



**The Exeter College Summer Programme
at Exeter College in the University of Oxford**

Individual Research Tutorial Proposal Form

Name: Lizzy Zarate

Home University: New York University

Home Degree Major: History, minor in Politics

Expected Graduation Date: May 2023

ECSP course you would like to substitute for the IRT: Literatures of Modernism

Title of your Proposal: “The Politics of the Olympics: Athletics in the Cold War Era”

Subject Area of this Proposal: History

Briefly describe your proposal in no more than 250 words.

The Olympic Games are largely considered to be the world stage for athletic excellence and sports competition. During the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, the world hosted twenty-two Winter and Summer Olympic Games. Two in particular were key points in the escalating tensions of the Cold War. The first was the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow, which was boycotted by the United States. Subsequently, the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles was boycotted by the USSR.

Both events were an exercise in international reputation, where the global superpowers’ primary political objective was to show the superior athletic prowess of their citizens as a means of establishing global dominance. But what was the political impact of the Games where both powers *were* in attendance? Why did the Olympic Games become a new battleground for this political conflict? And how did each respective superpower use their host Games to show their dominance – and were there any similarities in their approaches? In this paper, I will not only compare and contrast the actual athletic and political events of the Games, I will also examine the similarities and differences in the Soviet and American athletic training programs. By considering these issues in the context of the Cold War era, I hope to offer valuable academic insight into the potential causes and effects of the Olympic Games as a platform for political conflict.

Briefly describe any relevant study you have already completed in the area.

In the fall semester of my second year, I took a class in Comparative Politics where we examined the Soviet Union as a case study in the transition to democracy. I have also taken classes in International Politics and Political Psychology. Both classes

covered the subject of international reputation as it pertains to national identity. Intrigued by these topics, I began conducting my own research, studying the link between the Cold War and the reform of youth fitness programs in the U.S. during the same era.

List any books or other resources which may be relevant and/or necessary to your proposed research. Please limit your answer to no more than 10 entries.

Cold War Cultures: Perspectives on Eastern and Western European Societies, edited by Annette Vowinckel, et al., Berghahn Books, Incorporated, 2012. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.library.nyu.edu/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=915492>.

D'Agati, Philip. *The Cold War and the 1984 Olympic Games: A Soviet-American Surrogate War*, Palgrave Macmillan US, 2013. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.library.nyu.edu/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1249573>.

Dyreson, Mark. "The Californization of Olympian Love: Olga Fikotová and Harold Connolly's Cold War Romance." *Journal of Sport History*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2019, pp. 36–61. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jsporthistory.46.1.0036. Accessed 28 May 2021.

Kobierecki, Michal Marcin. "Boycott of the Los Angeles 1984 Olympic Games as an Example of Political Play-Acting of the Cold War Superpowers." *Polish Political Science Yearbook*, 44, 2015, p. 93-111. HeinOnline, <https://heinonline-org.proxy.library.nyu.edu/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/pps40&i=93>.

Redihan, Erin E. "The Gerald R. Ford Administration and the Olympic Movement: Political Games." *Sport History Review*, vol. 50, no. 1, May 2019, pp. 54–74. EBSCOhost, doi:10.1123/shr.2017-0044.

Rider, Toby C. *Cold War Games: Propaganda, the Olympics, and U.S. Foreign Policy*. University of Illinois Press, 2016. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/j.ctt18j8wv0. Accessed 26 May 2021.

Ross, MacIntosh, and E. K. Nagel. "More than a Miracle: The Korean War, Cold War Politics, and the 1960 Olympic Hockey Tournament." *International Journal of the History of Sport*, vol. 35, no. 9, May 2018, pp. 911–928. EBSCOhost, doi:10.1080/09523367.2018.1538130.

Sarantakes, Nicholas Evan. *Dropping the Torch: Jimmy Carter, the Olympic Boycott, and the Cold War*, Cambridge University Press, 2010. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.library.nyu.edu/lib/nyulibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1042401>.

Important: *The IRT is subject absolutely to the Academic Director's approval and the availability of an expert in Oxford to guide your research. Submission of an IRT proposal and payment of the supplementary fee does not guarantee acceptance.*