

What Each Student Must Submit

By 11:59 pm on November 12th, you (each student) must submit 500 words on what you want to contribute to the debate. Some possible questions you can respond to as your contribution: What are the competing interests or obligations in this issue? How should the moral interests be weighed or understood? Based on your position, what is the most challenging aspect of resolving these ethical problems? What is a problem with one of the opposing views? Which of the available options will best promote the interests of oppressed groups or individuals? Your analysis should focus on ethical issues. Do not attempt to answer all of the above questions in your paper. Focus on one particular aspect of the case that you will present with your team. **Your contribution should be from the viewpoint of your assigned position.** In other words, if you are an LGBTQI athlete, then your 500 words should be a reflection on the debate from the perspective of someone who has the interests of this kind of athlete. Depth and thoughtfulness are more important than breadth. **You should incorporate at least one of the readings assigned for the debate** (though you need to read *all* of the materials),

“Protests, Boycott Calls as Anger Grows over Russia Anti-Gay Propaganda Laws” by Laura Smith-Spark

(<http://www.cnn.com/2013/08/01/world/europe/russia-gay-rights-controversy>)

“Russian’s Anti-Gay Crackdown” by Harvey Fierstein

(http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/22/opinion/russias-anti-gay-crackdown.html?_r=1&)

“An Olympic Legend on Boycotts and Bigotry” by Frank Bruni

(<http://bruni.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/07/29/an-olympic-legend-on-boycotts-and-bigotry/>)

On your paper, include your name and your team assignment (e.g., Jack Schmack, LGBTQI Athlete).

Submit to Blackboard SafeAssign.

What Each Group Needs to Do

Before the debate begins, you will have some class time to strategize with your teammates. You should put together a coherent and compelling argument that reflects your interests in the issues at hand and responds to the debate questions (see below). If some members of the team want to “go rogue” and disagree with the majority opinion, that is fine. However, everyone

must provide arguments from their assigned standpoint. Keep in mind that when a team has numerous rogues, it will be increasingly difficult to present a coherent argument together. So do your best to accommodate the various concerns that people have to form a unified argument that you can present together. Without a minimally coherent argument, you cannot hope to hold much sway in this debate.

You have some flexibility in how you flesh out your position. There are several philosophical approaches and commitments that people from each side could have regarding boycotting the Olympics.

Format

After the teams have had 20 minutes to form a team strategy, the debate will open with each team providing an overview of their argument for 3–5 minutes. The moderator (Laura GG) will then ask each of the below questions. After each question, the teams will take turns providing a response. After a team responds to the question, the other two teams should provide a rebuttal to the team's answer. The debate will close with the teams trying to find at least minimal agreement on what responsibilities there are in curbing homophobia and LGBTQI discrimination in the Olympics.

What Will Be Debated

Given the laws recently passed by Russian Parliament and President Putin, there is alarm in the international community about the discrimination and persecution against LGBTQI individuals who live in Russia, or merely visit it or adopt a Russian child. Some activists believe that massive boycotting of the 2014 Russian Olympics will send a message globally and to the Russian government specifically: Homophobia will not be tolerated. Other activists, including some LGBTQI athletes who plan on competing next year, believe that this event should be used to gain allies; they argue that attending the event would have more of a positive impact, and people involved in the Olympics, like athletes, would not be alienated as a result. Still, many

U.S. consumers are debating whether it would be morally irresponsible to purchase Russian products, such as vodka and Olympics paraphernalia. They wonder whether they should even watch the Olympics on the television. Perhaps if the International Olympics Committee sees long-ranging, successful protests and boycotts, they will reconsider where they hold future games.

Questions

1. Is it morally problematic for athletes to knowingly and willingly compete in the 2014 Olympics, given the new legislation? What are the moral responsibilities of athletes in this situation?
2. The International Association of Athletics Federations has “guaranteed it [the Russian laws] will not affect the athletes in any way.” Should athletes trust this claim that they will be completely unaffected by the recent legislation in Russia if they attend the Olympics? What are some worries that the International Olympics Committee, IAAF, and USA Track and Field *should* have on behalf of LGBTQI athletes who compete in the 2014 games?
3. Should consumers and viewers in the United States and elsewhere boycott watching the Russian Olympics and boycott purchasing Russian products? Are they responsible for expressing their protest to the Russian laws? If so, how far does this responsibility go? Should all consumers protest the laws, even if some of them take issue with the LGBTQI identity/lifestyle?
4. From a moral point of view, how should the members of the International Olympics Committee decide the best location for the games? Should discrimination in a country make any difference in this decision, especially given some activists’ desire to take advantage of these highly publicized situations to raise awareness?

Groups

International Olympic Committee

Abdallah, Farah
Arroyo, Ava
Baez, Alejandra
Blakeway-Phillips, Bella
Byrd, Giacobbe
Chavez, Michelyne
Ciesemier, Kendall

Russian Olympics Protestors

Riggins, Elizabeth
Schafer, Luke
Shiu, Kristen
Tersy, Marisa
Thompson, Kate
Trefny, Elizabeth
Vicas, Alexander
Willits, Claire

LGBTQI Athletes

Collins, William
Dandoy, Lorea
De La Paz, Richard
Douglass, Kathryn
Germovic, Mirza
Hanlon, Kyra
Hopp-Storey, Maddie

Consumers/Viewers

Kenslea, Timothy
Landegger, Montana
Laughlin, Peter
Link, Allison
Mannix, John
Peisch, Stella
Regan, Heather