

Black Americans and The Nazi Olympics

Introduction to Jim Crow and Nazi Racial Antisemitism

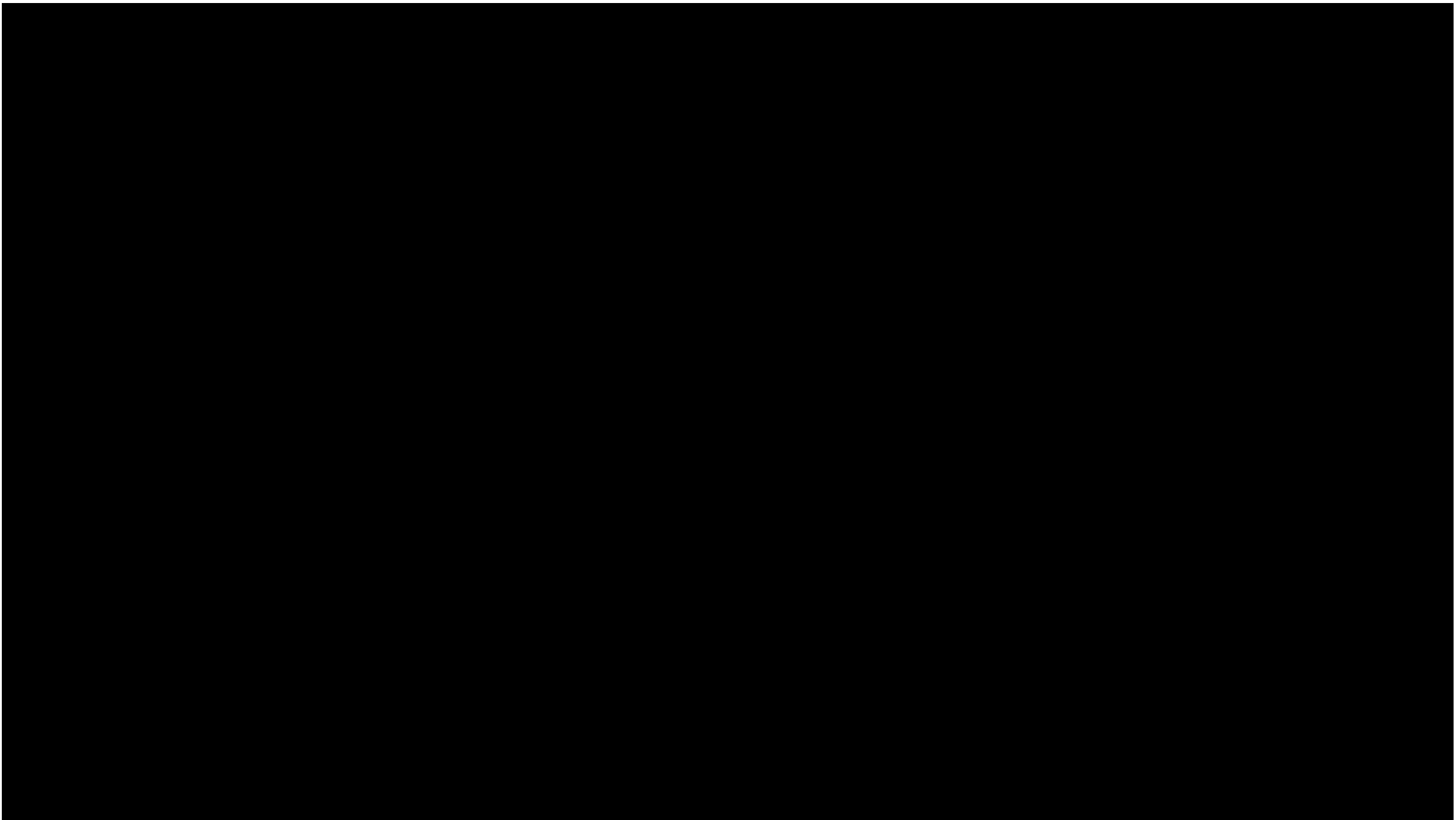
ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What was Jim Crow?

How did life in Jim Crow America inform debates about whether athletes should participate in the 1936 Olympics in Nazi Germany?

Did Olympic achievement of Black American athletes in the Nazi Olympics translate into better lives for those athletes in the United States?

<https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Black-Americans-and-the-Nazi-Olympics.pdf>



What was Jim Crow?



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia

Jim Crow Laws

- Education
- Burial
- Amateur Baseball
- Railroads
- Restaurants
- Pool and Billiard Rooms
- Toilet Facilities
- Intermarriage
- Cohabitation
- Education
- Juvenile Delinquents
- Mental Hospitals
- Barbers
- Parks
- Wine and Beer
- Reform Schools
- Circus Tickets
- Housing
- The Blind
- Hospital Entrances
- Prisons
- Textbooks
- Libraries
- Militia
- Fishing, Boating, Bathing
- Mining
- Telephone Booths
- Lunch Counters
- Child Custody
- Theaters

In America in the 1930s...



Lawrence Beitler/Bettmann/Corbis

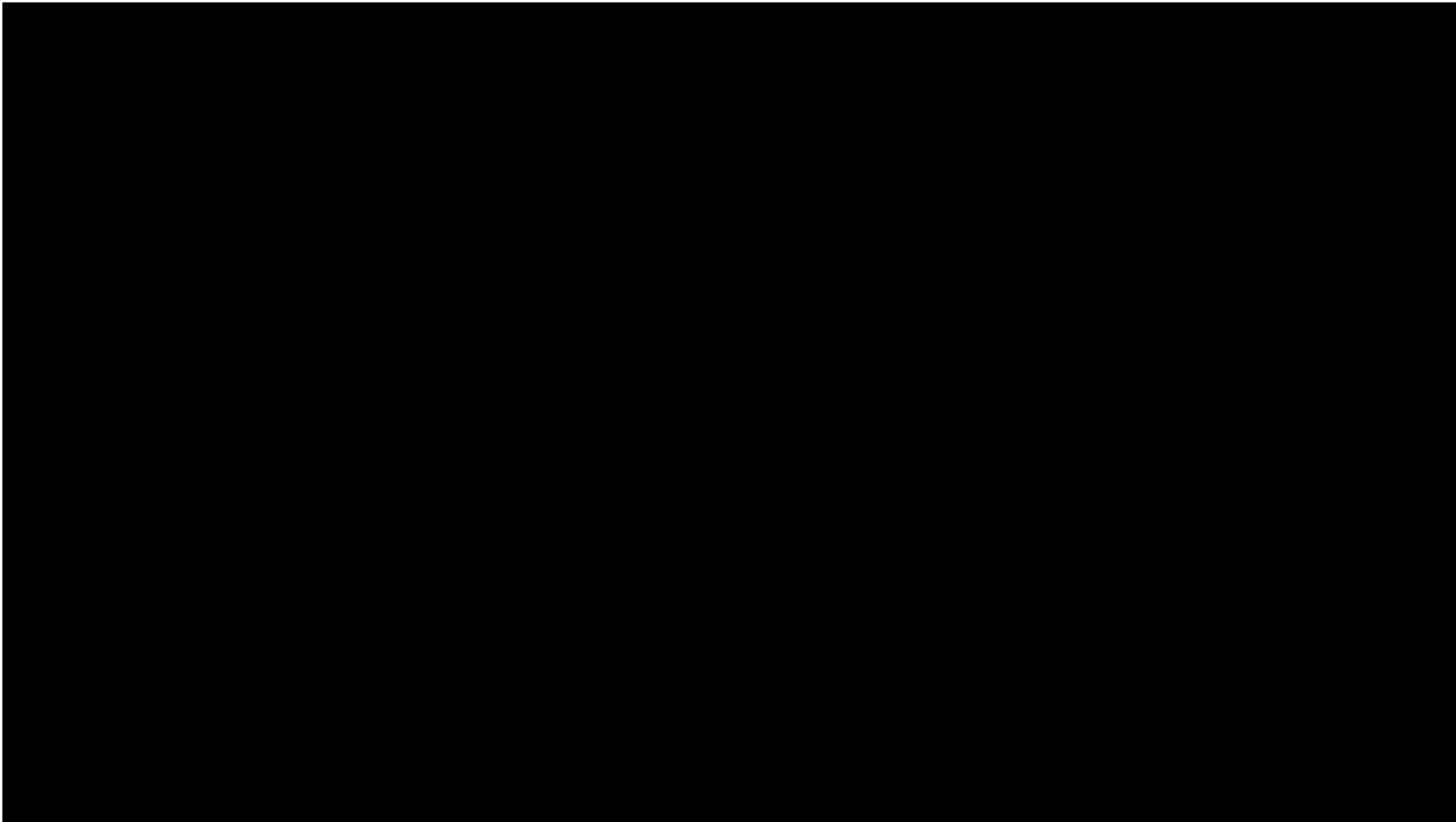


On his first day as president, Franklin D. Roosevelt told Americans: “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”

In the fourth year of the Great Depression, 25 percent of US workers were unemployed.

Public facilities, churches, and schools were racially segregated.

The United States continued to limit immigration, especially by people of “undesirable” national origin, including eastern European Jews.



What did Americans know about what was happening in Germany in 1933?

The Petoskey Evening News (Petoskey, Michigan), May 11, 1933.

BERLIN SCHOOLS BURN OLD BOOKS

ONLY THOSE FAVORABLE
TO NAZI REGIME WILL
NOW BE USED

All Opposition to Hitler Given
Serious Jolts. Socialists
Arrested. Papers Seized

Berlin, May 11.—(UP)—Ten thousand singing and shouting students marched around a blazing bon fire in Opera Square until the early hours of today, jubilant at destroying books representing ideas and doctrines considered hostile to Nazi Germany. Some 20,000 books were consigned to the flames.

The Patriot (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania), March 25, 1933.

NAZIS HOLD 10,000 FOES AS PRISONERS

Prepare Concentration Camps
in Prussia and Wurtemberg
—Jewish Union Labels Al-
leged Atrocities 'Inventions'

Copyright, 1933, by Universal Service.
Berlin, March 24. — Concentra-
tion camps for 10,000 political
prisoners are being prepared, Ger-
man newspapers stated today.

To one of the camps near
Munich, which has a capacity for
5000, about 1500 prisoners are now
ready to be sent. The camp is
on the former military drill
grounds at Heuberg, Wuerttemberg.

The Daily Illini (Champaign-Urbana, Illinois), March 28, 1933.

Nazi Party Announces Plan To Boycott Jewish Business In Reply to Foreign Threats

BERLIN, Mar. 27. — (AP) — Adolf Hitler's Nazi party answered foreign threats of boycotts against German goods today by announcing a movement to boycott Jewish business establishments within the Reich.

The purpose of this movement will be to retaliate against foreigners who have made protests based on allegations of anti-Semitic outrages in Germany.

May 13, 1934.

Mr. Franklin Delano Roosevelt
President of the United States.

Mr. President:

This day has been set aside as Mothers' Day. Therefore, we come to you as mothers, suffering the greatest pain, because our innocent sons are made to endure the most terrible tortures. Though guilty of no crime, the State of Alabama holds them in dark and terrible cells and tortures them. The electric chair stares them in the face each new day.

It is now three years since our sons have been forcibly separated from us. Our boys were framed on a terrible charge of which they are innocent. We know that Judge Horton in granting a new trial to Haywood Patterson said that the evidence is in favor of the boys. Yet, the rulers of Alabama keep them locked in dark dungeons. What can be the reasons for such a crime against our boys, when they have been proven innocent?

It is the prejudice and oppression against the Negro people. We know that Negroes were not allowed to sit on the jury, which gave the death sentence to our innocent boys.

Mr. President, we ask you to act in behalf of our sons. We ask that you, as the chief executive of this country, as one who is supposed to take an interest in the welfare of the people of this country, and to see that justice is done to all alike, speak out against the murderous persecution of our children.

Your word, Mr. President, would have great weight throughout the land. Millions of people in America and other countries have already raised their voices in protest against this terrible wrong.

Men in high places all over the world have spoken for the freedom of our boys because they believe in their innocence from the evidence of the case. Ruby Bates, young southern white girl, who in fear of her life was forced to speak against our sons, has honestly now told the whole truth proving the innocence of our boys. Will you not, as President of the United States, speak and do everything in your power to free our wronged and tortured sons?

With anxious hearts we await your reply and shall watch the press for your public statement.

Earnestly,

The Scottsboro Mothers

Mrs. Janie Patterson
Mrs. Viola Montgomery
Mrs. Ida Norris
Mrs. Josephine Powell
Mrs. Mamie Williams

Janie Patterson
Viola Montgomery
Ida Norris
Josephine Powell
Mamie Williams

Analyze a Written Document

Meet the document.

Type (check all that apply):

- | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech | <input type="checkbox"/> Patent | <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram | <input type="checkbox"/> Court document |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chart | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement | <input type="checkbox"/> Press Release | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Email | <input type="checkbox"/> Identification document | <input type="checkbox"/> Presidential document | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional document | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | | |

Describe it as if you were explaining to someone who can't see it.

Think about: Is it handwritten or typed? Is it all by the same person? Are there stamps or other marks? What else do you see on it?

Observe its parts.

Who wrote it?

Who read/received it?

When is it from?

Where is it from?

Try to make sense of it.

What is it talking about?

Write one sentence summarizing this document.

Why did the author write it?

Quote evidence from the document that tells you this.

What was happening at the time in history this document was created?

Use it as historical evidence.

What did you find out from this document that you might not learn anywhere else?

What other documents or historical evidence are you going to use to help you understand this event or topic?



TEACHING MATERIALS BY TOPIC

Teaching Materials on the Holocaust

Foundational lesson plans for teaching about the Holocaust

Timeline Activity

This lesson is structured around a multi-layered wall timeline that encourages critical thinking about the relationship between Nazi policy, World War II, historical events, and individual experiences during the Holocaust.

<https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/USHMM-Timeline-Activity-Instructions.pdf>



In Germany, in 1933...

ADOLF HITLER APPOINTED CHANCELLOR OF GERMANY



- In the November 1932 German elections, the Nazi Party won 33 percent of the vote, more than any other party.
- German President Paul von Hindenburg (*left*) appointed Adolf Hitler (*right*), the head of the National Socialist German Workers Party (Nazi Party), as the new chancellor of Germany.
- Conservative politicians thought they could control Hitler and his followers.

JANUARY 30, 1933

REICHSTAG FIRE DECREE



- On February 27, 1933, an arsonist burned down the *Reichstag*, the German parliament building.
- The “Decree of the Reich President for the Protection of the People and the State,” known as the “Reichstag Fire Decree,” declared a state of emergency.
- With Nazi encouragement, President von Hindenburg suspended freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the right to assemble. The government could arrest political opponents without charge, dissolve political organizations, and censor newspapers.

FEBRUARY 28, 1933

DACHAU CONCENTRATION CAMP OPENS



- Dachau was the first concentration camp established by the Nazi government. It was originally intended to incarcerate political opponents of the new regime.
- By the end of 1933, Dachau held 4,800 prisoners. Almost all of them were imprisoned for political reasons: for being a socialist, a communist, a Social Democrat (a political party opposing the Nazis), or an advocate of trade unions.

MARCH 22, 1933

ENABLING ACT



- The German parliament passed the “Law for Rectification of the Distress of Nation and Reich,” commonly called the “Enabling Act.” The law allowed Hitler to propose and sign legislation into law without consulting the parliament.
- This law effectively created a dictatorship in Germany.
- This propaganda flyer exclaims, “The Reichstag in Flames!” and urges, “Choose Hitler!”

MARCH 23, 1933

BOYCOTT OF JEWISH BUSINESSES



- The Nazi Party launched a one-day nationwide boycott of Jewish businesses.
- They claimed that German Jews and Jewish communities elsewhere were spreading “atrocities propaganda” in newspapers worldwide to damage Germany’s reputation.
- The boycott marked the beginning of Nazi efforts to drive Jews from the German economy.

APRIL 1, 1933

CIVIL SERVICE LAW



- The German government issued the “Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service.”
- The law removed Jews and political opponents of the Nazis from civil service positions, including school, university, and government jobs. People were exempt only if they had been in that job before August 1914, had fought in World War I, or had lost a father or son in the war.
- Most Jewish lawyers were also forbidden to practice law.

APRIL 7, 1933

EDUCATION LAW



- The German government issued the “Law Against Overcrowding in Schools and Universities.”
- The law stated that Jewish students could be no more than 5 percent of the student population of any public school or university.
- Many Jewish students had to leave public school and start attending private school.
- German schools taught Nazi racial ideas about the superiority of “Aryans” and the inferiority of Jews.

APRIL 25, 1933

PRESS CENSORSHIP LAW



- The “Editors’ Law” forbade Jews from working in journalism.
- The German Propaganda Ministry kept registries of “racially pure” editors and journalists. New reporters had to register and show they were not Jewish.
- Newspapers could not publish any information that would “weaken the strength of the Reich abroad or at home.”
- Journalists who broke this law could be sent to concentration camps.

OCTOBER 4, 1933

STERILIZATION LAW



- The German government passed the “Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases.”

- The law allowed the government to forcibly sterilize people with physical or mental disabilities so they could not have children.

- Under the law, 400,000 Germans were sterilized from January 1934 to May 1945.
- The caption of this propaganda slide reads “Life only as a Burden.”

JULY 14, 1933

JEHOVAH'S WITNESS ORGANIZATION BANNED

Konzentrationslager
Abteilung II

Erklärung.

Ich, -der, -die
gehöre an: _____ in: _____
gebe hiermit folgende Erklärung ab:

1. Ich habe erkannt, dass die Internationale Bibelforschervereinigung eine Irrlehre verbreitet und unter dem Deckmantel religiöser Betätigung lediglich staatsfeindliche Ziele verfolgt.
2. Ich habe mich deshalb mit und ganz von dieser Organisation abgewandt, und mich auch innerlich von einer Sekte losgewandt.
3. Ich versichere hiermit, dass ich mich nie wieder für die Internationale Bibelforschervereinigung betätigen werde. Personen, die für die Irrlehre der Bibelforscher an mich versucht haben werden oder in anderer Weise den Einwand als Bibelforscher bekräftigen, werde ich unverzüglich zur Anzeige bringen. Sollten mir Bibelforscherschreiben zugesandt werden, so werde ich diese umgehend bei der nächsten Polizeistation abgeben.
4. Ich will künftig die Gesetze des Staates achten, insbesondere im Falle eines Krieges mein Vaterland mit der Waffe in der Hand verteidigen und mich voll und ganz in die Volksgemeinschaft einfügen.
5. Mir ist eröffnet worden, dass ich mit meiner ersten Inhaftierungnahme zu rechnen habe, wenn ich meiner heute abgegebenen Erklärung ausbleibe.

_____, der _____
Unterschrift

KL/11.1.41 5000

- The German government banned the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, a Jehovah's Witness publishing house. Local laws had already banned the Jehovah's Witness organization entirely. Many Witnesses violated laws against practicing their religion and distributing religious literature.
- Jehovah's Witnesses also refused to swear allegiance to Hitler or Nazi Germany or to serve in the military.
- Witnesses faced persecution and arrest. To be released from imprisonment, they could sign a form like this one, swearing allegiance to Nazi Germany. Few did so.

APRIL 1, 1935

In Germany, in 1935...

REVISION OF PARAGRAPH 175

2. Hinter § 175 des Strafgesetzbuchs wird als § 175a folgende Vorschrift eingefügt:

§ 175a

Mit Zuchthaus bis zu zehn Jahren, bei mildernden Umständen mit Gefängnis nicht unter drei Monaten wird bestraft:

1. ein Mann, der einen anderen Mann mit Gewalt oder durch Drohung mit gegenwärtiger Gefahr für Leib oder Leben nötigt, mit ihm Unzucht zu treiben oder sich von ihm zur Unzucht mißbrauchen zu lassen;

- The German government revised an existing law that already outlawed male homosexuality.
- The revision expanded what activities qualified as sexual contact and increased the punishments for those acts.
- Gay men were persecuted because they were seen as corrupting “German values” and not adding to the population. Because lesbians could still have biological children, they were usually not targeted.

JUNE 28, 1935

REICH CITIZENSHIP LAW



- This law defined who the German government considered “German” and who was a “Jew.”
- The law defined Jews as a race identified by blood and genealogy. It did not identify Judaism as a religion or culture.
- Under this law, Jews lost their citizenship and became “subjects of the state.”
- This law and the “Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor” are called the “Nuremberg Race Laws.”

SEPTEMBER 15, 1935

NUREMBERG LAWS EXTENDED



- The Reich Minister of the Interior, Wilhelm Frick, announced an expansion of the September 15, 1935 Reich Citizenship Law.
- Frick stated that the citizenship law also applied to Roma and Sinti (so-called “gypsies”) and to Afro-Germans.
- Roma, Sinti, and Afro-Germans lost their citizenship and were not permitted to marry “Aryan” Germans.
- This racial identity card identifies Konrad Lehman as a *Zigeuner* (Gypsy).

NOVEMBER 26, 1935

Black Americans and The Nazi Olympics

The Aftermath

After the Games...



In the Olympic Stadium, German spectators salute Adolf Hitler during the Games of the 11th Olympiad. Berlin, Germany, August 1936.



German soldiers parade through Warsaw to celebrate the conquest of Poland, Warsaw, Poland, September 1939

After the Games...



During World War II, African American and white soldiers who were bonded on the battlefield were divided at home. The US 12th Armored Division was one of only ten US divisions during World War II that had integrated combat companies.



African-American man drinking from a "Colored" water cooler in streetcar terminal, Oklahoma City, mid-20th century.

In America...

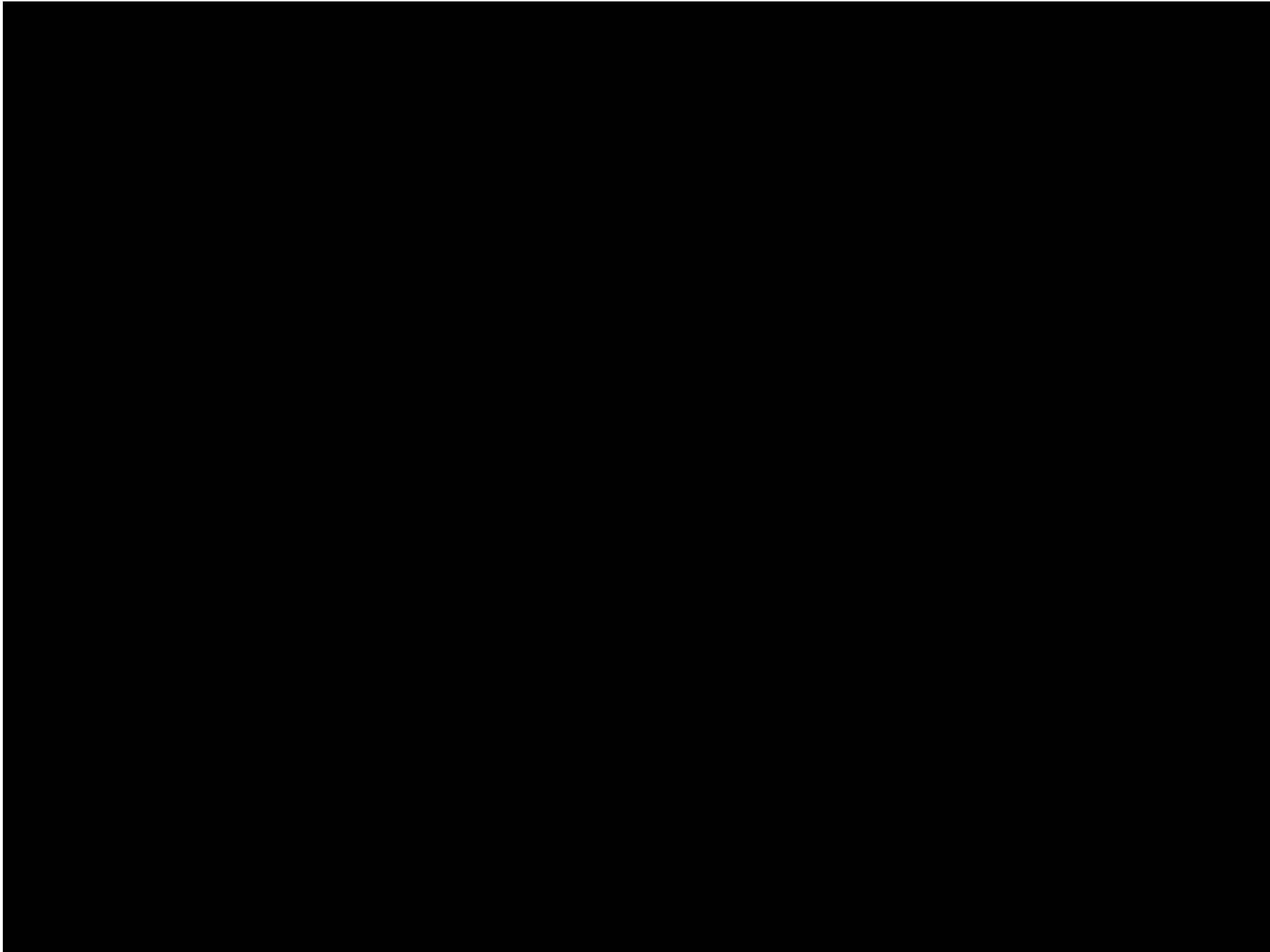


January 4, 2001, Marty Glickman Obituary

New York Times



Play from
6:10 – 8:30



April 1, 1980, Jesse Owens Obituary

Washington Post



Did Olympic achievement of Black American athletes in the Nazi Olympics translate into better lives for those athletes in the United States?