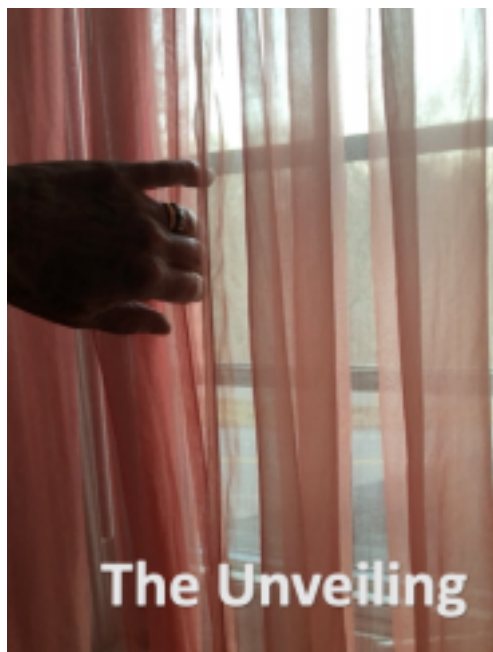


***The Unveiling***  
**Our Little known History**



**“SHUT UP AND ...”**

**Silencing Athletes on Race and Justice**

The Olympics are coming up on July 23rd! If you're like us, you are getting excited by the prospect of seeing your s/heroes do their thing. Simone Biles! S(w)imone Manuel! Naomi Osaka! Sha'carri Richardson! Go girls!

But there are fierce restrictions on this glorious show. Athletes representing their countries are not allowed to be individuals with thoughts and beliefs. Already IOC officials are warning that no political statements such as Black Lives Matter

symbols will be tolerated. This is nothing new.

We've all seen the iconic photo of Black American track stars Tommy Smith and John Carlos with their heads bowed and black-gloved fists in the air on the podium of the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. Smith said he had raised his right fist to represent black power in America, while Carlos raised his left fist to represent black unity. Together they formed an “arch of unity and power.”



Many people don't know the back story. Though they won 1st and 3rd in their event, the two had considered not attending the Olympics at all. Tommie Smith, the fastest man in the world at the time, had experienced disgusting racism in the United States when he was off the track. A friend, San Jose State Professor Harry Edwards, had organized the Olympic Project for Human Rights (OPHR) and called for Black American athletes to boycott the games and let the world know the civil rights movement had not gone far enough. He told Black athletes they should refuse "to be utilised as 'performing animals' in the games."

The boycott never happened; the Black athletes showed up and smashed the record. They did not, though, forget the troubles faced by Blacks back home. But when they made their powerful statement for justice, the proverbial shit hit the fan.

They were booed by fans and sent home, not allowed to compete in further events. However, they were welcomed back as heroes by the Black community.

\*Incidentally, the Olympic Games president who suspended them from the team and expelled them from the Olympic Village was an American, Avery Brundage. He had been president of the United States Olympic Committee in 1936 and had made no objections against **Nazi** salutes during the Berlin Olympics.

Sadly, Professor Harry Richards was right about athletes being utilized as "performing animals" and not allowed to speak for themselves. Americans become outraged when their athletic heroes stand up for what they believe in. We'll never forget Fox News' Laura Ingraham saying LeBron James should "shut up and dribble" when he spoke out on racism and politics. Colin Kaepernick (arguably one of the most promising football stars of his time) was ridiculed (by an American president), threatened, and even lost his career for daring to speak out for what is right.

In this video, Hannah Drake reads her powerful tribute to his bravery and takedown of the oppressive system that condemned him: "All You Had to Do Was Play the Game, Boy."

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=234457390792961>