

A Case Study of the Rise and Demise of Power: Monique Berlioux, IOC Director, 1969-1985

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Monique Berlioux dedicated her life towards achieving goals. She was an elite athlete, a heroine to her countrymen, and an administrator extraordinaire. Her dominating physical appearance was commensurate with her organizational skills within the International Olympic Committee (IOC). In 1969, Berlioux became the IOC's unofficial Director of Information. In 1971, she received an official appointment. In June of 1985, after nearly two decades of devoted

service to the IOC, Berlioux abruptly resigned. Juan Antonio Samaranch instigated this resignation.

From the commencement of his presidency in 1980, Samaranch viewed with increasing alarm and irritation Berlioux's methods of conducting IOC affairs; so he forced her to resign. This careful study of Berlioux's career within the IOC details several decisive considerations that elucidate her startling separation from the Modern Olympic Movement, considerations which move beyond Samaranch's simplistic rationale for her resignation. Berlioux's infamous 'Jeckyl and Hyde' personality among IOC staff, her intransigent administrative style fostered under Avery Brundage's tutelage, and her Coubertin-like Olympic idealism vis-a-vis Samaranch's vision for the future of the Olympic Movement, help to explain the demise of Berlioux's career.

This paper examines the themes of power, conflict and control within the IOC. Primary sources used for this study include material from the Avery Brundage Collection, private interviews with IOC member James Worrall and Olympic scholar John A. Lucas, documents from the IOC archives, and IOC executive meeting minutes. Secondary sources used include articles by Olympic columnists in several international newspapers and magazines, as well as numerous books.