

# Darwinism, Inferior Races, Sports, and Hitler's Olympics

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## Abstract

**H**istorically, Black people have excelled in certain sports. This fact produced a problem for Darwinists since they believe that an ‘inferior race’ cannot be physically (or mentally) superior to other races. To resolve this contradiction, it was believed that since those with black skin were less evolved, their bodies retained ‘animal bestial athletic abilities.’ Thus, they were better at athletics. Nazi Germany embraced this explanation as the ‘solution’ to this contradiction. Ultimately, this belief found its way into the United States. The racism that Darwin produced resulted from a rejection of the clear teaching of Scripture that all humans were descended from the first couple as described in Genesis. The Biblical truth is only one race exists, the human race.

## Introduction

Darwinism was interpreted in Germany as evolution resulting from the survival of the fittest *race*; in America, Darwinism was viewed as resulting from the survival of the fittest *individual* (Krüger and Murray, 2003, pp. 17, 36). Evolutionists widely concluded that “inferior races” were both mentally and physically inferior. University of Texas professor John Hoberman explained that racial evaluation judgments made during the latter part of the nineteenth century included physical ability comparisons and

Charles Darwin was only one of many who assumed that Europeans were generally stronger than

darker-skinned people and that the performances of their explorers had confirmed this. In *The Descent of Man*, he stated that “civilized men [have] been found, wherever compared, to be physically stronger than savages. They [whites] appear also to have equal powers of endurance, as has been proved in many adventurous expeditions.” (Hoberman, 1997, p. 105)

This belief predated Darwin:

Even before the appearance of Darwin’s influential book in 1871, the German anthropologist Theodor Waitz had made the same point. In addition, he made an important

distinction between vitality and muscular force that is characteristic of nineteenth-century racial anthropology....This distinction between the savage and the better-disciplined (and therefore better-trained) European helped to preserve the latter’s athletic self-image and thus his sense of authority. (Hobermann, 1997, pp. 105–106)

The sources of Hitler’s racist’s ideas were complex, but one factor is clear. As the author/founder of the Science and Genetic Literacy Project, Jon Entine noted, the “young Adolf Hitler developed an obsession with the concept of evolution” and in 1924 he read

an internationally recognized textbook on genetics, *Human Heredity*, written by German biologists Erwin Baur, Eugen Fischer, and Fritz Lenz. Hitler twisted eugen-

ics to serve his political version of “survival of the fittest,”—who by his measure were the obviously superior Aryans. The title of his autobiography, *Mein Kampf*, translated as *My Struggle*, is widely thought to be a play on Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species*, which is subtitled “Struggle for Existence.” (Entine, 2000, pp. 178–179)

Although racism and anti-Semitism existed before the Scientific Revolution, construction of fixed and firm “racial” hierarchies and cultural taxonomies—grounded in references to measurable distinctions, among other pretensions to scientific objectivity—lent academic authority to popular [racist] thought and practice. And in an increasingly secular age, such discriminations became all the more influential. (Miller, 1996, p. 128)

### **Indoctrination in Racism**

German 1930s sports imagery actively promoted the myth of Aryan racial superiority and physical power. Artists idealized the athletes’ well-developed muscle tone and heroic strength. Often accentuated were the so-called Aryan facial features, especially blue eyes and blond hair (characteristics that are, in reality, more typical of Scandinavians than Germans). Such imagery reflected the importance the Nazi regime placed in their belief of the superior physical fitness of the Aryan race.

The problem the Nazis had with Jews was with their ‘race’ (actually their ethnicity), *not* their religion, since converting to Christianity did not remove their “poisonous racial taint” (Mandell, 1971, p. 61). Consequently, they were murdered in the concentration camps like those of any other so-called “inferior” race. The German Ministry of the Interior authorized the chief of police to arrest all Romani (Gypsies) who were also seen as racially inferior. They were interned

in a special camp *before* the Olympics commenced (Bergman, 2020).

Nazification of Germany and the eugenics programs involved all aspects of German life, even sports. A staunch Nazi close to Hitler, Hans von Tschammer und Osten, headed the Reich Sports Office that oversaw all organized German sports activities and clubs, including the German Olympic Committee. The Nazi government honed in on promoting sports, not only to prove the superiority of the ‘Aryan race’ but also to strengthen the German youth for war.

German Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, wrote on April 23, 1933, that “German sport has only one task: to strengthen the character of the German people, imbuing it with the fighting spirit and steadfast camaraderie necessary in the struggle for its existence” as taught by Darwinism (Fosty and Fosty, 2014, p. 127). In short,

Darwinist racial theories ... emphasize the interplay among the principles of evolution and selection as developed by Darwin, namely that human groups living in isolation from one another have developed unequally due to dissimilar processes of selection. It is this inequality that matters once races encounter each other, and in the ‘competitive struggle for existence’ races are superior or inferior with regard to selection. In the nineteenth century Darwinist racial theories led to the emergence of the specific racist theories of Social Darwinism. (Marten, 1999, p. 27)

The Nazis systematically excluded all “Non-Aryans” including Blacks, Gypsies, and Jews, and mixed “Aryan” and non-Aryan persons called *Mischling*, from German sports facilities and associations. Nazi Germany allowed only members of the “Aryan” race to compete for Germany in order to further promote Hitler’s Darwinian racial supremacy beliefs. As a result of the Nazi sports ban, several German Jewish athletes, such as Dr. Daniel Prenn, Germany’s top tennis

player since 1928, became British subjects (Mandell, 1971, pp. 62–63).

For international events, Hitler was unable to ban Jews from other nations. Consequently, Professor Robert Mandell observed many Polish, Czechoslovakian, and Hungarian Jews were part of their home Olympic teams, negating the myth of superior Aryan physical abilities (Mandell, 1971, p. 80). Hitler had no desire “to see proud ‘Aryans’ competing with their racial inferiors” and ruled that, in the future, the German Olympic games would involve only Aryans (Krüger and Murray, 2003, p. 1).

Hitler even proposed a fashion dress reform to promote a “healthier mode of dress which would uncover the bodies of the best of Aryan youth so that the maiden will ‘know her knight. If beautiful bodies were not completely placed in the background by our foppish modes, the seduction of hundreds of thousands of girls by bowlegged, disgusting Jew bastards would be quite impossible” (quoted in Mandell, 1987, p. 234).

### **The 1936 Berlin Olympics**

The connection between racism and sports is best illustrated by the events that occurred at the 1936 Olympics. The 1936 Summer Olympics was an international multi-sport event held in Berlin, Germany. Berlin was selected to host the Games on April 26, 1931, two years before the Nazis came to power. Miller concluded that “no event in the history of modern sport has been more significant in either its impact or implications than the Summer Olympics of 1936” (Miller, 1996, p. 129).

At these pivotal 1936 Olympics, several of the visiting nations displayed behaviors that were blatantly sympathetic to Nazism, revealing a growing international acceptance of Darwinian racism. During the preliminary ceremonies, the Afghans, Bermudans, Bolivians, Icelanders, Italians, and Austrians gave a clear full-arm fascist salute. The Bul-

garians went further and not only gave a Nazi salute, but broke into the Nazi goose-step march. The Turks maintained the Nazi salute all around the track. Half the Austrians gave the Nazi salute and the other half the Olympic salute (Edmondson, 2007, p. 44).

The Chinese and Filipinos used neither salute but, instead, put their hands on their chest near their hearts. The crowd cheered the French, who they thought gave the Nazi salute, but conflicting reports exist as to whether they had given the Nazi or Olympic salute. The British gave a simple eyes-right salute, and as a result were coolly received. The Americans gave a “hat over heart” gesture, and were given a noisy whistling reception as they left the stadium. Over 110,000 people attended the opening ceremonies (Edmondson, 2007, p. 44).

### **Germany Camouflages Its Racist Agenda**

Hitler initially held the Olympics in low regard both because of his lack of interest in all sports and its internationalism. He became an avid Olympic supporter only after Goebbels convinced him of the games’ important propaganda value (Large, 2007, pp. 59–60). As a result, the Nazis provided financial support for the event amounting to over 20 million Reichsmarks, or about 8 million U.S. dollars. Goebbels thought the games would give the Nazi’s public a showing to prove their racist theories (Streissguth, 2005, p. 52).

While hosting the Summer Olympics, the Nazis wanted to present to the world an image of a peaceful, tolerant Germany. Consequently, during the Olympics for the two weeks in August of 1936, the Nazis camouflaged their racist and militaristic goals. After hiding their anti-Semitic agenda and their plans for territorial expansion, the regime exploited the Olympic Games in an effort to bedazzle the many foreign spectators

and journalists with the grandeur of Nazi Germany. The result was that

open intimidation of Jews in Germany was suspended, so the beating of Jews, previously reported to make the Jews look criminal and to justify their lynching, was outlawed. The order for the national press was explicit: “With respect to the upcoming Olympic Winter Games and until further notice, it is strictly prohibited to report disputes with foreigners in Germany or actual controversies with Jews. Even in local reporting such incidents are not to be mentioned under any circumstances, to avoid giving foreigners propaganda to use against Germany.” The “pause” on Jew-baiting in the press remained through the Summer Games, forcing the yellow press to overlook stories of the rigorous application of the Nuremberg Laws that previously it had assiduously dwelt on. (Krüger and Murray, 2003, pp. 24–25)

The Nazis even removed the “Jews not wanted” and similar signs from the city’s main tourist attractions in an attempt to hide their racism from visitors. It worked. Ticket revenues alone were 7.5 million Reichsmarks, generating a profit of over one million marks. Tolerance, though, had its limits.

During the Olympics, Nazi officer “Schirach suggested that the impression of amiability that was the theme of the hour might be strengthened if Hitler were to be photographed with his rival in popularity, [the American Black athlete] Jesse Owens” (Mandell, 1971, p. 236). Jesse Owens in particular would challenge both the American and Nazi idea of inferior race (see Figures 1 and 2). Hitler was so angry over Owens’ presence in the Olympics that “the Führer blew up and screamed at what he thought was the grossest insult. However, these reactions [by Hitler] were viewed by few [persons] and were suppressed” (Mandell, 1971, p. 236).

### **Anti-Black Racism and Sports**

Racism in many nations was especially strong against dark-skinned people. It was not only the Germans that “were rotten with anti-Negro prejudice” and were corrupted by the “save-the-white-race” ethic, but talented Black athletes in other nations were not allowed to participate in many sports in Nazi Germany (Mandell, 1971, pp. 115, 221). Nonetheless, neither Germany nor America could ignore one Black American named Joe Louis because he was a star athlete and

a surpassingly handsome physical specimen, clean, abstemious, loyal to his mother, and serious. He never shot his mouth off. In short he was hailed as a credit to his race. His neatly tucked stance and economy of movement reeked of science. An admiring reporter observed: “Any romantic white person who believes that the Negro possesses a distinctive quality ought to see Louis. He suggests a gorilla or a jungle lion about as much as [he does] an assistant professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.” (Mandell, 1971, pp. 115–116)

Other American Black Olympic contestants included Cornelius Johnson and David Albritton (Large, 2007, p. 230). The participation of Blacks in the Olympics was controversial, not just in Germany but in the entire Western world. The reason was that they (Negroes and native Africans) were an ethnic group that both the German and American race scientists regarded as inferior. One Black in particular would challenge both the American and Nazi idea of inferior race. His name was Jesse Owens.

### **Jesse Owens**

Owens held the world’s record for the long jump, and high expectations existed for him at the 1936 Olympics. He more than fulfilled them and won, not one, but four gold medals (Miller, 1996,



Figure 1. Jesse Owens performing at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, Germany. From Wikimedia Commons; [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Jesse\\_Owens](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Jesse_Owens).

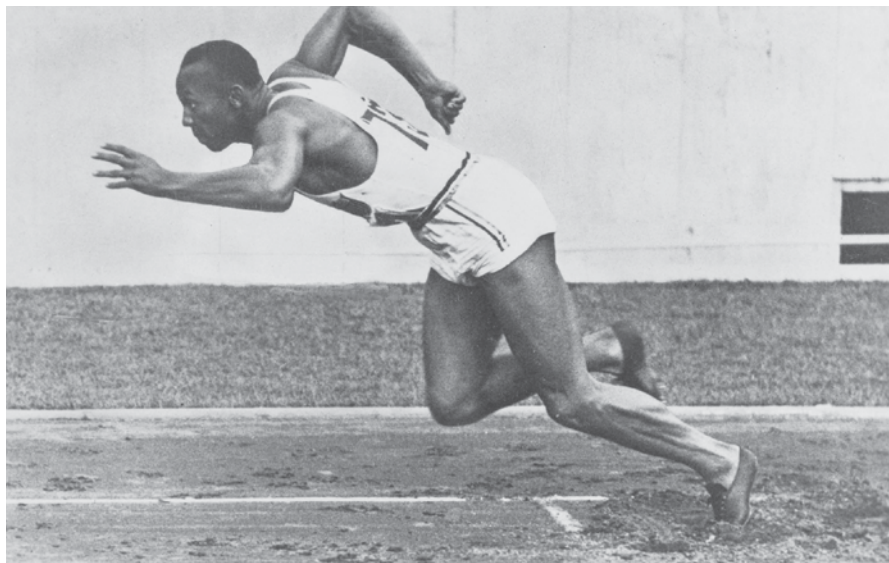


Figure 2. Jesse Owens performing at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, Germany. From Wikimedia Commons; [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Jesse\\_Owens](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Jesse_Owens).

p. 130). Ironically, in Berlin, Owens was able to use public transportation and patronize public facilities without the segregation and discrimination he faced as a Black man in much of the United States in the 1930s. In fact, a few Black Africans, such as Hans Massaquoi, lived in Nazi Germany with relatively few problems (Massaquoi, 1999).

Because Hitler endeavored to present a tolerant, friendly face to the world, he did not publicly, overtly snub minorities. Reports that Hitler deliberately avoided acknowledging Owens' victories, and even refused to shake his hand, were discounted by Owens himself (Baker, 2006, pp. 90–91). Specifically, Owens recounted, "When I passed the Chancellor he arose, waved his hand at me, and I waved back at him.... Hitler didn't snub me—it was FDR who snubbed me. The president didn't even send me a telegram" (quoted in Schaap, 2007, p. 193).

Others, though, recognized that Hitler regarded Blacks as an inferior race

and Hitler did not shy away from relating this fact to his close associates (Large, 2007, pp. 232–233). Nonetheless, for good reason, Owens was very positive about the Germans:

German spectators gave him the warmest ovation of his life. Just before he entered the stadium, Larry Snyder warned him to be ready for a hostile reception: "Don't let anything you hear from the stands upset you. Ignore the insults and you'll be alright." Little did Snyder know that German admiration for athletic achievement transcended racial prejudice. From the moment Owens first appeared on the track, curious German athletes and coaches milled around him. ... Then, after Jesse won his first heat, the entire stadium burst out in thunderous applause. From then on he received a loud ovation every time he walked onto the track. (Baker, 2006, p. 92)

In the 1936 Olympics environment, with

the omnipresent Nazi swastika and salute, as well as the medals won

by German athletes in a variety of events, contemporary observers of the Berlin Games were also inclined at times to refer to the athletic pageant as the "Jesse Owens Olympics." The victories by Owens in the 100 and 200 meter dashes, the long jump and sprint relay—as well as the stellar accomplishments of Ralph Metcalfe, Archie Williams, John Woodruff, Cornelius Johnson and other African-American competitors—had a profound impact not just on contemporary sports coverage but on racial ideology as well. (Miller, 1996, p. 129)

After the Olympics was over, Owens' name was hammered into the bronze plaque on the Berlin stadium four times, one for each of his four gold medals. The four records he set, for which he was awarded medals, replaced five athletes' world records. Owens held three of his records for 15 years, and the other was undefeated for 25 years (Durant and Bettmann, 1973, p. 208).

Hitler's contempt for Owens and races he deemed "inferior" arose

mostly in private, where Olympic neutrality was not required. Hitler's war armaments minister, Albert Speer, recollected that all of the "German victories—and there were a surprising number of them—made him [Hitler] happy, but he was highly annoyed by the series of triumphs by the marvelous colored American runner, Jesse Owens" (Speer, 1970, p. 73).

Hitler once expressed his racist views to Baldur von Schirach, the German politician who served as head of the Hitler Youth from 1931 to 1940. Specifically, Hitler stated that the "Americans ought to be ashamed of themselves for letting their medals be won by Negroes. I myself would never even shake hands with one of them" (Mandell, 1971, p. 236). The strength of Hitler's view was revealed in 1935 by one Olympic official who traveled to Germany just prior to the 1935 Nuremberg Party Rally in an attempt to persuade the Reich authorities to name at least one token Jew to the 1936 German Olympic team. On August 24 this official

discussed the matter personally with Hitler in Munich, proposing that Germany add a Jewish athlete to its team for the Berlin games, a symbolic gesture he compared with the American tradition of "the token Negro." He warned that if Germany did not do this, America might boycott Berlin. To reinforce his point, he reminded Hitler of the Jews' tremendous influence in America, especially in New York City, where he said "the Jew La Guardia" (La Guardia's mother was Jewish) was cultivating "anti-Nazi sentiment" ... But Hitler flatly rejected such tokenism, insisting there could be no Jewish participation on the German teams, period. If the IOC insisted on polluting Germany's teams with Jews, he said, he would call the whole damn thing off and substitute "purely German Olympic Games." (Large, 2007, pp. 84–85)

Hitler himself was hardly an example of the supposedly superior Aryan physical traits he valued. He was not involved in any physical activity except taking regular walks. Hitler "stayed resolutely clear of all competitive games" because he did not want to risk "looking less svelte and physically hardened than what might have been expected of the leader of the 'master race'" (Large, 2007, p. 59). Hitler was even described as a physically weak man who was "entirely un-athletic" (Mandell, 1971, p. 291).

### Sports Changes the View of Inferior Races

The view of "primitive" Negroid peoples began

to change in the early 1930s, due largely to the strong performances in the 1932 Olympic Games by the American blacks Eddie Tolan and Ralph Metcalfe (sprints) and Edward Gordon (long jump). Now some white (and even some black) commentators began to argue that blacks possessed certain anatomical advantages over whites that "explained" their recent successes in sprinting and jumping. (Large, 2007, p. 330)

The problem that racists had to deal with was, "How could these members of inferior races have done so well in the Olympics?" They did so well that "the Negroes' ... spectacular performance has done more than any other single factor to make these the greatest Olympics in history" (Krüger and Murray, 2003, p. 62). Hitler and many others explained this by arguing that "People whose antecedents came from the jungle were primitive," and their more primitive physical traits made them physically

stronger than those of civilized whites. They represented unfair competition and hence must be excluded from future games. Hitler was also jolted by the jubilation of the Berliners when the French team

filed solemnly into the Olympic Stadium ... Hitler ... was more disturbed than pleased by the Berliners' cheers. (Speer, 1970, p. 73)

The Nazi assistant to Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop even claimed that the United States took advantage of Germany by allowing "non-humans like Owens and other Negro athletes" to compete in the Olympics (Erenberg, 2006, p. 105).

### Racism Supported by Evolution

Darwinian-based racism was not unique to Nazi Germany. The conclusion that "Blacks and other 'primitive' peoples owed whatever athletic successes they might achieve" to their animal past was common in other countries including the United States (Large, 2007, p. 330). R. Meade Bache "in 1895 interpreted racial ability in boxing as an example of the Darwinian 'law of compensation' which postulated an inverse relationship between brain and brawn, between 'intelligence' and 'primitive constitution'" (Hoberman, 1997, p. 189). Nevertheless, the "prevailing view for much of the early twentieth century" was that white athletic achievement

derived from a combination of superior minds *and* superior bodies. The dominance in the early Olympic Games by whites of northern European extraction buttressed this perspective. In boxing, repeated victories over whites by black fighters like Australia's Peter Jackson and America's Jack Johnson generated some speculation about "inherent" Negro advantages in that brutal sport, but since blacks could compete only against other blacks in most athletic arenas the myth of white athletic supremacy went largely unchallenged. (Large, 2007, p. 330)

In explaining the jumping styles of Owens and his chief competitor, Luz Long, one German used

pseudoscientific racial terms: “In the person of the Nordic type, [we find] a well-thought-out style, a systematic working towards the outside edge of the takeoff point, in order to achieve an ever-better performance, a pulling together of the entire body. In the Negro [we find] an unsystematic upwards rush of the body, almost like the elegant and easy jump of an animal in the wild.” This comment presaged the manner in which the Nazis would deal with the long parade of victories by America’s black stars. (Large, 2007, p. 239)

In short, Nazi racism was eloquently demonstrated by the treatment of Black and Jewish athletes in the Olympics, documenting their belief that Aryans were the superior race, both intellectually and physically. But when a member of an inferior race excelled physically, the Nazis rationalized their achievement by claiming that Blacks were “more apelike” and less-removed from our ape ancestry than whites. As Professor Richard Mandell noted, “In view of the hostility against the Negro in general and the Negro athlete in particular, it is quite extraordinary that any of them made it to the top at all” (1971, p. 221). Remnants of this view are still with us today, although often more subtle (Goff et al., 2008, p. 292).

## The Effect of the Results in America

The Nazi racist idea that Blacks being closer to a primitive race accounted for their athletic skill was also shared by many Americans (Miller, 1998). In fact, the 1936 Olympics proved to have a major impact on the spread of racist ideas in America. As author and Nazi sports researcher, David Clay Large explains, it was the 1936 Olympics which hardened “pseudoscientific nostrums” that primitive races had superior athletic skills due to their jungle life past. As a

result of this ideology/philosophy, the idea spread widely

among sports commentators, officials, and coaches, Avery Brundage wrote that “one could see, particularly with Jesse Owens, how the Negroes could excel in track events. Their muscle structure lends itself to this sort of competition.” Albert McGall, Yale’s track coach, proposed that a projecting heel bone commonly found among blacks literally gave them leverage over white sprinters. (Large, 2007, p. 331)

The assistant coach of America’s 1936 Olympic track team, Dean Cromwell, wrote in 1941 that the Negro excels in certain sports “because he is closer to the primitive than the white man. It was not that long ago that his ability to spring and jump was a life-and-death matter to him” (quoted in Large, 2007, p. 331). Even Owens’ athletic coach, Ohio State’s Larry Snyder, believed that Owens’ success and that

of other black sprinters derived from “the striation of the muscles ... and the cell structure of the nervous system.” It also helped, Snyder said, that Negro athletes like Owens were willing to take orders from their white coaches: “Most colored boys take coaching very readily. They have perfect confidence in their coach ... and are willing and glad to leave their training, their form, and their perfection of their technique up to him.” (Large, 2007, p. 331)

In a post-game essay titled “The Real Winners in the 1936 Olympic Games,” Johns Hopkins University professor of experimental physiology, Charles D. Snyder,

insisted that the victories of the American blacks in Berlin did not necessarily undermine the doctrine of overall white supremacy on the athletic field. “Perhaps in the short races,” he wrote, “some anatomical advantages of bone or muscle structure gives the black man an

advantage over the white. In any case, we must remember that the Negro boys were trained by white men in the white men’s institutions.” (Large, 2007, p. 331)

One other theory for why Blacks did so well in sports was because it was

estimated that only one Negro slave in five was able to live through the rigors of the “Middle Passage,” and that the horrible conditions of slavery took toll of many slaves who could [not] make biological adjustments in a hostile environment. One finds the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest operating among Negroes as rigorously as any selective process ever operated among human beings. *There is just a likelihood that some very vital elements persist in the histological tissues of the glands or muscles of Negro athletes.* (Quoted in Hoberman, 1997, p. 191; emphasis in original.)

This theory does not explain the superior performance of those many Blacks whose ancestors were never slaves.

The propaganda about superior and inferior races during the 1936 Olympics led to other nations interpreting the performance of athletes within Darwinian racist ideology. For example, “Japan’s military leaders saw their nation’s strong performance in Berlin as a confirmation of Japanese general “racial vitality” and as yet another indication that Japan was destined to replace America and Britain as the chief imperial power in East Asia” (Large, 2007, p. 292). Even the Chinese athletes, although they did not win a single medal in 1936, drew their

own positive “racial lesson” from the Berlin games. In reference to Jesse Owens’s victories, one prominent Chinese journalist wrote that his performance “destroyed the poisonous myth of white supremacy,” while another asked, “Now who says the colored races ... are inferior to the white race?” (Large, 2007, p. 292)

Of note is the “idea that black athletes were more naturally gifted than whites at certain athletic events was not” adopted by the British in spite of their “tradition of manly sports and imperial rule” (Krüger and Murray, 2003, p. 81). Rather, in Britain, Owens was

taken at face value as a splendid individual athlete. The question of confounding or confirming Nazi theories of the “master race” did not occupy the public to any great extent, though it was widely believed that Hitler had snubbed Owens in an unsporting way. The British certainly did not draw the conclusion of some French commentators that they should use their empire to find black athletes to win medals for them. The imperial British amateur was too racially arrogant and too genuinely “sporting” for such a thing. (Krüger and Murray, 2003, p. 81)

The issue of race was given little open prominence in the games themselves. The Japanese sport teams even ignored the problem, partly because Japan is not a multiracial country and, therefore, experienced few racial problems and the Jewish issue was nonexistent in Japan.

The only problem Japan had with the Nazi regime was whether or not the Japanese would be considered a colored race under Nazi law. Matsuzo Nagai, the Japanese ambassador to Germany, called on von Neurath, the minister of foreign affairs, on Oct. 20, 1933. The reason for the meeting was that Nagai wanted to know whether the Japanese were considered a colored race under the bill for amending the criminal law. The minister answered that the Japanese were never considered a colored race. (Krüger and Murray, 2003, pp. 134–135)

Many historians believe that the racist theory of the source of Black athletic ability still exists today. Hoberman writes that one modern ambitious project was

to resurrect the Law of Compensation in the form of zero-sum physiological economy in which “the fast sex hormonal promotion of full sexual differentiation of the body is accompanied by fast maturation of the brain.” And this model leads straight to the classic muscle/mind tradeoff Darwin presented in *The Descent of Man*. (Hoberman, 1997, p. 230)

In 1971, Henry Edwards noted the persisting Darwinian context in which black athletic performances were still interpreted as evidence of retarded development: “So by asserting that blacks are physically superior, whites at best reinforce some old stereotypes long held about Afro-Americans—to wit, that they are little removed from the apes in their evolutionary development.”

One effect of this racist dogma was that

by accepting the stereotype of black athletic superiority, white athletes inflict a crippling psychological handicap on themselves. Finally, by arguing for a cultural rather than a biological interpretation of “race,” ... black athletic superiority results from “a complex of societal conditions” that channels a disproportionate number of talented blacks into athletic careers. (Hoberman, 1997, p. 195)

## Summary

The Nazis and the people of many other Western nations rationalized the success of Black athletes by concluding that they were members of “primitive races” that were closer to their animal ape past than the Caucasian races. Consequently, their superior athletic skills, rather than demonstrating their superiority, proved their inferiority!

The prime example, the 1936 Olympics, was “inextricably bound to Hitler’s policies of ‘racial purification’” as was

almost everything else in Nazi Germany (Miller, 1996, p. 131). Nonetheless, the enormous success of Jesse Owens inspired many Blacks to excel in sports, and this factor alone was no doubt important in the athletic success of Black Americans (Edmondson, 2007, p. 37). This history documents that evolutionary ideas are often built on *propaganda* that is popularized through public and media-led endeavors where multiple people, simultaneously receive the propaganda/false ideologies.

The major significance of this study was in demonstrating that Darwinian survival-of-the-fittest ideas were actually visibly negated during the 1936 Olympics through the incredible performances of the Black athletes. But the visible display of Black men fully functioning as the image of God with other men (and doing so with exponential results), was often ignored and instead re-labeled as simply “left-over animal traits.” In reality, their performances were proving the Biblical concept that all men are created in the image of God and no one people group is inferior or superior to any other.

The historical significance of this 1930s connection of sporting events and the performances of different “races” also revealed that Darwinists were a major cause of the spread of racist ideas about people of color—not science fact. In the end, the lesson that can be learned is that Nazi Germany’s adherence to evolutionary theory blinded their eyes to the visible truth being played out in front of them. *Their conclusions proved that racist ideas are simply the delusions of men* who desire to “suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18). The reality was that the conclusions the Nazis were making about Black athletes were not based on the scientific method but Nazi propaganda. The only way that an idea as absurd as Blacks being athletic because they were closer to their “animal past” could become popular and spread to the world is in the hearts of men who have given themselves over to

false beliefs (Romans 1:28). The 1936 Olympic Games proved the opposite of what the German régime wanted people to believe about human origins. Unfortunately, many people have allowed themselves to be “indoctrinated” by corrupt leadership and the allure of public opinion—much like what is going on in the world today.

Abilities of all humans point to the fact that they were created in the image of God, established by the fact that the Bible simply says “all mankind” were created in God’s image, Genesis 1:26–27. This is significant to the field of Creation Science where we desire to see all men in God’s image, and so desire to discredit evolutionary theory, which has in society displaced God and the evidence for Him, namely His creation.

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