

# **Imagine if the Olympics Really Benefited the People of the Host City**

**by Guest Contributors - Thursday, September 06, 2012**

<http://politicsrespun.org/2012/09/imagine-if-the-olympics-really-benefited-the-people-of-the-host-city/>

The London Olympics games closed with the words of “Imagine” by John Lennon and “Freedom” by George Michael. John Lennon sang “Imagine all the people living life in peace.” And then Eric Idle sang “Always look at the Bright Side of Life.” But what did the Olympic Games really bring to London?

The idea of the Olympic Games is supposed to bring peace and harmony to the world. But do they really? What benefits do they bring the host city? Who do they really benefit? These Olympics were held in East London. Rather than leaving a legacy of benefit to East London, one of the most successful housing cooperatives was torn down to make way for the Olympic Athletes Village displacing many residents.

Many promises were also made and broken during the Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010. But who really benefited from both Vancouver and London games? Imagine if the Olympics really benefited the people of the host city.

One legacy that came out of the Vancouver Olympics was the establishment of the Poverty Olympics and the tradition has been carried to the London Olympics as protest and critique of the failure of the Olympics to bring real benefit to the people of the city that host them. Anti-Olympic organizing has already begun in the cities where the Olympics are going next.

Now that the London Olympics games are over, the media focus on the Paralympic games will not be the same. There will be little coverage and sponsorship as was the case here in Vancouver. These Paralympic games may not bring the coverage and sponsorship, but they do bring an opportunity for community organizing, support and awareness for people living with disabilities.

Maybe this Anti-Olympic organizing will make future cities hosting the Olympic really think about what social benefits can be gained from hosting these Olympic events rather than simply being projects of gentrification and economic development that benefit the corporate agenda. But it will also build a movement for social development with a growing network of anti-Olympic organizing.

Please follow this link for more Poverty Olympic coverage. <http://london.indymedia.org/articles/12559>