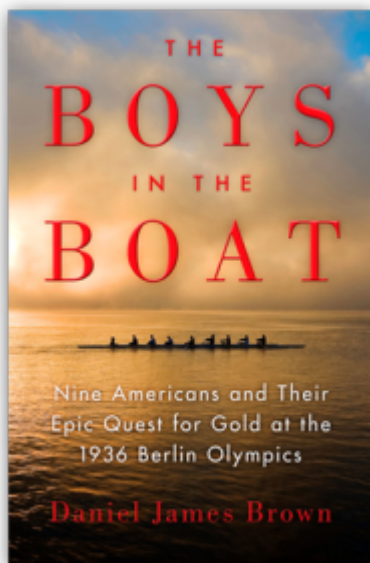


'Boys in the Boat' captures historic crew team

By Kathryn Reed

The United States in the early and mid-1930s wasn't anything like it is today. People on the East Coast barely could find Seattle on a map. The Olympics truly were a contest of amateur athletes. And, of course, Hitler was creating a dictatorship few saw coming.

This is the backdrop for "The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics" by Daniel James Brown. It was published in 2013.



Grit, determination and camaraderie are what made this crew team so successful. Saying this group of young men from Washington was special is an understatement.

Brown is able to capture the intensity of their quest through storytelling that makes this a page-turner. While the team is front and center, it is Joe Rantz who is the main character. His struggles to survive when his family turned its back and to find the money to pay for college were not unique. But they made him the man he became.

Lessons of what it means to be part of a team were often learned the hard way for this University of Washington team.

"The Boys in the Boat" is a bit of a coming of age story, part sports, and a ton of history. But all the segments are woven together in a way that gives depth to their various stories within the main story and perspective about living in Seattle 80 years ago as well as the workings of the Nazi regime.

It doesn't matter if you know the outcome of the various races, the words are enough to stimulate a bit of adrenaline. Brown's delivery is like that of a good broadcaster who makes you envision what is going on without needing to actually attend the sporting event.

Brown does such a superb job making the reader care about these men that you can find yourself silently cheering during each race.

The movie rights have already been sold.