

# Delve Deeper into *My Way to Olympia*

A film by **Niko von Glasow**

**This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Penny Talbert and Rebecca Zinner of Ephrata Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *My Way to Olympia*.**

*Who better to cover the Paralympics, the international sporting event for athletes with physical and intellectual disabilities, than Niko von Glasow, the world's best-known disabled filmmaker? Unfortunately — or fortunately for anyone seeking an insightful and funny documentary — this filmmaker frankly hates sports and thinks the games are "a stupid idea." Born with severely shortened arms, von Glasow serves as an endearing guide to London's Paralympics competition in **My Way to Olympia**. As he meets a one-handed Norwegian table tennis player, the Rwandan sitting volleyball team, an American archer without arms and a Greek paraplegic boccia player, his own stereotypes about disability and sports get delightfully punctured.*

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## ADULT NONFICTION

**Reinertsen, Sarah and Goldsher, Alan. *In A Single Bound: Losing My Leg, Finding Myself, And Training For Life*. Guilford, CT: GPP Life, 2009.** Sarah Reinertsen's list of athletic accomplishments is impressive; a world record, an Ironman Championship and a hike across the Great Wall of China. After Reinertsen had her leg amputated at age seven, no one would have faulted her if she had never accomplished any of these things. In this memoir, we meet the feisty little girl from Long Island who decided she wouldn't let adversity slow her down.

**Howe, P. David. *The Cultural Politics of the Paralympic Movement: Through an Anthropological Lens*. London: Routledge, 2008.** Through the years, the Paralympic Games have become

a source of inspiration for disabled and able-bodied people alike. As the pomp and circumstance surrounding the event continues to grow, P. David Howe, a University lecturer and four-time Paralympian, challenges the assumption that the Paralympic Games are empowering to those with disabilities.

**Brittain, Ian. *From Stoke Mandeville to Sochi: A History of the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games*. Champaign, IL: Common Ground Publications, 2014.**

In this comprehensive history detailing the inception and exponential growth of the Paralympic Games, the reader begins their journey at the Stoke Mandeville hospital in the United Kingdom, where the first World Wheelchair and Amputee Games were held in 1948. In the second edition of Brittain's book, the journey ends with the most recent Paralympic Games held in Sochi, Russia. A far cry from their humble beginnings, the Paralympic Games now boast a close partnership with the Olympic Games and wide television viewership.

**Bailey, Steve. *Athlete First: A History of the Paralympic Movement*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008.**

This text, which was produced with support from both the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education and the International Olympic Committee, served as the first published history of the Paralympic Movement at the time of its publication in 2008. Providing an in-depth analysis of the Movement as well as the details surrounding the development of the International Paralympic Committee, this title has been hailed as a must-read for anyone with interest in Paralympic history.

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## ADULT FICTION

**Steel, Daneille. *Winners: A Novel*. New York: Delacorte Press, 2013.** Zooming down snow-covered hills, Lily Thomas'

eyes were affixed on one goal – Olympic Gold. When a tragic accident forces Lily to reconsider her possibilities, it is almost too much to bear. As Lily recuperates she interacts with others who are also facing seemingly insurmountable challenges in their lives. Follow their paths from ruin to triumph in this inspiring novel.

**Mae, Lynette. *Rebound*. Cincinnati, OH: Sapphire Books Publishing, 2014.**

Conner Maguire is at the top of her game, both literally and figuratively. Conner, a successful female basketball star, is enjoying her gains on the court and in her personal life. When tragedy strikes, Conner is faced with a life devoid of basketball. Lost in mourning and fear, she is aided by beautiful and strong-willed Shawn Tyler, who hopes to once again open Conner's heart.

**Burcaw, Jon. *The Sidecar Kings*.** When his friends at the Muscular Dystrophy Association summer camp tell him about all of the adventures they have throughout the summer, eight-year old TJ is most excited for their upcoming motorcycle ride. When a dangerous storm threatens the camp and the motorcyclists who are making their way to the campground, TJ prepares for the worst. In this inspirational novel, Burcaw challenges our preconceived notions of both bikers and the handicapped.

**McNeney, Arley. *Post*. Saskatoon: Thistledown Press, 2007.** For thirteen years, Nolan Taylor has been a staple of the Canadian women's wheelchair basketball team. When Nolan is forced into retirement in order to receive a much-needed hip transplant, she finds herself struggling to forge her post-retirement identity and to maintain relationships with those around her. McNeney deftly takes the reader along an emotional journey that explores the difficulties and triumphs of meeting physical needs among bodily limitations.



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## NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

**Johnson, Robin. *Paralympic Sports Events (Winter Olympic Sports)*. New York: Crabtree, 2009.** This entertaining quick reference features fascinating facts about all the Paralympic sports, with dramatic stories and dynamic photographs of the events. A terrific guide to both historical and current records, as well as to the reigning Paralympic champions!

**Schultz Nicholson, Lorna. *Fighting for Gold: The Story of Canada's Sledge Hockey Paralympic Gold*. Toronto: James Lorimer, 2009.** Canada is internationally recognized as a leader in men's and women's hockey, but in 2006 Canada had yet to conquer the world of sledge hockey, the Paralympic version of ice hockey played by athletes with a physical disability in the lower part of the body. The Canadian Men's Sledge Hockey team came into the 2006 games as the underdogs. Yet, through determination, guts and guile, they overcame all obstacles to win gold.

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## FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

**Christopher, Matt and Hirschfeld, Robert. *Wheel Wizards*. Boston: Little, Brown, 2000.** Seth Pender is a lively twelve-year-old with a strong love for playing basketball. When Seth suffers from a spinal injury that renders him wheelchair-bound, he believes that his life is over and withdraws emotionally from his friends and family. Seth's attitude changes when he sees another wheelchair-bound boy playing basketball. With fresh inspiration, Seth sets out to once again play basketball.

**Van Draanen, Wendelin. *The Running Dream*. New York: Ember, 2012.** Every morning, sixteen-year-old Jessica Carlisle

runs a five-mile loop around her neighborhood before school. The fresh morning air and the thrill of the run make her feel alive. Her love of running inspires Jessica to join the school's track team. One day, as the team is making its way to a track meet, a vehicle collides into the team's bus in a terrible incident. As a result of the crash, Jessica must have her leg amputated. As she faces tremendous difficulties completing daily tasks such as showering and climbing stairs, Jessica feels as though she not only lost her leg, but also her true passion in life; running.

**Auch, Mary Jane. *One-Handed Catch*. New York: H. Holt and Company, 2006.** After losing his hand in an accident in his father's butcher shop in 1946, sixth-grader Norman uses hard work and humor to learn to live with his disability and to succeed at baseball, art, and other activities.

**Crutcher, Chris. *The Crazy Horse Electric Game*. New York: Dell, 1987.** In his small Montana hometown, Willie Weaver is hailed as a hero. Single-handedly securing his baseball team's victory against Crazy Horse Electric, he is the epitome of an all-American athlete. After an accident robs him of his physical abilities, Willie is forced to rebuild his life by learning how to express himself in new ways.

