



# The Politics of the Olympics: A Survey (Politics of ...)

*Bairner Alan*

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With the ever increasing global significance of the Olympic Games, it has never been more topical to address the political issues that surround, influence and emanate from this quadrennial sporting mega event. In terms of the most recent evidence of the politics of the Olympics, the 2008 Beijing Games were riddled with political messages and content from the outset, and provided a global stage for protesters with numerous agendas. These included, to name but a few, proposed boycotts, potential terrorist attacks, the question of open media access, protests against China's political practices and attempts to interrupt the 'traditional' torch rally.

Essays in this collection focus on numerous political aspects of the Olympics from a variety of different perspectives, with a Glossary that contains a range of politically relevant entries relating to famous and infamous Olympic athletes, Olympic movement personnel and events and broader political issues and developments which have affected the modern Games. The purpose of this anthology is not to perpetuate hatred towards the concept and practices of Olympism or to regurgitate a 'celebratory party line'. Instead, in addition to being informative, the book offers critical engagement with the Olympics by raising awareness of the movement's political significance. Consequently, the essays in this anthology illustrate the strong but changing links between the modern Olympic Games and politics, in general, and address and discuss the key political aspects and issues with regard to the Games themselves, to national and international sport organisations and to specific countries' attitudes to (ab)using the idea/ideal of the Olympics for their own political ends.

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