

**Because of rather than in spite of: ‘Friday Night Lights’
Important Cultural Work of Intersecting Disability and Masculinity**

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Abstract

The 2006-2011 television series *Friday Night Lights* began with a storyline that featured Jason Street, an elite high school quarterback, becoming disabled. Usually, men with disability offer a straightforward media representation of a loss of masculinity and narratives consider personal triumphs “in spite of” this loss. For Garland Thomson (2007) conventional narrative genres conform to an image of bodily stability and perpetuate cultural fantasies of loss and relentless cure seeking rather than present stories “possible because of rather than in spite of disability”. She argues that presenting disability within the context of community and sexuality in particular can offer a different narrative of masculinity and structure a positive story. This paper considers the way the first season of *Friday Night Lights* rewrites the usual narrative of disability on television through Jason particularly in relation to community, sexuality and masculinity. This character marks a radical shift from other television characters with disability and offers a narrative because of rather than in spite of disability.

Key words:

Disability, masculinity, community, sexuality, Friday Night Lights, television.

Title Image: Production still from Friday Night Lights Television Series

(P. Berg, S.Aubrey, Imagine TV, Film 44, NBC, UMS , 2006-2012)

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We are all vulnerable – we will all at some point in our lives fall. We will all fall. We must carry this in our hearts, that what we have is special. That it can be taken from us, and that when it is taken from us, we will be tested. We will be tested to our very souls. We will now all be tested. It is these times; it is this pain that allows us to look inside ourselves ~ Coach Taylor *Friday Night Lights*

The television series *Friday Night Lights* initially struggled to find an audience yet has received almost universally positive critical acclaim—the pilot was described as “not just television great, but great in the way of a poem or painting, great in the way of art” by Virginia Heffernan in *The New York Times*.¹ The narrative conceit of the first season focused on Jason Street, a talented high school quarterback who became disabled in the pilot episode. The epigraph above is Coach Taylor’s voice over response to the news that his star quarterback has sustained a spinal cord injury following a bad tackle in the first game of the season. This statement, framed as a coach’s response to his team but directed towards the entire community as well as the audience captures the way disability is commonly constructed as both a tragedy and inspiration on popular television. However, *Friday Night Lights* offers a more nuanced representation of disability than what is usually seen on television.

My aim in this essay is to engage with images and ideas about disability and masculinity that are explored in the first season of *Friday Night Lights* as a result of Jason’s injury. Disability is often used on television to evoke an emotional response from the audience. For example, in drama disability evokes pity and is commonly used as an exit strategy to “kill off” characters.² Cumberbatch and Negrine’s 1988 research into the representation of disability on television found a total absence of main characters with disability engaging in series regular roles.³ By comparison, there are now a number of ongoing series regular characters with disability on television dramas such as *Glee*, *Friday Night Lights*, *House*, and *CSI*.

Jason Street from *Friday Night Lights* represents a new type of character with disability on television. He participates in the everyday of life and his experiences are no more or less significant than the other characters in the series. This is in odds to arguments by key disability theorists that that representation of disability on television has not changed in the last two decades.⁴ *Friday Night Lights* is an innovative television program which explores significant issues such as racism, disability, mental health, pressure on teens, religion, domestic abuse, and gender roles, through a variety of narrative devices including, ongoing characters rather than guest spots resolved in one episode. While characters with disability are rarely afforded major storylines on television drama, it is significant to note that Jason remains a main character for three seasons.

People with disability negotiate a complex identity that involves both physical difference and social stigma. Yet disability is often individualised and treated as something that a person must overcome—social restrictions are not addressed. While this narrative is retold on television, a new image is emerging as a result of the politicization of disability and the emergence of a disability culture movement (in Britain and North America especially). This paper will explore the centrality of disability in the cultural construction of identity, gender and power on television using the important contributions of the British social model of disability, but also recognizing its limitations, particularly as it has been unable to address questions of identity and media representation. Video clips from *Friday Night Lights* are embedded throughout the paper to demonstrate the innovative filming style integral to the series and the representation of disability.

Disability as a personal tragedy

In *Media, Gender and Identity*, David Gauntlett argues that film and television provide guidance regarding our interactions with other people, teaching us how to relate to friends, neighbours and lovers. He also suggests that the media reinforces the inequality of certain groups while promising equality for others. Although a group may have certain legal rights, media representation will often perpetuate their disempowered position. His further observation that “external social circumstances” influence the centrality of aspects of identity⁵ offers insight to the media’s role in the

social construction of disability. While disability is relevant to self identity, it is made significant by a disabling community. For example, while not being able to walk is relevant to a person's self-identity, it is made significant in situations where there is an absence of wheelchair accessibility—a disabling community. Narratives, characters and images can also be considered disabling in the sense that disability is represented under narrow parameters.

Disability is a representational identity and a “prevalent characteristic of narrative discourses”.⁶ Disability has historically been presented on television as a personal tragedy under three clear narrative tropes. Colin Barnes argues that frequently the individual is struck down by impairment, illness or injury and must rise above it – usually with the help of a non-disabled person – in order to get on with their life.⁷ Alternatively, for Pointon and Davis, the television character experiences a miraculous and spontaneous cure allowing them to continue on with life as though the disability never happened.⁸ Finally, the personal tragedy can be read as a punishment for wrong-doings. Within these narratives, characters are encouraged to both accept their condition and affirm their ‘normality’.⁹ Another common representation sees characters with disability convey information about other able bodied characters.¹⁰ Disability is continually re-constructed as an individual's personal problem, while social restrictions are not addressed.

Lennard Davis discusses this in the context of cinema, finding that disability is continually individualised, or constructed as heroic or tragic because it is not considered a cultural category:

The history of oppression of disabled people is unknown to most people, and so they see disability as an individual tragedy, worthy of being turned into a movie, and not as the political oppression and the struggle to fight that oppression, which makes for complex movies and even more difficult legal, social and political battles. It's a lot easier to make a movie in which we weep for the personal defeat of a person who loses a leg or two, or cry with joy for the triumph of an individual with disabilities, than it is to change the way we as a society envision, think about, and deal with people who are disabled.¹¹

Critical analysis of the representational system of disability reveals the cultural discourses behind our understanding of disability.¹² Although disability is often interpreted as a medical problem that should be cured, an alternative approach questions whether disability is exclusively an individual's personal problem or tragedy to overcome. This social model of disability sees disability as located in society, not the individual's "damaged body" and posits that mainstream society disables people that have impairments through inaccessible built environments and the perpetuation of stereotypes and prejudicial attitudes. The definition of disability as social oppression advanced by disability theorists such as Oliver (1996) can be expanded to include images, characters and narratives that encourage negative attitudes towards disability. For example, men who become disabled on film and television are often constructed as having lost their masculinity by becoming vulnerable.¹³

Masculinity and the Cultural Discourse of Disability

Jenny Morris finds that stereotypes of physical attractiveness exclude people with disability. Disabled men, she argues do not live up to the definition of masculinity as equal to strength while women fail to meet the cultural expectations of pretty passivity. People with disability do not fit into the heterosexual paradigm of active male and passive female. For Morris, the absence of disability is central to Western culture's definition of beauty, status, and authority. By extension, ugliness and evil are defined by the presence of disability. Morris believes disability has become a metaphor that draws on prejudice and ignorance. Through repetition, this cultural stereotype is confirmed. She sees the representation of disability in the context of masculinity as illustrative of the cultural negation of disability.

Arguing that social stereotypes of masculinity – which include strength, perfect bodies, not being vulnerable, a celebration of youth, and taking bodily functions for granted – Morris suggests that many Hollywood films representing disability do so as an exploration of a loss of masculinity. For example, *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989) chronicles Ron Kovic's journey from a teenaged patriot to being paralysed in the Vietnam War to becoming an anti-war political activist. Similarly *My Left Foot* (1989) explores the success of Christy Brown, a man with

cerebral palsy who teaches himself to paint and write using his only controllable limb—his left foot. For Morris, these two films rely on stereotypes of heterosexual masculinity to offer clear examples of the notion that “dependency is hell for a man” particularly as they are infantilised and experience romantic rejection.¹⁴

Narratives that explore disability as what society makes are not as common because a cultural mythology surrounds disability and dictates that “the disabled body is expected to engage in public “masquerades” of its own normalcy”.¹⁵ In other words, people with disability are expected to appear as nondisabled as possible and success is measured in terms of how well disabled people are able to approximate normalcy. Disabled bodies are subjugated as out of control and vulnerable.¹⁶ Rosemary Garland Thomson describes the stereotypical image of disability in many cultural texts:

Disability ruins a life, obliterates sexual activity and appeal,
prevents meaningful work, and isolates one from others.¹⁷

For Garland Thomson conventional narratives of disability conform to an image of bodily stability and perpetuate cultural fantasies of loss and relentless cure seeking rather than present stories “possible because of rather than in spite of disability”. While the most common narrative of disability is of despair, suffering and cure seeking, a new narrative of disability in the context of community and sexuality in particular, are emerging to structure a positive story.¹⁸ Garland Thomson sees the individualisation of disability as the primary reason why culturally we do not think about disability in terms of sexuality or community. Narratives that explore disability in the context of either or both sexuality and community counter the stereotypical stories of overcoming and pity. For Garland Thomson the documentary *Murderball* (2005) illustrates the way disability can structure a positive story through masculinity, sexuality and community.

The narrative of *Murderball* is relentlessly familiar as a sporting team of intensely masculine men prepare to battle their arch rivals; however, these strong athletes are disabled. The inclusion and indeed necessity of disability is significant as the athletes also fight against what they see as discriminatory cultural beliefs that emasculate them.

While the image of a wheelchair usually denotes a loss of masculinity on screen, in *Murderball* the chair has become a symbol of “freedom, sexiness and regained masculinity-maschismo”.¹⁹ This documentary problematises the two most enduring representations of disability –a loss of sexuality and a lack of community – by chronicalling the lives of hyper masculine athletes with disability.²⁰

Media images often use disability as an exploration of masculinity and dependency.²¹ However, in *Murderball* the presence of the wheelchair does not signal a loss of masculinity, rather it offers access to a hypermasculine world—you must be disabled to play murderball. Disability has provided these young men-

...a meaningful life in which one thrives rather than languishes. Disability provides an unanticipated opportunity for boys to come into themselves as athletes and men.²²

They are not the stereotypical “sidelined and dejected injured athletes”.²³ A similar narrative trajectory, albeit within the confines of a television drama, takes place with Jason Street on *Friday Night Lights*. *Friday Night Lights* rewrites the usual narrative of disability in relation to community, sexuality and gender as Jason maintains everyday life without denying the significance of his disability.

Friday Night Lights

Friday Night Lights is set in the fictional town of Dillon Texas where the community is defined by high school football. The series begins with the high hopes for the Dillon High School Panthers now that they have new coach Eric Taylor, and Quarterback Jason Street is ranked the best high school quarterback not only in Texas, but nationally. The aspirations of this working class town rest on Jason’s shoulders as he takes to the field in the first football game of the season. When Jason takes a bad tackle and is seriously injured, world for the entire community stops as they watch Jason lying motionless on the oval.

View Clip 1 : <https://www.dropbox.com/s/6coy501jhrs1110/FNL%20pilot.wmv>

At the hospital, it is discovered that Jason has sustained a spinal cord injury. The characterisation and experience of Jason Street becoming paralysed in a high school football game in *Friday Night Lights* is loosely based David Edwards who broke his neck playing varsity football for his high school team in 2003.²⁴ It is unusual to see representations of athletes becoming disabled as this does not conform to the cultural mythology of strength and super human achievement that surrounds the elite athlete. As Garland Thomson comments it is unusual to encounter disabled athletes because “bodies shaped by sport are usually the most regularized we encounter”.²⁵ However, Jason’s injury and subsequent disablement, both physical and social, drive this narrative.

Jason negotiates a complex identity that includes both physical difference and social stigma and his experiences are no more or less heroic than other characters. *Friday Night Lights* has also dealt with a number of other social issues including racism, injury, mental illness, poverty, religion, sex, rape, body image and drugs. In 1988 Cumberbatch and Negrine found a stark contrast between the portrayal of disability in soap opera (only 8%) and that of other social issues. Jason Street of *Friday Night Lights* could be the realization of their argument that when people with disability become among the leading characters on television, disability would come to be seen as an ordinary experience by the general public.²⁶ Jason engages in the typical storylines of this genre while revealing both the effects of physical impairment and a disabling social world. *Friday Night Lights* represents disability as the relationship between Jason’s body, mind, self, society, and an environment that excludes him.

Although disabled, Jason participates in the typical storylines of a teenaged character in a soap opera particularly those related to sex and romance. In addition to his tumultuous relationship with Lyla, narrative arcs include personality clashes in a share house, search for identity and career, feeling misunderstood by his parents, fights over girls, and teenaged pregnancy. His experience with disability provides the opportunity to consider political issues such as inaccessibility; access to rehabilitation, housing and employment; prejudice; and the process of adjusting to a new life with a disability within the same narrative.

Friday Night Lights relies on a narrative structure that emphasizes real life situations as opposed to contrived situations, for example Jason is not immediately successful when trying out for the quad rugby team. Instead he is encouraged to adjust to his new identity as a person with a disability. The use of multiple and handheld cameras conveys a sense of realism to the program and invites a more political image of disability.

Tele-visual style and the politicisation of disability

The first season of *Friday Night Lights* utilised a shaky camera and available light to adopt a cinema verité style of filming. According to Ethan Thompson, observational styles adopted by television programme makers offer “efficiency, visual complexity, and semiotic clout”.²⁷ Although his observations relate to a genre he describes as “comedy verite” similar opportunities for improvisation and new strategies of meaning making can be seen in the way *Friday Night Lights* makes use of this mode of filming. Verité styles challenge traditional tele-visual conceptions of camera and performer space to both disturb audiences and offer them a sense of intimacy with the characters. This holds particular significance for theorisation about the representation of disability.

While early disability-media theorisation criticised close up framing of the impaired body on screen as an exploitative objectification of the disabled body²⁸, more recent theorisation recognises the cultural potential of such an inclusion.²⁹ Snyder and Mitchell argue that these types of imagery force audiences to engage with disabled bodies by creating an intimacy.³⁰ The body is integral to the experience of disability and this should be reflected on screen in a way that recognises the way the body and self interact with a disabling social environment. The multiple camera angles adopted in *Friday Night Lights* cross camera and performer space to take in what is happening in and outside the screen without paying undue focus on any one specific thing. Disability exists as part of the world of the characters and through the framing reveals the way Jason’s experiences are shaped by both his body and a disabling or enabling environment. This clip of Jason learning to drive illustrates the way the environment can be modified to offer inclusion to people with disability.

The scene also recognises the significance of identity adjustment as a very real aspect of the lives of people with disability. While it is true that many problems experienced by people with disability can be solved by the provision of appropriate services, impairment can create difficulties that can not be attributed only to a disabling society.³¹ Impairment is often a marker of difference for people with disability and increasing the visibility of disability and impairment on television through characters such as Jason Street has the potential to change the way disability, difference and diversity are envisioned.

View clip 2: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/68kmdryd65qe518/Jason%20learning%20to%20drive.wmv>

Narrative dramas introducing characters who become disabled often depict this character as hopeless and socially dead. These dramas rarely depict a rehabilitation process that demonstrates the alternative ways people with disability can participate in the community. Narratives that result in death or a cure, like Carlos Solis' miraculous cure from blindness in *Desperate Housewives*, or Jean Sylvester's death in *Glee* are more common. A "cure or kill" philosophy persists in cultural representation.³² Throughout the first season of *Friday Night Lights* Jason is not only depicted participating in physiotherapy, he is shown in his every day life using modified equipment such as a fork to cut his own food, or a straw to drink. Or as above, learning to drive a modified vehicle.

Community

Initially Jason struggles to find his place in the community and his old friends have difficulty relating to him because he will never walk or play football again. When the team visit him in hospital they are visibly uncomfortable. Later when Jason is wheeled out onto the football field before a Panthers game (1:7 *Homecoming*), the silence of the shocked crowd is in stark contrast to the exuberant cheers Jason received as the star quarterback in the pilot episode. They applaud only when instructed to do so. Herc, who shares a hospital room and attends rehab with Jason, takes issue with Jason being treated as a mascot and begins introducing him to a more political view of disability—one that will eventually give him an identity through a sense of community. Significantly, Jason is unable to re-enter the football community until he embraces the disability community in later episodes.

It is important to consider issues of identity readjustment – a concept left out of much disability theorization – because it does exist and is part of the experience of acquired disability. By Episode Eight *Crossing the Line* Jason begins to settle into his new life with a disability through sport and community. After discovering his girlfriend (Lyla) and best friend (Tim) have been having an affair he initiates a fight with Tim. This is an overt signal towards Jason reclaiming his masculinity. Herc – slightly older, definitely tougher and much more politically aware than Jason – is integral to this journey. Herc introduces Jason to the extremely masculine sport of wheelchair rugby (murderball). Herc is horrified that Jason continues to be with Lyla despite her infidelities and tells Jason that by keeping the girlfriend he had when he could walk he avoids the reality that he is one of them.

Herc urges Jason to stop taking “crumbs”. Norden describes the ways characters with disability are further separated as a phenomenon of isolation:

The phenomenon of isolation is reflected not only in the typical storylines [...] but also to a large extent in the ways filmmakers have visualised the characters interacting with their environments; they have used the basic tools of their trade – framing, editing, sound, lighting, set design elements (e.g. fences, windows, staircase bannisters) to suggest physical or symbolic separation of disabled characters from the rest of society.³³

Friday Night Lights utilises a more political and innovative filming style, for example when Jason does break up with Lyla, the camera is at his chair height during their argument. A similar camera technique was used in the 1978 Vietnam War film *Coming Home* to avoid a semiotic connection with powerlessness.³⁴ Throughout the following episodes the camera height is at Jason’s chair giving him prominence in the frame and semiotic power, except when the narrative is dealing with instances of social disablement. In those scenes, Jason is socially disempowered and the camera looks “down” on him such as when he is refused the sale of beer for being underage in Episode 19 *Ch-Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes* while Tim, the next customer and exactly the same age has no problems simply because he is a football player.

The series explores and critiques the cultural imbalance between the football players who are treated as Gods and the rest of the community. They are afforded favourable treatment in almost every aspect of their lives, from being celebrated on the football field, to receiving grades without completing their school work, to being sold alcohol despite being underage. Jason, as Quarterback, was a central figure in this culture must now negotiate a new life.

Crossing the Line (Ep 1.8) follows Jason's yearning to be part of something, like he was with football. In homage to the documentary, wheelchair rugby or murderball represents a new type of masculinity to Jason. The other characters undergoing rehabilitation with him are men, like Herc, who embrace this kind of masculinity and play this sport. Jason is at ease and happy with them. This is in stark contrast to his football friends, including girlfriend Lyla, who do not fit in. In episode 18 *Extended Families* Lyla feels unsure of herself as Jason's girlfriend and the changes he is making and insults this group of hypermasculine disabled men. Jason laughs at her as she describes being afraid of who he is becoming and whether they will last.

By contrast Jason discovers acceptance in sport "I don't think I've been this happy since the accident". Although Jason plays well in his tryout he fails to make the team - because he isn't "comfortable in [his] chair yet". He is encouraged to adjust to his new identity as a person with a disability. Despite this rejection, his involvement in an extremely masculine sport that requires athletes be disabled allows Jason a way to reconnect with football – the sport that defined him – in a new way. He begins mentoring the Panther's new quarterback and becomes friends with Tim again.

In the following episode, *Ch-Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes* (1:19) he sees Tim and two other Panthers – Smash and Matt – at the liquor store. Smash is a confident and talented running back while second string Quarterback Matt lacks confidence. Matt, who thought he wouldn't play a game all season, inherited Jason's position following his injury. Matt's performance on the field demonstrates more luck than skill. Together they go to the football field where Jason begins mentoring Matt, teaching him a play that according to Jason even college footballers struggle to master.

Jason is able to teach Matt to think and play “big” and as a result is offered an assistant coaching position with the Panthers. He ends the season living in a new apartment and “comfortable” in his chair. In the finale episode *State* he tells the media it is great to be part of the team and he’s come full circle. He shares in the Panthers glory winning the game.

Sexuality

Jason moves further towards a disability community by watching videos of murderball games and getting out of bed at 6am to train in *Nevermind* (1:11). Sexuality, the second narrative current identified by Garland Thomson, is also emphasised in this episode. Where previously in *Crossing the Line* Jason initiates an argument with Lyla instead of having sex with her, in *Nevermind* Jason admits he can’t feel anything and is nervous at the prospect of having sex. While this motivates Lyla to track down an instructional video, Jason asks Herc who tells him that he will need to relearn everything just as a newborn baby would. He needs to figure out what works for him because everything is different now. Jason’s experience with disability shapes several subplots in the context of teenaged sexuality.

Paul Longmore (1987) argues that all representations of disability are inherently negative and that sexuality is one of the most common narrative tropes. His analysis of several films that deal with disability, masculinity, sexuality and war reveals two key points regarding the intersection between masculinity and sexuality in media texts:

1. Disabled people are more likely to experience constant rejection and by extension a lack of self-acceptance. This should be represented in popular culture
2. Characters with disabilities that possess a strong disability identity enter sexual relationships with self assurance. These representations could change public perceptions about disability.

Although these two points may appear contradictory (Ellis 2008), when considered alongside Garland Thomson’s (2007) argument that sexuality can structure a positive story, it is clear that disability identity and community again has an important role to play.

When Jason rejects his place in the disability community and takes the “crumbs” offered by Lyla he experiences implicit rejection as she is sleeping with his best friend instead. As a result Jason lacks self acceptance. However, as he moves closer to accepting a disability community, influenced by the hyper masculine quad rugby world he attracts the attention of Suzy the “cute tattoo girl” (1:17). She is the first person he talks about his accident with. The season ends with Jason (in paid employment excelling as an assistant coach) and Suzy dating to Lyla’s jealousy and disgust. Garland Thomson discusses the important cultural work of narratives dealing with sex in conjunction with masculinity in relation to the documentary *Murderball*:

Virile and vibrant heterosexuality also defines the masculine athlete. As with sport community, the quad rugby players perform an alternative masculine heterosexuality in the film. A major suspense-provoking narrative subtext in the film turns on the question everyone has about paralysed guy: Can they *do it*? And if they do, *how do they do it?*³⁵

View clip 3 : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMSfPNz6U-c&feature=plcp>

Representations of disability and sex on television perpetuate the notion that people with disability are either asexual or sexually degenerate with disabled men often being perceived as impotent.³⁶ Garland Thomson sees the cultural work of *Murderball*, especially the scene clipped above, as overturning the notion that disability “obliterates sexuality”.³⁷ Likewise Jason has both one night stands and longer term girlfriends, including an engagement which he ended. One of his sexual encounters results in the birth of a child.

The character of Jason marks a radical shift from other soap operas which adopt a cure or kill philosophy. However, it is worth noting that Jason was written out of *Friday Night Lights* around the time of the writers strike when audiences couldn’t embrace his relationship with the mother of his child.³⁸ Scott Porter, the actor who portraying Jason believes his character was effectively developed as destined for greater things than a small town in Texas could offer and he needed to leave Dillon. He sets off for New York in stark contrast to the “Texas forever” mantra of able bodied Jason at the beginning of the series. Disability provided Jason a more meaningful life.

Conclusion

Disability is fluid and dependent on social structures, identity formation and the relationship between the body (impairment) and social restrictions (disability). Recent articulations of the social model emphasize disability as a complex identity that involves both physical difference and social stigma.³⁹ While the drama generated from Jason's traumatic injury provides the dramatic impetus for *Friday Night Lights* his and others' characters develop constantly throughout the show. Despite the obvious similarities to "inspirational" stories common on soaps and other broadcast programmes, *Friday Night Lights* follows the trajectory Garland Thomson sees as structuring a positive story (2007)—community and sexuality in a masculine context. *Friday Night Lights* takes up disability as a core element of the storyline. The series also makes use of an innovative verité style to offer audiences an intimacy with the characters, and by extension the social experience of disability.

The high school quarterback at once represents community, teenage sexuality and masculinity in American popular culture. By featuring an elite high school quarterback becoming disabled, *Friday Night Lights* began with a storyline that subverts this cultural paradigm. This event influenced the course of the other character's lives throughout the show's five seasons. Although written out of the show in season three, Jason Street returned in season five as a sports agent to try to entice Coach Taylor into accepting a college coaching position. *Friday Night Lights* is unique because people with disability are usually excluded from narratives of community and sexuality.⁴⁰ Following a period of adjustment, Jason achieves self assurance through involvement with the disability community and begins to enter sexual relationships with confidence. He also continues to be heavily involved in the sporting community, both football and quad rugby. Jason and his family and friends experience difficulties related to both the physical effects of his impairment and the social stigmas and power imbalances that surround them. This characterisation displays an understanding of social and cultural models of disability which acknowledge disability both as what society makes and limitations that relate to embodiment.

EndNotes

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