinion.

In the meantime, post four signs around the room: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Ask students to stand under the sign that describes their opinion. Allow for debate; encourage students to justify and explain their position; students are able to move between positions.

Debrief the process. Restage the debate from the perspective of the present day, based on the following statement: *Canada should have participated in the 1936 Olympics.*

In the post-debate discuss how shifting historical perspectives affected students understanding of the issues.

EXTENSION: THE POLITICS OF SPORT

The International Olympic Committee has always opposed boycott movements, claiming that the Olympics are above politics and designed to promote international cooperation. Students write an argument in support of or in opposition to this claim.

EXTENSION: OLYMPIC BOYCOTTS & CONTROVERSIES

Students select another Olympic Games that was subject to a boycott or other political controversy. They write an essay summarizing the issues at stake, considering a variety of sources in their research.

Suggested topics: Mexico City, 1968 (expression of support for the Black Power movement by African American athletes); Munich, 1972 (massacre of Israeli athletes by a Palestinian militant group); Montreal, 1976 (boycott by 26 African countries as a result of the IOC's refusal to ban New Zealand despite its rugby tour in segregated South Africa); Moscow, 1980 (boycott by the United States, West Germany and Japan in response to Soviet invasion of Afghanistan); Los Angeles, 1984 (boycott by USSR in response to Western nations' 1980 boycott of the Moscow Games); Beijing, 2008 (concern about human rights in China); Vancouver (participation of women in ski jumping and participation of nations that ban women from competing on Olympic teams).

The following resources can help students begin their research on Olympic boycotts and controversies:

- Reynolds, Paul. "Long History of Olympic Protests." BBC. April 7, 2008
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7334362.stm>
This article provides a good overview of the history of Olympic boycotts to introduce students to the topic.
- Politics and the Olympics – CBC Digital Archives
<http://archives.cbc.ca/sports/olympics/topics/3568/>
The CBC Digital Archives provides a Canadian account of politics in the Olympics from 1936 to 2008 drawing on CBC radio and television clips.

STUDENT READING: THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT

THE GAMES BEGIN

In 1894, French educator and athletic enthusiast Baron Pierre de Coubertin hosted a meeting of representatives from nine countries at which he called for a modern revival of the ancient Olympic Games. Embracing the motto *Citius, Altius, Fortius* (Faster, Higher, Stronger), de Coubertin championed the idea of an Olympics celebrating amateur athletics and the love of sport.

AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT

De Coubertin saw the potential for the Olympics to promote international goodwill through both open competition and cultural exchange. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) was created to organize the first modern Olympic Games in Athens, Greece in the summer of 1896. Summer Olympics have been held every four years since 1896 – with the exception of the war years – and in 1924 the IOC added the Winter Games.

Cover of the official report of 1896 Athens Summer Olympics.



SPORT & NATION BUILDING

Within modern nation states, there were different attitudes towards physical activity. In Germany, Friedrich Jahn (1778-1852) saw gymnastics as a way for German boys and men to develop personal strength in order to strengthen **nationalism**. In Great Britain, educators and social reformers saw competitive sports as the way to toughen their males and teach fair play. In the first decades of the 20th century, and particularly after the First World War (1914-1918), competitive sports became more popular than gymnastics in Europe, North America and parts of Asia.

LESSON 2

STUDENT READING: THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT (CONTINUED)

SPORT IN CANADA

“To strengthen the body is to improve the vehicle of almost all our activity, and to strengthen the bodies of the nation is to strengthen the nation.”

- Henry Roxborough, Canadian author and supporter of amateur sport, 1925

Olympic supporters argued for well-ordered and regulated Games promoting competition and self-improvement. Canadians created national associations for their favorite sports. The Amateur Athletic Union of Canada was the largest of these organizations, in charge of track and field, gymnastics, handball, fencing, boxing and wrestling.

JEWS & SPORTS

“A healthy self-reliant and self-respecting Jewish generation will add credit to our community, to our city and to our country.”

- One of the justifications for the Young Men’s and Young Women’s Hebrew Association of Toronto, 1925.

As with their non-Jewish counterparts, individual Jewish athletes have challenged themselves to excel in their chosen sport. Success in sports could mean recognition in both the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds. By participating in athletics, Jews were also challenging stereotypes of Jews and Jewish bodies as “weak,” “nervous,” “feminine” and “ugly.”

CHALLENGES TO THE OLYMPICS

Between the First and Second World Wars, the political left - socialists and communists - charged governments with using Olympic competition to claim a place for their nation on the international scene, or to prove the strength of their nation to both friend and foe. Critics believed that many of the national sports organizations and the IOC promoted the interests of the upper and middle classes. They responded by creating alternative sporting associations and competitions such as the Red Sport International and the Workers’ Olympics.

FROM AMATEUR TO PROFESSIONAL

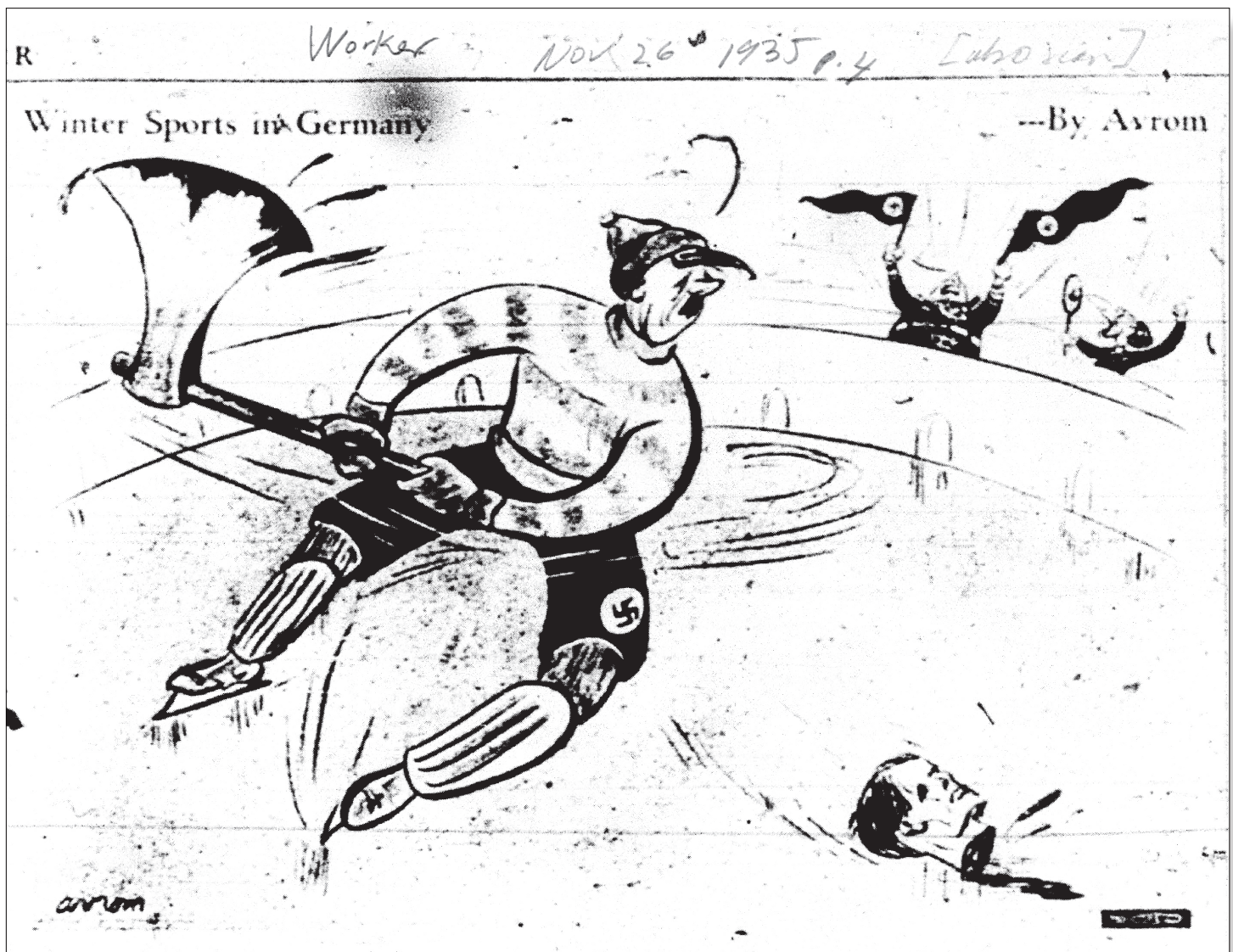
The Olympics were conceived as a competition for amateur athletes who did not earn money or receive endorsements for their participation. Amateur athletes who competed against professionals or accepted endorsements could be disqualified. With the growth of professional sports, this began to change. In 1986, the IOC allowed professional athletes to participate in the Games.

Nationalism: devotion and loyalty to one’s nation.

LESSON 2

DOCUMENTS: THE CANADIAN BOYCOTT DEBATE

DOCUMENT 1



A cartoon by Avrom in the November 25, 1935 edition of the Communist Party of Canada's newspaper, *The Worker*.

- Collection of Anna Yanovsky

LESSON 2

DOCUMENTS: THE CANADIAN BOYCOTT DEBATE

DOCUMENT 2

The text below is from a petition that was addressed to Prime Minister Richard Bennett by S. W. Jacobs, the President of the Canadian Jewish Congress, and published in the Jewish Western Bulletin, a Vancouver-based Jewish newspaper, on August 22, 1935. The petition was accompanied by a memorandum listing 69 cases of discrimination and violence under the Nazi regime.



Samuel William Jacobs, Member of Parliament and President of the Canadian Jewish Congress, 1930s. – *Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee National Archives*

“Our country [Canada] has traditionally recognized its moral and legal rights, as well as its duty to speak on the behalf of those persecuted for their religious beliefs and for minority groups or races derived of their just rights.”

“In light of the humanitarian traditions by which our Government has been guided; in light of the danger to world peace, and to democratic institutions of government in this unleashing of barbarism and race hatred, and of the threat to Canadian citizens who are Jews, that is explicit in the policy of the German Government of organizing attacks upon, and denying the rights of all Jews in Germany, we respectfully call upon the Government of Canada to protest against the racial and religious persecution that now prevail in Germany, and to take every step consistent with international practice to inform the German Government of the outraged sentiments of the Canadian people.”

“We are confident that in expressing these views, our Government will speak not only for the thousands of our brethren in this country, but for all Canadians, of all races and creeds, who have given, repeatedly, evidence of their horror of oppression and of their concern for the preservation of the fundamental rights of civilized humanity.”

LESSON 2

DOCUMENTS: THE CANADIAN BOYCOTT DEBATE

DOCUMENT 3

The text below is an excerpt from an opinion piece by Ted Reeves, a sports columnist and coach of the Queens University football team, published in the Evening Telegram on October 29, 1935.

“It may be that [...] Jews may be given the worst of it at the Berlin Olympic Games, although we do not think such will be the case. [...] To be an Olympic winner or contender, a man must have great ability, he must almost live for the sport at which he excels, he must have ambition to become the best at his athletic specialty and the courage of a real competitor.

[...]

“It is very well to say that the real spirit of sportsmanship is not in the narrow-minded hopped-up Germany of today. But what is real sportsmanship? Our notion of a sportsman is a bloke who does his best every time he pulls on his sweater and who can give or take his bumps without crying too much. Maybe other people have other definitions, but we think that any good athlete believing he has a chance to win an Olympic title and having the ambition to do so, who lets the threats of a little trouble in Berlin keep him away from the Olympic Games, well, he doesn’t rate as champion no matter how fast he can run or how high he can jump.”

Excerpt from: Kidd, Bruce. “Canadian Opposition to the 1936 Olympics in Germany.” *Canadian Journal of the History of Sport and Physical Education*, Volume 9 (December 1978).

CANADIAN ATHLETES

OBJECTIVE

Students reflect on aspects of individual identity and other factors that contribute to decision-making in times of moral crisis.

Links to Historical Thinking Concepts:

- *Take Historical Perspective* - Students anticipate the perspective of individual Canadian athletes who participated, or who chose not to participate, in the 1936 Olympics.
- *Understand the Ethical Dimensions of History* - What are the contexts that shaped athletes' decisions about whether to participate in these controversial Games?
- *Analyze Cause and Consequence* - Students assess the decisions made by Canadian athletes. What were the implications of these decisions?

CHARTING IDENTITY

Students work independently to create an identity chart filled with words and/or symbols used to describe themselves, as well as the labels others give them. Identity characteristics to include might be: gender, age, personal and physical characteristics, as well as cultural identifiers such as ties to a particular religion, class, neighbourhood, school, and nation.

Students discuss their identity charts in pairs. Consider: what does the chart reveal about you? Are there aspects of your identity and character that are difficult to communicate in the diagram?

Distribute the *Athlete Cards* to students, ensuring that each student has one card, and have them create identity charts for their individual Canadian athletes.

Students return to their pairs and debrief about their athletes. Discuss: what do you imagine the response to the question posed at the end of the card might be?

WRITTEN REFLECTION

Distribute the *Athlete Postscripts*, which reveal the fate of the athletes. Students revisit their athlete's identity chart and write a response about what they learned about their individual.

In their written reflections, student should consider the following questions:

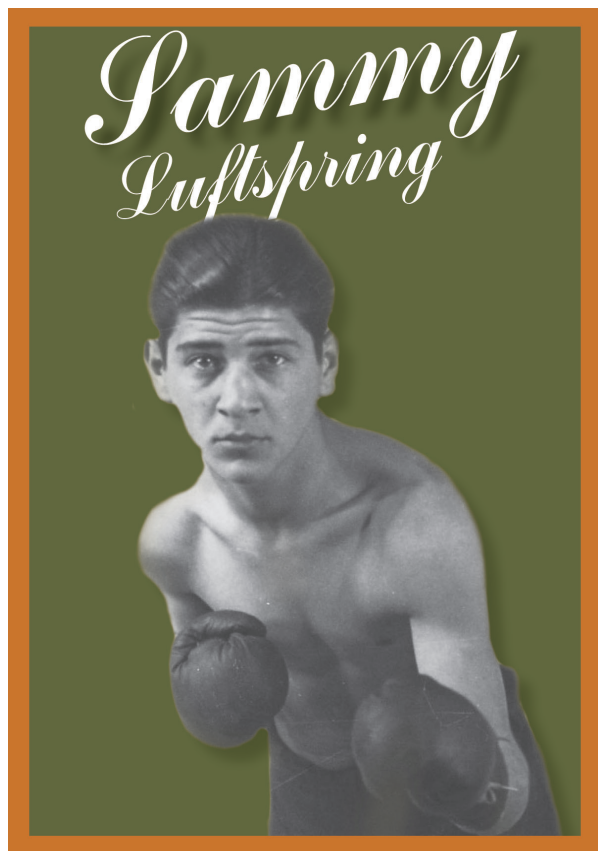
- What was your athlete's dilemma?
- Did your athlete face discrimination in Canada? If so, in what way?
- What were the considerations that influenced the decisions and actions of your athlete regarding participation in the 1936 Olympics?
- What would you have done in their position? Explain your answer.
- How does your individual's fate inform your understanding of Canada in the 1930s and, if they participated in the Games, Nazi Germany?

CLASS DISCUSSION

Teachers select one written reflection relating to each of the four athletes to read to the class.

As a class, students discuss: Do you participate in a sport and/or play on a team? What does it mean to you? How would you feel if you were competing in a setting in which there was discrimination? Have you ever faced a decision similar to those faced by the athletes in this activity? Explain how you juggled multiple, perhaps competing, concerns.

After hearing the various responses, ask students to consider the following question: How does the historical perspective of more than 70 years influence our analyses of the decisions made by the Canadian athletes?



Front image: Sammy Luftspring. Canada's Sports Hall of Fame

NAME: SAMMY LUFTSPRING

DATE & PLACE OF BIRTH: MAY 14, 1916 | TORONTO, CANADA

SPORT: BOXING

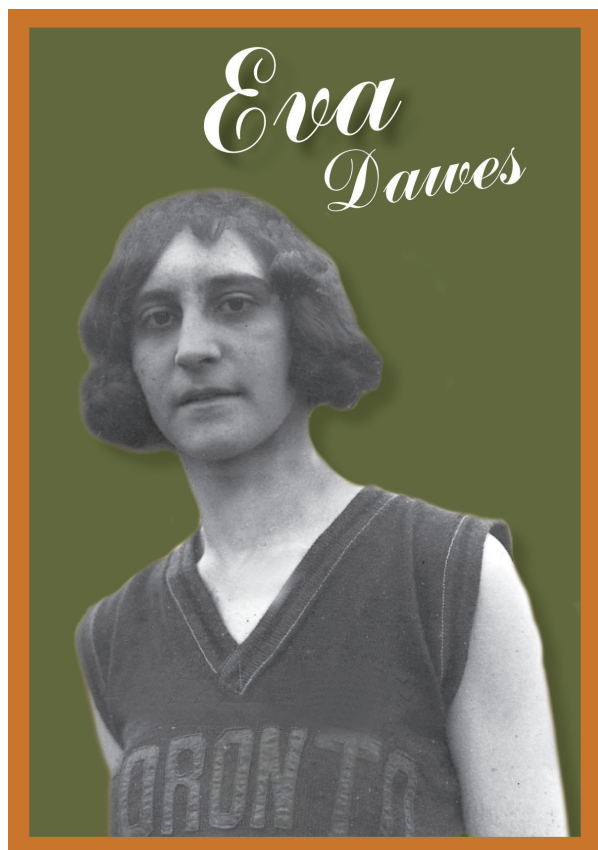
Born into a working class family in the heart of Toronto's immigrant Jewish neighbourhood, Sammy Luftspring aspired to a boxing career after seeing a match at the age of 9.

Between 1932 and 1936, Luftspring fought 105 matches with only five losses. He won many tournaments, including the Ontario amateur lightweight boxing championship in 1933, at the age of 17.

For years, Luftspring dreamed of competing at the pinnacle of amateur boxing - the Olympics. Luftspring and fellow boxer Norman "Baby" Yack planned to compete in the 1936 Olympic trials in Montreal, and go to Berlin if they made the team.

However, Luftspring's parents and the Jewish community tried to convince him that participating in Hitler's Games would be an endorsement of Nazi racist policies.

Did Sammy Luftspring fulfil his lifelong ambition of boxing at the 1936 Olympics or heed the appeals of his family and Jewish community and boycott the Games?



Front image: Eva Dawes. Canada's Sports Hall of Fame

NAME: EVA DAWES

DATE & PLACE OF BIRTH: SEPTEMBER 17, 1912 | TORONTO, CANADA

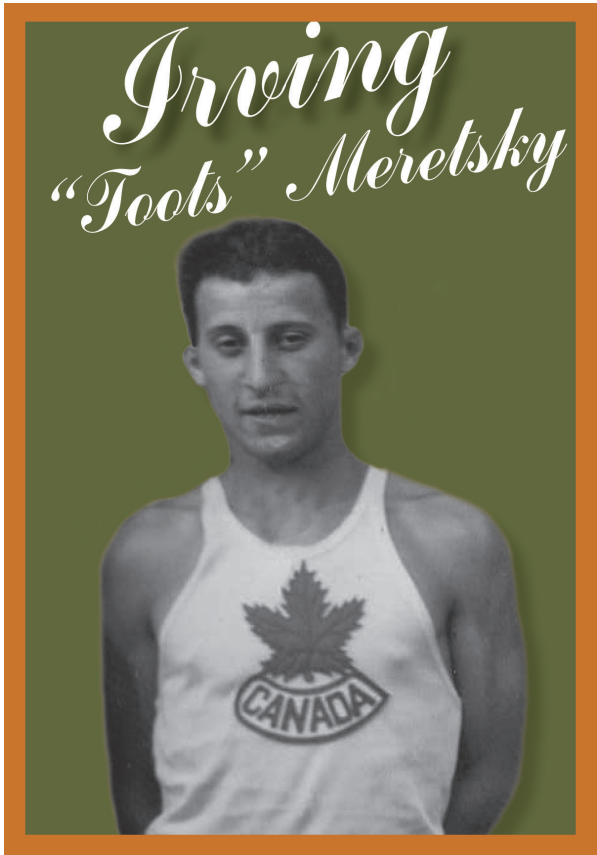
SPORT: HIGH JUMPING

Eva Dawes was a weak child. But when her father discovered that she had a gift for high jumping, he dug a pit for her in a little-used corner of a school playground. She won a bronze medal in the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles and a silver medal at the 1934 British Empire Games in London.

Eva's independent spirit led her to do what she believed in, even if it got her into trouble. In 1935, Eva competed in a sporting event in Moscow. The meet was not approved by the Amateur Athletic Union of Canada, which suspended Dawes as a result. But when the Olympic trials came up, the AAUC pleaded with Eva to apologize and compete. She refused. As far as she was concerned, she had nothing to apologize for.

Instead, Eva boycotted the Berlin Olympics, where she felt the "true meaning of sport" did not exist, and decided to attend the People's Olympiad in Barcelona.

What impact did this decision have on Eva Dawes' athletic career after the 1936 Games?



NAME: IRVING "TOOTS" MERETSKY

DATE & PLACE OF BIRTH: MAY 17, 1912 | WINDSOR, ONTARIO, CANADA

SPORT: BASKETBALL

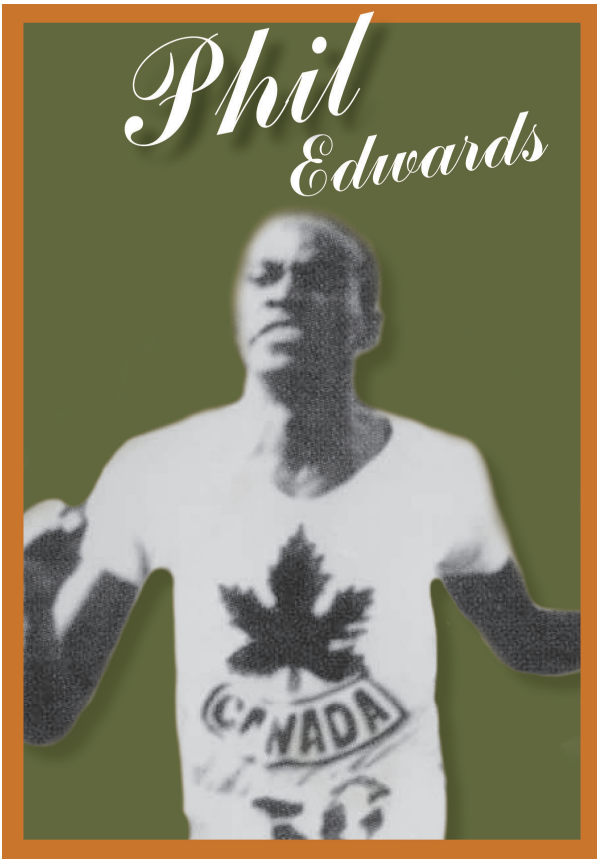
Irving "Toots" Meretsky was born in Windsor, Ontario. From 1935 to 1936, he played on the Windsor Ford V8s, who defeated the Victoria Dominoes to become the Canadian Senior Men's Champions and the representatives for Canada in the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

Meretsky was the leading scorer in the championship tournament and one of the star players of the Canadian Olympic basketball team. Canada was a basketball powerhouse at the time and the game, created by the Canadian James Naismith, was a medal sport for the first time in 1936.

Nothing was going to keep Meretsky from the Olympics - including the fact that he was the only Jewish member of a team bound for Hitler's Germany. He ventured into Jewish neighbourhoods in Berlin and was appalled to see people's fear and the signs of oppression.

Canada won the silver medal, after losing to the US in the gold medal game.

Why did it take sixty years for Irving "Toots" Meretsky to finally get his silver medal from the 1936 Games?



NAME: PHIL EDWARDS

DATE & PLACE OF BIRTH: SEPTEMBER 13, 1907
GEORGETOWN, BRITISH GUIANA

SPORT: RUNNING

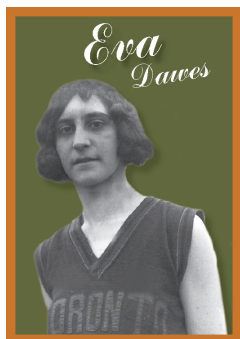
Phil Edwards won five Olympic Bronze medals for Canada at three Olympiads, including the bronze medal in the 800-metre race at the Berlin Games, for which he earned the title "man of bronze."

Born into an upper-class family in British Guiana, Edwards moved to the US in 1926 to attend New York University where he broke college records. Because he was not an American, Edwards could not race for the United States at the 1928 Olympics.

He was invited to compete for Canada and attended McGill University, where he graduated from the medical school just before competing in the 1936 Olympics.

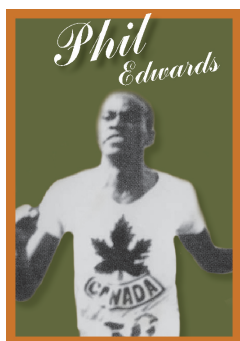
There was controversy in the Black community about participation in the "Nazi Olympics," but many saw the 1936 Games as an opportunity for athletes of African descent to disprove Nazi racist doctrines.

What did the Canadian Summer Olympic Team do when their hotel in London, England refused to accept Phil Edwards as a guest?



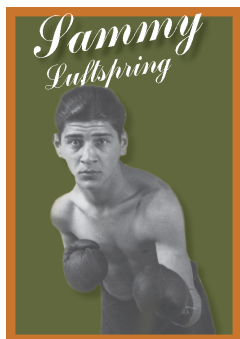
EVA DAWES

High jumper Eva Dawes returned from Europe disappointed at the cancellation of the People's Games in Barcelona. Suspended from the Amateur Athletic Union of Canada, Dawes was also prohibited from entering amateur competition in Canada. In 1937, a year after arriving back in Canada, Dawes moved to England, where she married. While she remained interested in sport, she never competed again. Dawes died in England on May 30, 2009 at the age of 96.



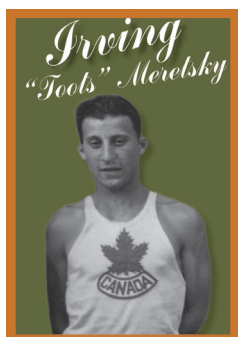
PHIL EDWARDS

Just before he left for Berlin to compete as part of Canada's Olympic track and field team, Phil Edwards was awarded a degree in medicine from McGill University. Winner of multiple medals and one of the first African-Canadians to represent Canada at the Olympics, he was also the first winner of the prestigious Lou Marsh Trophy in 1936. Edwards went on to serve in the Canadian Army during the Second World War. He earned the rank of Captain. After the war he joined the staff of Montreal's Royal Victoria Hospital and became a tropical disease expert. He was inducted into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame in 1997. Edwards passed away on September 6, 1971.



SAMMY LUFTSPRING

Shortly after returning from Europe in 1936, Sammy Luftspring gave up his amateur status and turned to professional boxing. In 1938, he won the Canadian Welterweight Championship and was ranked the third best welterweight in the world. Luftspring's hopes of challenging for the World Welterweight title were dashed when he suffered a detached retina in the ring. He was forced to give up professional boxing and turned to refereeing and business. He was inducted into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame in 1985. Luftspring died on September 27, 2000.



IRVING "TOOTS" MERETSKY

Irving Meretsky returned from the Berlin Olympics a member of the silver medal Ford V8s. For several years he continued to play for the team before becoming a player-coach in Port Alberni, British Columbia. In 1941, he returned to Windsor, where he coached amateur basketball and managed the Meretsky family-owned furniture store. He was inducted into the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame, the Ontario Sports Hall of Fame, and the Windsor/Essex County Sports Hall of Fame. Because only eight medals were available for the Canadian basketball team, Meretsky did not receive his Olympic silver medal until 1996, on the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Games. Meretsky died on May 18, 2006.

THE 1936 GAMES

OBJECTIVE

Students incorporate the story of an individual German athlete into a written expression of opinion about the 1936 Games, and reflect on the relationship between the 1936 Olympics and the Nazis' policies of persecution.

Links to Historical Thinking Concepts:

- *Establish Historical Significance* - Students assess the significance of one person, a “non-Aryan” German athlete, and consider what an individual’s story reveals about an historical moment.
- *Identify Continuity and Change* - What is the relationship between the “Olympic Pause” described by Matthew Halton and Nazi racism that preceded and followed the 1936 Olympics in Nazi Germany?
- *Use Primary Source Evidence* - Students analyze the diary of a Jewish observer of the 1936 Berlin Games.
- *Take Historical Perspective* - Students take the perspective on a “non-Aryan” German athlete during the 1936 Olympic moment.

CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW

Let students explore this section of the website or assign [*Student Reading: The 1936 Games*](#), which provide background information about the 1936 Winter and Summer Games.

Explain that students will conduct an imaginary interview with a “non-Aryan” athlete in Nazi Germany. Working in pairs, students generate a list of questions they would like to ask such an athlete.

Alternately, provide the following questions for consideration:

- How did you get involved in sports?
- How did your career as an athlete change after the Nazis come to power?
- Were you allowed to compete during the 1936 Games? Why or why not?

Distribute the [*Athlete Bios*](#), assigning one athlete to each student.

Using their questions or the questions above, students take notes during their “interview” with the athlete, generating response to their questions from the bios.

WRITE AN OP-ED PIECE

Using Matthew Halton (*See Teach & Learn: The Nazi State*) as a model, students play the role of a correspondent for a Canadian newspaper stationed in Germany during the 1936 Olympics.

Assign students the task of writing an article that includes facts about either the Winter or Summer Games, and that also expresses an opinion about the Games. Students are to incorporate their athlete interviews into their piece.

Optional: assemble the completed articles into a newspaper and circulate copies among students.

LESSON 4

THE 1936 GAMES (CONTINUED)

CLASS DISCUSSION

The 1936 Games marked a watershed moment between the Nazis ascension to power and the outbreak of the Second World War. Matthew Halton described the 1936 Olympic moment as “the Olympic pause.”

As a class, students discuss: What do you think Halton meant by this? How does learning about the 1936 Olympics contribute to your understanding of the Holocaust?

EXTENSION: THE DIARY OF VICTOR KLEMPERER

Distribute *Extension: The Diary of Victor Klemperer* to students and have them read the background information and diary excerpt.

Discuss the following as a class:

- What does Klemperer think about the Olympics?
- What does he suggest that the Olympics reveal about Nazi racism?
- What is Klemperer anxious about? What does he think will follow the Games?
- What does Klemperer’s diary reveal about the time that other sources - such as photographs, documents, newspapers, history books etc - might not tell us?
- Why is it important to consider the perspective of Jews when considering this moment in history?

Students write a diary entry with observations about Nazi Germany from the perspective of the athlete they wrote about during this activity.

STUDENT READING: THE 1936 GAMES

Adolf Hitler rides in a motorcade through the Brandenburg Gate to the opening ceremonies of the XI Olympiad in Berlin, August 1, 1936. – USHMM, courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration, College Park



THE GAMES COME TO GERMANY

Germany hosted both the Winter and Summer Games in 1936. Canadian athletes, journalists and tourists who traveled to the Olympics found world-class facilities and meticulously run athletic and cultural program intended to bolster the image of Nazi Germany at home and abroad.

THE WINTER GAMES

The twin Bavarian towns of Garmisch-Partenkirchen hosted the Winter Olympics in February 1936. To create a positive image for Germany, the Nazis built a number of world-class venues for sporting events.

Amid preparations for the Games, the Garmisch-Partenkirchen town council passed an order to expel all Jews in its jurisdiction, but decided to wait until after the Olympics to implement the decree. Antisemitic signs and publications were removed from the region for the duration of the Games as a concession to the International Olympic Committee.

On December 3, 1935, the Minister of the Interior issued an order to “remove all signs and posters relating to the Jewish question” in the region of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, so as not to endanger international support for the Games. Even so, in early February 1936, the Interior Ministry had to reissue his order that all antisemitic signs and propaganda be removed.

STUDENT READING: THE 1936 GAMES (CONTINUED)

FROM GARMISCH TO BERLIN

In the six months between the Winter and Summer Games, the Nazi prepared to host a variety of athletic and cultural events and selected the German athletes who would participate. Germany's plans for Berlin's Summer Games were especially grandiose. Hitler, who considered himself a visionary architect and urban planner, presided over the design and construction of an imposing and inspiring stadium.

Meanwhile, the Nazis continued their plan of remilitarization and expansion. On March 7, 1936, Hitler launched his militarization of the Rhineland in defiant violation of post-war treaties. The Western democracies remained silent, signaling an international and domestic victory for Hitler.

Although the Nazis continued to temper their racial policies, persecution persisted. The Roma and Sinti ("Gypsies") in the region were interned in a camp in a suburb of Berlin, and political dissidents were imprisoned in the newly constructed Sachsenhausen concentration camp on the outskirts of the city.

THE SUMMER GAMES

On August 1, 1936 the Olympic stadium opened its doors. Hitler received a hero's welcome upon arriving at the stadium and declaring the Games open.

Jesse Owens was the star of the 1936 Olympics and one of the greatest athletes of all time. He and other African-American athletes dominated track and field at the Berlin Games. Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels, who insisted that the race question not be raised in the German press, wrote in his diary: "We Germans won a gold medal, the Americans three, of which two were Negroes. That is a disgrace. White people should be ashamed of themselves."

AFTER THE GAMES

Germany won more medals in the Summer Olympics than any other country and Nazi leadership considered the Games a domestic and international success. According to Hitler's favourite architect, Albert Speer, "Hitler exulted over the harmonious atmosphere that prevailed during the Olympic Games. International animosity toward National Socialist Germany was plainly a thing of the past, he thought."

Canadian journalist Matthew Halton saw the Games differently. Writing in the *Toronto Daily Star* on August 11, 1936, he cautioned: "You may not appreciate your democracy now, but some day you will. If you had been with me last week and seen fine men who had been completely broken on the Fascist wheel you would know whereof I speak."

Halton's fears proved correct. On November 9, 1938, the Nazis unleashed a state-directed pogrom against Jews, burning over 1,000 synagogues and vandalizing over 7,000 Jewish businesses in the "Night of Broken Glass," or *Kristallnacht*. On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland, precipitating the Second World War and the Holocaust.

Between 1939 and 1945, the Nazis and their collaborators murdered some six million Jews across Nazi-occupied Europe. Hundreds of thousands of Roma and Sinti, as well as mentally and physically disabled people, were also killed, victims of Nazi terror. Countless others, including Poles, Soviet prisoners of war, political dissidents, Jehovah's Witnesses, and homosexuals, were executed or died from maltreatment during imprisonment in Nazi prisons and concentration camps.



RUDI BALL

Born to a middle class family in Berlin, Rudi Ball's father and paternal ancestors were Jewish, and his mother was from a Lutheran family. Considered a half-Jew according to Aryan laws, Rudi Ball was initially not allowed to compete for the German hockey team at the 1936 Winter Olympic Games. However, his friend and star teammate Gustav Jaenecke refused to compete without him. As the star of the first matches, Rudi Ball was cheered on by his German fans. After being injured, Ball could not compete in the rest of the series.

Rudi Ball, in a guarded yet revealing interview with Canadian journalist Matthew Halton, explained his participation in the 1936 Games. When asked as to whether he considered himself to be "primarily a Jew, or a German," Ball replied, "I belong to the Jewish faith, but to the German nation." But, as Halton noted, "Ball never spoke of the Germans as 'we.' It was always as 'they.'"

Rudi Ball scores the first goal for Berliner SC in the Spengler Cup tournament against Cambridge University, Davos (Switzerland), December 31, 1931. Berliner SC won the game 4 points to 1, but lost the Spengler Cup Final against Oxford University. – *Swedish Ice Hockey Historical and Statistical Society*



HELENE MAYER

Mayer was born to a Jewish father and non-Jewish mother in Offenbach, Germany, a famous fencing centre. At 14 years of age, she was a runner-up in foil fencing at the German championships and from 1925 to 1930 was national champion.

Mayer won a gold medal in the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics. In a controversial gesture, she waved the flag of Imperial First World War Germany rather than the flag of the democratic Weimar Germany. It would not be her last controversial Olympics gesture.

In 1933, Mayer's Offenbach Fencing Club expelled the "half-Jew" who was the club's most successful fencer. However, in 1935 Mayer received a formal invitation to fence at the Olympics for Germany. Mayer won the silver medal and at the medal ceremony wore a swastika and gave the Nazi salute. Some emphasize that she competed out of love for Germany. Others insist that she competed out of fear for her family in Germany.

Helene Mayer, one of two "half-Jewish" athletes permitted to compete in the 1936 Olympics, date unknown. – *USHMM, courtesy of Dr. George Eisen*



GRETEL BERGMANN

Fearing an Olympic boycott, the International Olympic Committee extracted promises from the German authorities that there would be no restrictions on the participation of Jewish athletes. To showcase a German-Jewish athlete, the Nazis ordered Gretel Bergmann, who had moved to London, to return home to train, threatening her family in Germany would suffer if she did not comply.

Bergmann was born in the small town of Laupheim, Germany. A gifted athlete, Bergmann competed in local track and field competitions from the age of ten. Bergmann excelled in the high jump, and in 1931 was sent to a special sports school in southern Germany. However, when the Nazis took power, Bergmann was expelled from her sports club and school. She left Germany for the United Kingdom.

Forced to return to Germany, Bergmann tied the German women's national high jump record in 1936. As soon as German Olympic officials were confident that the Americans would participate in the Olympics, they sent Bergmann a letter stating that her "poor performance" meant that she could not be a member of the German Olympic team.

The Nazis offered Bergmann a standing-room ticket to view the track and field events. Both devastated and defiant, Bergmann refused the ticket and left Germany in 1937.

Gretel Bergmann, competing in the high jump in Stuttgart, 1936. Four weeks before the Olympics, she matched the German record of 1.60 metres – the height that ultimately won the gold medal at the Berlin Games. – *USHMM, courtesy of Margaret (Gretel Bergmann) Lambert*



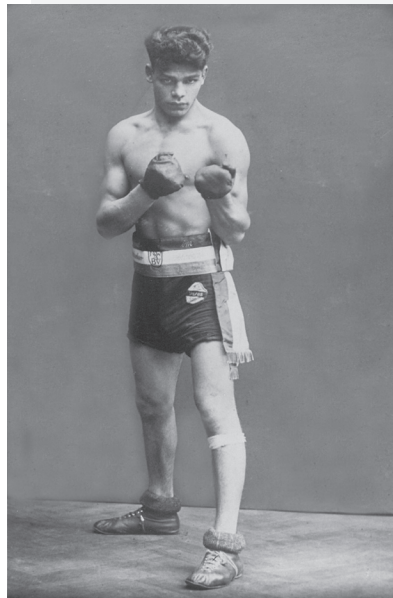
LILLI HENOCH

In the decade before Hitler rose to power, Lilli Henoch established herself as the best female athlete in the Berlin Sports Club (BSC). In addition to setting world records in track and field, Henoch was captain of the BSC handball team and a member of the club's hockey team, the Berlin champions of 1925.

In 1933, just 14 days before Hitler was named Chancellor of Germany, Henoch was elected chair of the BSC women's athletic section. She was highly esteemed by her peers, who praised her in a BSC publication: "If you ever need an example of club loyalty and selflessness, call her name. And the air around us will become clean."

After the "Aryanization" of sports in Germany, however, Henoch was ousted from the BSC, so she put her energies behind a Jewish sports club. In 1942, Henoch and her sixty-year-old mother were deported. They were shot and buried in a mass grave in Riga, Latvia.

Lilli Henoch in a 1922 publication of the Berlin Sports Club. – *University of Potsdam (History of Sports) in cooperation with the "Zentrum Deutsche Sportgeschichte Berlin-Brandenburg e.V."*



JOHANN TROLLMANN

Johann Trollmann was a Sinti light-heavyweight boxer born in Hanover, Germany. On June 9, 1933, he fought for the German light-heavyweight title. In a racially charged decision, Trollman was denied victory. The crowd went into a frenzy of protest and the officials belatedly declared Trollmann the winner. Days later, Trollman's title was taken from him.

In a courageous mockery of Nazi ideology, Trollman faced his next competitor with his hair dyed blond, his body powdered white, and he refused to return punches. Remarkably, he lasted five rounds.

With the Aryanization of sports, Trollman was not permitted to compete for a place on the German Olympic team. However, unlike German Jews, Sinti were allowed to serve in the military. In 1939, Trollmann joined the Germany army and was wounded as he served on the Eastern Front. In spite of his military service, Trollmann was arrested in 1942 and sent to a subcamp of Sachsenhausen. As he grew weaker from performing slave labour, he was forced to box with camp guards who delighted in beating him. In 1943, Trollmann was reportedly murdered by a guard.

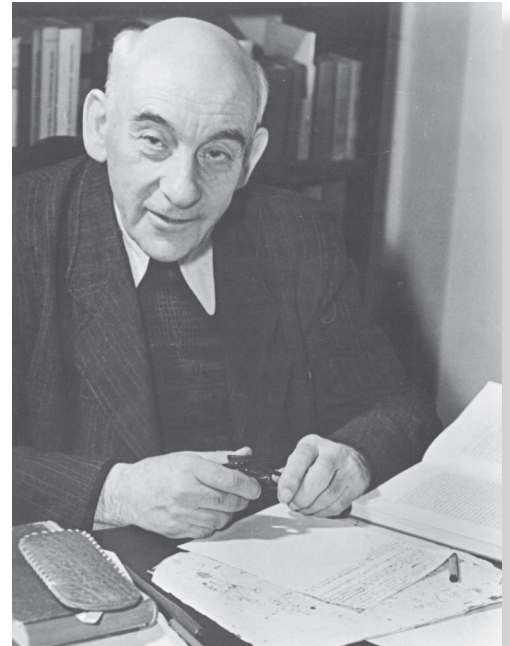
EXTENSION: THE DIARY OF VICTOR KLEMPERER

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Victor Klemperer (1881-1960), a veteran of the First World War, was a professor at the University of Dresden when the Nazis came to power in 1933. Recognizing the danger of Hitler's regime, Klemperer began to keep a diary chronicling daily life in Nazi Germany.

Although Klemperer converted from Judaism to Protestantism in 1912, he was stripped of his academic position and citizenship according to the Nuremberg Laws of 1935. He was eventually forced to work as a labourer in a factory and in 1940 was rehoused under miserable conditions in a ghetto, where he was routinely questioned, humiliated and beaten by the Gestapo (Nazi secret police). Married to a non-Jew, Klemperer remained free until receiving his deportation notice on February 13, 1945. That night the massive Allied bombing raid of Dresden took place. In the confusion caused by the firestorm, Klemperer was able to escape.

After a terrifying run-in with police in 1941, he wrote about the significance of his secret diary: "This is my heroics. I want to bear witness, precise witness, until the very end." When a neighbour noted that he alone could not cover the main events of the war, Klemperer wrote: "It's not the big things that are important, but the everyday life in tyranny, which may be forgotten. A thousand mosquito bites are worse than a blow on the head. I observe, I note, the mosquito bites."



Victor Klemperer, 1954.
– Bundesarchiv Bild 183-26707-0001/
Photographer: Erich; Pohl, Erich, Höhne

DIARY ENTRY | THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 1936

"The Olympics will end next Sunday, the NSDAP [Nazi] Party Rally is being heralded, an explosion is imminent, and naturally, they will first of all take things out on the Jews. ... In Barcelona four Germans have been 'murdered' as martyrs of National Socialism..., and even before that, they were saying that the German-Jewish émigrés were stirring up hatred against Germany there. God knows, what will come of it all, but surely and as always a new measure against the Jews. I do not believe that we shall keep our house.

[...]

"The Olympics, which are now ending, are doubly repugnant to me. (1) as an absurd overestimation of sport; the honour of a nation depends on whether a fellow citizen can jump four inches higher than all the rest. In any case, a Negro from the United States jumped the highest of all and the Jewess Helene Mayer won the fencing silver medal for Germany (I don't know which is more shameful, her participating as a German of the Third Reich, or the fact that her achievement is claimed for the Third Reich).

[...]

"And (2) I find the Olympics so odious because they are not about sports – in this country I mean – but are an entirely political enterprise. 'German renaissance through Hitler' I read recently. It's constantly being drummed into the country and into foreigners that here one is witnessing the revival, the flowering, the new spirit, the unity, steadfastness and magnificence, pacific too, of course, spirit of the Third Reich, which lovingly embraces the whole world."

BODIES & PAGEANTRY

OBJECTIVE

Students critically “read” Nazi propaganda images depicting idealized and dehumanized human bodies, reflecting on the intentions and consequences of these images.

Links to Historical Thinking Concepts:

- *Use Primary Source Evidence* - Students “decode” Nazi propaganda images relating to the human body and sport.
- *Analyze Cause and Consequence* - What is the relationship between a culture of dehumanization and policies of persecution?
- *Take Historical Perspective* - How did the Nazis take eugenic theories, prevalent throughout the Western world during the early twentieth century, to an extreme?
- *Understand the Ethical Dimensions of History* - Students ethically assess the visual culture of Nazi Germany, in particular Leni Riefenstahl’s documentary film, *Olympia*.
- *Identify Continuity and Change* - How did the Paralympic movement change assumptions about athletic ability prevalent before the Second World War?

DEFINING PROPAGANDA

As a class, brainstorm a definition of propaganda: *a form of communication designed to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes or behaviour of its audience. Promotes biased information, ideas or practices and is transmitted in speeches, slogans, posters, newspapers, films, etc.*

Discuss propaganda, using the following questions as a guide:

- What forms can propaganda take?
- What are examples of propaganda that students can think of?
- Optional: extend the discussion to consider how popular media influences attitudes towards different bodies: male, female, athletic, disabled, different ethnicities, etc.

DECODING IMAGES

Note: when working with Nazi propaganda images, inform students in advance that they will be looking at material that they might find offensive. Explain that your intent is not to offend, but to work together to learn about the historical period in which these images were produced.

Students work in groups (there should be six groups with one image per group) to consider propaganda images relating to sport and the human body. The images portray idealized bodies, and their counterpart: those persecuted in Nazi Germany. One student in each group is assigned the role of recorder and one the role of reporter.

Make copies of [Documents: Propaganda Images](#) and distribute one image to each group.

Students examine their image and respond to the prompts below, in sequence. The recorder takes notes during the discussion. Groups may wish to make a chart to organize their responses.

LESSON 5

BODIES & PAGEANTRY (CONTINUED)

1. **Describe** the appearance, gender, pose/action of body and relationship to surroundings.
2. **Question** - What questions do you have about the image?
3. **Predict** - Who do you think created the image? Who is the intended audience?
4. **Read** the caption.
5. **Analyze** - What is the message? How is the message conveyed?
6. **Reflect**: How does the image make you feel? Compare this image to similar images you may have encountered.

Reporters summarize the group's conversation with the class. During the reports, teachers can make connections between the image and the contextual information featured in Student Reading: Antisemitism & Racism.

After the decoding activity, assign *Student Reading: Antisemitism & Racism*. Students write a journal response to the text, considering: what does a knowledge of the fate of Jews, Roma, Sinti and the physically disabled people in Nazi-occupied Europe affect your understanding of the images in the activity?

EXTENSION: LENI REIFENSTAHL

Leni Riefenstahl was Nazi leader Adolf Hitler's favourite filmmaker. Her 1934 film about a Nuremberg Nazi party rally, *Triumph of the Will*, has been hailed as the most masterful propaganda film ever made. In 1935, Riefenstahl was commissioned by the Nazi Propaganda Ministry to create a documentary film about the upcoming Olympics. The resulting film, *Olympia*, featured many technical innovations and transformed the way sports were captured on film. Riefenstahl's strategies for idealizing the human body and athletic performance have led many to argue that *Olympia* is closely linked to the Nazi racial ideals. Until her death in 2003, Riefenstahl maintained that her films were "merely" art, unconnected to politics.

Students view one of Riefenstahl's films and/or do additional research about her life and work. Assignment: write a paper commenting on whether you think Riefenstahl's films can be separated from Nazi ideology.

EXTENSION: THE PARALYMPIC MOVEMENT

In 1948, Sir Ludwig Guttmann decided that veterans of the Second World War suffering from spinal cord injuries needed their own sporting competition. Four years later, a second competition drew competitors from the Netherlands. By 1960, a series of Olympic-style events for disabled athletes with 400 athletes from 23 countries was underway in Rome. In 1976, the first-ever Paralympic Winter Games, which merged various disability groups for an international sporting competition, were held in Sweden.

Today, the Paralympics have grown into an elite sporting event that celebrates the athletic abilities of thousands of disabled athletes. The 2008 Summer Paralympic Games in Beijing featured 3,951 athletes from 146 countries, while approximately 1,350 athletes are expected to compete in the 2010 Vancouver Winter Paralympic Games.

Students analyze the *Extension: Paralympic Images* using the prompts outlined in the lesson:

describe - question - predict - read - analyze - reflect

As a class, discuss:

- How do these images challenge your assumptions about disabled people? About athletic ability?
- Do you think the Paralympic Games can impact the status of intellectually and physically challenged people in our society? If so, how?

STUDENT READING: ANTISEMITISM & NAZI RACISM

In illustration from an antisemitic children's book. The sign reads "Jews are not wanted here." Germany, 1936. - USHMM



Antisemitism means prejudice against or hatred of **Jews**. Intolerance for the Jewish religion developed in the early Christian era and continued over the centuries. Riots against Jewish populations were often sparked by false rumours that Jews used the blood of Christian children for religious rituals. At times, Jews were also blamed for everything from economic conditions to epidemics to natural disasters.

During the Industrial Revolution of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Jews became more integrated into societies throughout Western Europe. At the same time, however, nationalist movements began to denounce Jews as disloyal citizens. In Germany, the "voelkisch movement" (folk or people's movement) claimed that Jews were "un-German."

The Nazi party, which was founded in 1919 by Adolf Hitler, argued for the removal of all Jews from Germany. **Nazism** gained popularity, in part, by blaming Jews for Germany's loss of the First World War and for the country's economic problems. This false accusation against Jews is particularly striking because Jews composed less than 1% of the German population when Hitler came to power in 1933 and were very integrated into German society.

STUDENT READING: ANTISEMITISM & NAZI RACISM (CONTINUED)

Unlike Christian antisemitism, which was hatred of Jews based primarily on religion, Nazi antisemitism defined Jews as an undesirable “race.” Drawing on eugenics, the Nazi party defined Jews as an “inferior” racial group, rather than a religious one, that threatened the purity of the “Aryan” race.

The Holocaust, the state-sponsored persecution and murder of European Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945, is considered to be history’s most extreme example of antisemitism. Prior to the Second World War, Jews were stripped of their German citizenship and discriminated against through antisemitic laws.

The Nazis also discriminated against other “inferior races,” such as Roma and Sinti as well as against mentally and physically disabled people. Nazi propaganda used eugenic research and economic statistics to argue that members of these “unfit” groups were a financial burden for Germany and endangered the well-being of the “Aryan master race.”

Between 1934 and 1945, the Nazis forcefully sterilized more than 300,000 Roma, Sinti and disabled people in Germany. Thousands died as a result of the operation. After the Second World War broke out in 1939, over 200,000 disabled Germans, many of whom were children, were murdered as part of a euthanasia program. Meanwhile, Jews and other “inferior” people, such as Sinti and Roma, Slavs, and homosexuals, were worked to death and murdered in concentration and death camps.

Antisemitism: Discrimination towards, persecution of or hatred of Jews.

Boycott: A form of activism involving the act of abstaining from using, buying, or interacting with a person, organization or country as an expression of protest, usually for political reasons.

Concentration and death camps: The Nazis established concentration camps shortly after assuming power in 1933 to imprison and isolate political opponents and those considered to be racially undesirable, such as Jews, and Sinti and Roma. Most of the approximately 1,800 camps were transit or labour camps. After the occupation of Poland, death or extermination camps were established for the purpose of systematic mass murder at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, Chelmno and Majdanek.

Eugenics: A racial theory that was popular in many Western nations at the time. According to eugenics, observation, family genealogies and intelligence tests could be used to define which groups had “superior” or “inferior” qualities.

Jew: Someone of the Hebrew or Jewish people. Someone who is either born into or converts to Judaism, the religion, philosophy and way of life of the Jewish people.

Nazism: The ideology of the Nazi party, which stressed nationalism, imperialism, anti-communism, militarism, racism and antisemitism.

Roma and Sinti: Roma (Gypsies) originated in the Punjab region of northern India as a nomadic people and entered Europe between the eighth and tenth centuries. They were called “Gypsies” because Europeans mistakenly believed they came from Egypt. This minority is made up of distinct groups called “tribes” or “nations.” Most of the Roma in Germany and the countries occupied by Germany during World War II belonged to the Sinti and Roma family groupings. Both groups spoke dialects of a common language called Romani, based on Sanskrit (the classical language of India). Some Roma are Christian and some are Muslim, having converted during the course of their migrations through Persia, Asia Minor, and the Balkans.

Slavs: Ethnic group of peoples inhabiting mainly eastern, southeastern and east central Europe, including Russians, Poles and Czechs, among others. Nazis considered Slavs to be an inferior race that was only suited for enslavement.

Yiddish: A dialect of High German that has Hebrew and Slavic words. Spoken by European Jews.

DOCUMENTS: PROPAGANDA IMAGES

IMAGE 1



Members of the League of German Girls doing athletics, circa 1933-45.

– Bundesarchiv, Bild 146-1979-099-21A/Photographer: o.Ang



Official poster of the 1936 Garmisch-Partenkirchen Winter Olympics by Ludwig Hohlwein.

– Bundesarchiv, Plak 003-01-025/ Designer: Hohlwein, Ludwig



"Healthy Women Through Exercise," state poster, 1934.

– Bundesarchiv, Plak 003-010-005/ Designer: o.Ang

DOCUMENTS: PROPAGANDA IMAGES

IMAGE 4



A Nazi propaganda slide, which was accompanied by the caption “Young men with sound limbs spend their free time in play and struggle, while stupid men with deformed hands and feet sit idle.”

– Archives of the Landeswohlfahrtsverband Hessen

DOCUMENTS: PROPAGANDA IMAGES

IMAGE 5



A panel from "The Eternal Jew," an exhibit on view in Berlin in 1937.

– Bundesarchiv, Bild 119-04-29-38/ Photographer: o.Ang



A poster promoting the Nazi monthly *Neues Volk* (New People), produced by the Nazi Party's Race Office, circa 1937. The caption reads: "This hereditarily ill person will cost our national community 60,000 Reichmarks over the course of his lifetime. Citizen, this is your money."

– Deutsches Historisches Museum

EXTENSIONS: PARALYMPIC IMAGES



Left: Wheelchair Racer Kelly Smith at the 2004 Paralympic Summer Games in Athens. Smith won a Silver Medal in the Men's Marathon.

– Jean Baptiste Benavant, courtesy of Canadian Paralympic Committee



Right: The Canadian Sledge Hockey Team at the 2006 Paralympic Games in Torino, where they won a Gold Medal.

– Benoit Pelossee, courtesy of Canadian Paralympic Committee

1936 OLYMPICS TIMELINE

For a timeline of the Holocaust, see the VHEC Holocaust Education Resource, available for download at:
<http://vhec.org/teaching.html>

1931

May 13	The International Olympic Committee awards the 1936 Summer Olympics to Berlin.
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1933

January 30	Adolf Hitler is appointed Chancellor of Germany by President von Hindenburg.
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March	The city of Cologne prohibits Jews from using city playgrounds and sports facilities.
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March 22	Dachau, the first concentration camp, opens. Political opponents of the Nazis are detained.
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April 1	The first state-directed boycott of Jewish shops and businesses.
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April 4	The German Boxing Federation excludes Jewish boxers from participating in competitive bouts and orders the cancellation of all contracts involving Jewish promoters.
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April 7	The first Nazi laws excluding Jews from Civil Service, medical professions and the Arts are enacted. Schools and universities are Aryanized. Jewish children are denied access to public education.
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April 25	The Nazi's Sports Office orders public sport and gymnastic organizations to implement an "Aryans only" policy. Until May, exceptions are made for Jewish war veterans and the families of Jewish soldiers who had died in the war.
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June 2	The Prussian Ministry of Science orders all Jewish youths expelled from village, city, county, and district groups of physical education associations and organizations
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continued....

1936 OLYMPICS TIMELINE (CONTINUED)

July 14 A law is enacted to permit the forced sterilization of Roma and Sinti ("Gypsies"), the mentally and physically disabled, African-Germans and others considered "unfit." East European Jewish immigrants are stripped of German citizenship.

Sept/Oct "Non-Aryans" are prohibited from being professional or amateur jockeys.

1934

March 7 The Reich Youth Leadership prohibits German Jewish youth groups from wearing uniforms.

1935

"Olympic training courses" for Jews are established by the Nazis to deflect international criticism about Nazi policies. None of the participants are permitted to partake in the Olympics.

June 19 The Baden Minister of Interior prohibits group hikes and similar activities for all non-National Socialist youth groups.

September 15 "Nuremberg Laws," anti-Jewish racial laws are enacted. Jews lose the right to German citizenship and to marry Aryans. Sexual relations between Jews and non-Jews are forbidden. Aryan women under age 45 cannot work in Jewish homes.

November 14 Following the lead of Great Britain, the Amateur Athletic Union of Canada votes in favour of Canada's participation in the 1936 Olympic Games with no discussion of the boycott movement or anti-Jewish racial laws in Germany.

December 3 The Nazi government issues an order to "remove all signs and posters relating to the Jewish question" in the region of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, so as not to endanger international support for the Berlin Games.

continued....

1936 OLYMPICS TIMELINE (CONTINUED)

1936

February 6-16 The Winter Olympics open at Garmisch-Partenkirchen in the Bavarian Alps. Prior to the Winter Games, the Garmisch-Partenkirchen town council passed an order to expel all Jews in its jurisdiction, but it waits until after the Olympics to implement the antisemitic decree. Anti-Jewish signs are temporarily removed.

March 7 German troops reoccupy the Rhineland.

July 12 The Sachsenhausen concentration camp opens. Camp inmates are kept out of public sight, withdrawn from forced labour on road construction or on railway lines during the summer of the 1936 Olympics. By the end of 1936, the camp holds 1,600 prisoners.

Mid-July The Olympic stadium in Berlin is completed two weeks before the games after being plagued by construction delays.

July 16 About 800 Roma and Sinti ("Gypsies") are interned in the Berlin district of Marzahn.

July 20 The first modern Olympic torch relay begins in Athens. The final runner reaches the Olympic Stadium in Berlin on August 1 during the opening ceremonies.

July 26 The Canadian Olympic team arrives in Berlin and is greeted by large crowds.

July 31 The Canadian Olympic Team places a wreath on the German Tomb of the Unknown Soldier as a sign of goodwill.

August 1-16 The Summer Games take place in Berlin.

August 4 The Canadian Olympic Committee returns a fragment of the rudder of Baron von Richthofen's fighter plane shot down behind British lines during World War I, as a symbol of goodwill and friendship from the Canadian people.

August 18 Two days after the Olympics, Captain Wolfgang Fürstner, Head of the Olympic Village, kills himself because he is dismissed from active military services due to his Jewish ancestry.

OLYMPIC RESOURCES

WEBSITES

- Canada's Sports Hall of Fame
<http://www.sportshall.ca/accessible/index.php>
The Canada's Sports Hall of Fame website contains profiles and images of Canadian athletes that participated in the 1936 Olympic Games.
- Politics and the Olympics – CBC Digital Archives
<http://archives.cbc.ca/sports/olympics/topics/3568/>
The CBC Digital Archive provides an account of politics in the Olympics Games from 1936 to 2008 drawing on CBC radio and television clips.
- Steven Spielberg Film and Video Archive: Olympics (Berlin 1936)
http://resources.ushmm.org/film/search/advanced_search.php?Keyword=OLYMPICS+BERLIN+1936&Public=Yes&Digitized=Yes
This online film archive presents archival film footage of the Games held by the Steven Spielberg Film and Video Archive at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, including sporting events and newsreels of the opening ceremonies.
- The Nazi Olympics: Berlin 1936 – Online exhibition by the USHMM
<http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/olympics/>
An online exhibition prepared by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum that tells the story of the Berlin Olympiad, concurrent events, and their political implications using photographs, promotional posters and original documents. The website also contains links to relevant videos and other resources.

READINGS

- Bachrach, Susan. *The Nazi Olympics Berlin 1936*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1999.
This book tells the story of the 1936 Olympics as presented in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum exhibition The Nazi Olympics: Berlin 1936.
- Baker, William J. *Jesse Owens: An American Life*. New York: Free Press, 1988.
Baker profiles the life story of the most noted participant in the 1936 Olympics with an emphasis on Owens' struggles against racial discrimination. The book includes an examination of the myth surrounding Owens' supposed snubbing by Adolf Hitler at the Berlin Games.

OLYMPIC RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

- Hart-Davis, Duff. **Hitler's Games**. London: Olympic Marketing Corporation, 1986.
In a study of how the 1936 Olympics were exploited for political ends, British journalist Hart-Davis provides an account of the 1936 Berlin Olympics that focuses on the political and social circumstances leading to the Games.
- Kidd, Bruce. **The Struggle for Canadian Sport**. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.
In a study of the landscape of Canadian sport in the inter-war period, historian Bruce Kidd deals with the influence of continental leagues like the NHL, the power of the media, the participation of women, and the role of nationalism in amateur Olympic sports bodies.
- Kidd, Bruce. **Canadian Opposition to the 1936 Olympics in Germany**. Canadian Journal of the History of Sport and Physical Education no. 9 (December 1978): 20-40.
Kidd discusses key players in the 1936 Olympic boycott movement in Canada, as well as the events which led a Canadian team to be sent to the People's Olympiad in Barcelona.
- Lambert, Margaret Bergmann. **By Leaps and Bounds**. Washington, DC: U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2005.
In her memoir, Margaret Lambert, also known as Gretel Bergmann, recounts her experiences as a German Jewish athlete banned from participating in the 1936 Olympics, her subsequent escape from Germany, and her eventual return trip to that country many years later.
- Large, David Clay. **Nazi Games: The Olympics of 1936**. New York: W.W. Norton, 2007.
Clay provides a comprehensive history of the 1936 Olympics that considers both the athletic competitions, as well as the political climate of the Third Reich. The book includes numerous photographs of the events and pageantry, extensive notes, and an epilogue evaluating the place of the Games in the context of the history of Nazi Germany.
- Luftspring, Sammy with Brian Swarbrick. **Call Me Sammy**. Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada, 1975.
In his autobiography, Luftspring, a Jewish boxer selected to represent Canada at the 1936 Olympics, discusses his decision to boycott.
- Mandell, Richard D. **The Nazi Olympics**. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987.
Mandell examines the historical framework of the 1936 Olympics within the context of German attitudes towards sport and individual competition. The book summarizes the political atmosphere of Germany in 1936 and the jingoistic and propagandistic purposes of the Games for the Nazi leadership.
- Menkis, Richard and Harold Troper. **A Forgotten Controversy: Canada at the 1936 Olympics**. Zachor, October 2009: 3-5 (<http://www.vhec.org/zachor.html>).
Menkis and Troper, who researched and wrote the VHEC exhibit, discuss highlights of the exhibit and the process of putting it together.

OLYMPIC RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

- Mogulof, Milly. *Foiled: Hitler's Jewish Olympian: The Helene Mayer Story*. Oakland: RDR Books, 2002.
Mogulof presents a biography of Helene Mayer, winner of the gold medal in fencing at the 1928 Olympics, who was the “token Jewish Olympian” on the German team after a boycott threat pressured the Nazi government to allow her to compete. The biography includes numerous photographs, a chronology of Mayer’s life, endnotes, and a bibliography.
- Rippon, Anton. *Hitler's Olympics: The Story of the 1936 Nazi Games*. Barnsley, South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword, 2006.
In this illustrated book with images from events and ceremonies, Rippon presents a comprehensive, journalistic narrative of the planning and realization of the Summer and Winter Olympics, with particular emphasis on the Nazis’ use of the Games as a propaganda tool.
- Rosenberg, Danny. “The Canadian Jewish Congress and the 1936 Berlin Olympics Boycott Movement,” from *Sport and Physical Education in Jewish History*, edited by George Eisen, Hain Kaufman and Manfred Lämmer. Israel: Wingate Institute, 2003.
Rosenberg examines the Canadian Jewish reactions to the Canadian 1936 Berlin Olympic Boycott Movement by focusing on the response of the Canadian Jewish Congress.
- Schaap, Jeremy. *Triumph: The Untold Story of Jesse Owens and Hitler's Olympics*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007.
This detailed biography of Jesse Owens focuses on his experiences during the 1936 Games.
- Taylor, Paul. *Jews and the Olympic Games: The Clash Between Sport and Politics*. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2004.
This book provides an account of Jewish athletes in the Olympic Games from the first modern Olympics in Athens in 1896 through to the Munich Olympics in 1972. Taylor analyzes the intersection between sports and politics by focusing on how Jewish Olympic athletes used sport to combat oppression, social prejudice and inequality.

FILMS

- *Olympia*. Directed by Leni Riefenstahl. 1938; Pathfinder Home Entertainment, 2006. (DVD: 204 minutes).
Hailed as one of the greatest movies of all time, *Olympia* is a documentary of the 1936 Olympics written, produced and directed by Hitler’s favorite filmmaker, Leni Riefenstahl. Although Riefenstahl maintained that *Olympia* was a work of “art” unconnected to Nazi ideology, Riefenstahl’s idealization of the human body and athletic performance has led many to argue that *Olympia* is closely linked to Nazi ideology.

OLYMPIC RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

- **The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl.** Directed by Ray Muller. 1993; Kino International Corporation, 1998. (DVD: 188 minutes).

In this German documentary about the life of Leni Riefenstahl, the filmmaker addresses her life for the first time on camera. At 91, Riefenstahl lucidly discusses important aspects of her career, such as *Triumph of the Will* and *Olympia*, both of which were produced under the Nazi regime .

- **Watermarks.** Directed by Yaron Zilberman. 2004; Mongrel Media, 2004. (VHS: 92 minutes).

This award-winning documentary features the story of eight Jewish female swimmers, who were the core of Austria's 1936 Olympic team, although some refused to participate. The swimmers came from Hakoah Vienna, a Jewish sports organization that was created in 1909 after the Austrian government passed a law to forbid Jews from participating in Austrian sporting clubs.

HOLOCAUST RESOURCES

The following VHEC resources offer excellent support material about the Holocaust, and Canada's relationship to this history.



VHEC HOLOCAUST EDUCATION RESOURCE

Available for download at: <http://vhec.org/teaching.html>.

This resource contains guidelines for teaching about the Holocaust, frequently asked questions, a timeline, a glossary, recommended readings and websites.



OPEN HEARTS - CLOSED DOORS: The War Orphans Project

<http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/orphans/english/>

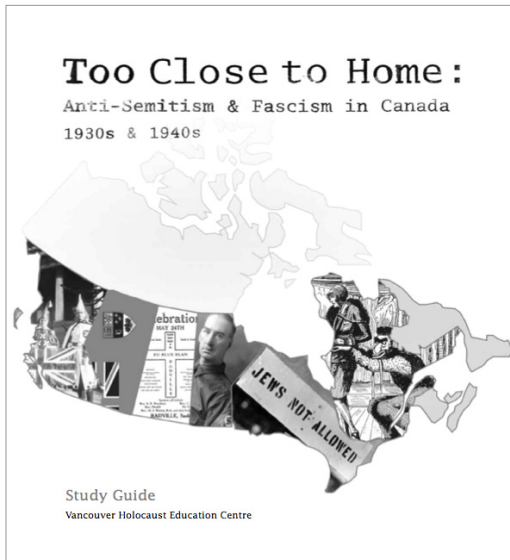
Recommended for Intermediate Students / Available in English and French.

Following the Second World War, a group of young Jewish orphans immigrated to Canada from the devastation of Europe. *Open Hearts - Closed Doors: The War Orphans Project* is an online teaching exhibit that chronicles the lives of these orphans as they emerged from the

events of the Holocaust into displaced person camps and eventually to new lives in Canada. This multimedia website uses the orphans' own words and artefacts as well as primary documents and photographs to provide students with a powerful learning experience about the Holocaust and the broader history of Canadian immigration during the 20th Century.

The site provides extensive support for students and teachers in middle and secondary schools, social studies and language arts classrooms. The teacher's guide, web links, maps, biblio-videographies and pop-up glossary terms can be browsed online or downloaded as printable classroom materials. The bilingual site offers French teachers a valuable resource for Holocaust Education.

HOLOCAUST RESOURCES (CONTINUED)



TOO CLOSE TO HOME: Antisemitism & Facism in Canada, 1930s–40s

Available for download at: <http://vhec.org/teachersguides.html>
Recommended for Secondary Students.

Too Close to Home: Anti Semitism & Fascism in Canada, 1930s-40s draws attention to a shameful part of Canadian history -- a time when Nazi ideology and antisemitism permeated Canada's cultural and political landscape and was reflected in Canada's restrictive immigration policies.

This artefact folio provides secondary school students and teachers with primary source materials from Canada in the 1930s and 1940s. These materials paint a picture of the times and address the issues of

antisemitism, Fascism, Nazism and immigration in Canada during the Holocaust, fostering student appreciation of how Canada's present-day diversity and multicultural identity evolved out of a more exclusionary past.