

1904 Derby Day, Washington Park Race Track, Chicago Photograph

Background

This photonegative is part of the *Chicago Daily News* collection at the Chicago Historical Society. It was digitized and made available on the Library of Congress Web site. The summary that accompanies the image online is: “image of women in horse drawn carriages and men standing alongside the carriages on the inside of the track at Washington Park Racetrack in Washington Park on the south side of Chicago, Illinois. A grandstand is visible in the background.” The date given for creation is June 18, 1904.

Teaching Ideas

Analyzing the Document

Ask students to examine the document intently, ask the following questions:

- What exactly do you see in this photograph?
- When do you think it was taken? Why?
- Why do you think the photo was taken?

Discuss students’ responses afterward and relay additional background information on photograph. Ask students to think about and reflect on the role of sporting events in our life today.

Creative Writing & Historic Research

Encourage students to imagine that it is 1905 and they are photographers for the *Chicago Daily News – CDN* (newspaper of the featured primary source). The *CDN* editor would like each photographer to improve their writing and research skills and has given the following assignment. Each staff photographer must produce a special two page spread highlighting the history of Washington Park Race Track in Chicago and Derby Day. Additional photos can be found in the *American Memory Collection* on the Library of Congress Web site at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>.

The following resources will also be of assistance:

- The *Encyclopedia of Chicago* Web site at: <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/>
- The *Chicago Tribune (1849-1985)* available through ProQuest Historical Newspapers on the Chicago Public Library Web site at: <http://piscator2.chipublib.org/ChicagoAuth.asp> or <http://www.chipublib.org/> (follow the Find It! header)
- Reiss, Steven, *Horse Racing; Leisure*. Eds. Grossman, James R., Ann Durkin Keating, and Janice L. Reiff, 2004, *Encyclopedia of Chicago*, pp.390-1, 468. The University of Chicago Press, ISBN 0-226-31015-9.

Further information about the *Chicago Daily Newspaper* can be found at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpcoop/ichihtml/about.html>.

Additional Exploration of Primary Sources

Have students compare and contrast the 1904 image with the 2007 photograph of the same area (found at the end of this document). Please note that the 2007 photograph was taken based on approximate historical descriptions, yet it may not capture the exact location.

- What appears in both photographs?
- What is different in the photographs?
- Why do you think the changes occurred?

Ask students to create their own Chicago “then and now” visual display. Each student should find another image on the Library of Congress’ American Memory site at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>. The students can then visit the actual site (parental assistance may be necessary) and take a current photograph. Digital, disposable, or camera phones are options. Setting the standard for the visual display may prove helpful (for example, both images on one 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper). Students should also write a paragraph on the history of their selected site in Chicago. Upon completion, students can exchange their “then and now” compositions with each other for further analysis with the questions listed above. After students have examined another student’s “then and now” composition, they can share their historical background paragraphs. A class book could be created to share with parents and other teachers.

Further Research and Public History

Have students complete additional research on the history of Washington Park in Chicago. Research can focus on the race track with boundaries falling just south of the park, as well as other aspects of the park. Resources from the online *Encyclopedia of Chicago* and the *Chicago Tribune Historical Newspaper* archives are starts. The Web site URLs for these resources are listed above.

After further research students can create a 10-15 minute active entertainment piece. This piece could “hypothetically” be performed during the 2016 Summer Olympics Opening Ceremony, if Chicago is selected to host the games. The entertainment piece should be designed to capture the audience’s attention, as well as highlight an accurate history of Chicago’s Washington Park. Students should share their entertainment piece with the class. Share video footage of Super bowl half-time shows, prior Olympic Opening Ceremonies, or even the last slice of the movie “Bill and Ted’s Excellent Adventures” for inspiration.

Illinois Learning Standards

Taken from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Web site at <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/>

Language Arts

State Goal 5 – Use the language arts to acquire, assess and communicate information

5A: Locate, organize and use information from various sources to answer questions, solve problems, and communicate ideas.

5B: Analyze and evaluate information acquired from various sources.

5C: Apply acquired information, concepts and ideas to communicate in a variety of formats

Social Science

State Goal 16 - Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.

16A: Apply the skills of historical analysis and interpretation.



Photo: *Chicago Daily News negatives collection*, DN-0001884. Courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society. Also available on Library of Congress Web site (www.loc.gov)

2007 Photograph Coming Soon