

The Impossible Dual Focus of the Paralympics

by Theodore Dalrymple



The Olympic Games are bad enough: you can tell just how bad by the regimes that have considered them important.

The Nazis, the Soviets, the Romanians under Ceausescu, all thought that a high tally of medals justified their dictatorships, or at least redounded to their international credit.

The Chinese think so now, and even the more tinsel-brained of democratic politicians attach importance to such hollow and swiftly forgotten victories.

It is difficult to think of any tyranny or hardship suffered by a population for which winning medals in the Olympics could offer the slightest compensation. Who would say, “We are afraid to speak out, and if we do so we shall be arrested and tortured, but at least our hop-skip-and-jump champion performed the best”?

The [*Epoch Times*](#).