#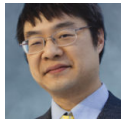 Raymond's subjective, unfair, and completely wrong impressions of the opening ceremonies of a major athletic event which took place recently

July 30, 2012

Raymond Chen

Like many other people, I watched the opening ceremonies of a major athletic event which took place a few days ago. (The organization responsible for the event has taken the step of blocking the mention of the name of the city hosting the event and the year the event takes place, or the name of the event itself except in editorial news pieces or journalistic statements of fact, of which this is neither, so I will endeavour to steer clear of the protected marks.) I wish somebody had let me know in advance that the opening ceremonies came with a reading list. I hope that at least the British history majors enjoyed it. NBC, the media organization which obtained the rights to broadcast the event in the United States, explained that they were not streaming the opening or closing ceremonies live because they "do not translate well online because they require context, which our award-winning production team will provide." And now we learned what sort of contextualization their award-winning production team provided: For Tim Berners-Lee, their valuable context was, "I don't know who that guy is." (*The Guardian* provides a snarky backgrounder.) During the entry of the various national teams, the standard activity is to make fun of their outfits. Dear Czech Republic: Spandex shorts and blue rain galoshes? It's as if you're *trying* to look hideous. Dear Germany: Wha??? I'm speechless. Dear United States of America: I hope you enjoy your shore leave. (Somebody seriously has a navy fetish going on.) Dear Sweden: I know it's late, but you're not supposed to wear your jammy-jams to the opening ceremony. *Jag säger bara...* Dear gracious hosts: Oh, now I get it. It's the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic. But still, you could've chosen a better tribute than wearing dresses from 1912.

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