

# Murderball: disability and attitudes paraplegic people

[Parts of the World, Asia](#)



[pic][pic] Murderball [pic][pic] Abstract I strongly believe the size of your success is measured by the strength of your desire. In the 2005 documentary film (Murderball) directors Henry Rubin and Dana Shapiro documented people's life experience with Paraplegia. Paraplegia is an impairment that diminishes the sensory and motor function of the lower half of your body. Henry and Dana were able to capture some of the attitudes Paraplegic people have for themselves and what others perceive for them which most of the time was incorrect.

Paraplegic people seem to never let their impairment encompass them and control their life which I find very empowering. Instead, they use strength to achieve what they desire and for many of them in the film that was to become wheelchair rugby gold medalists in the Paralympics. During the time period that we watched the film one Paraplegic person stood out from all the rest, Mark Zupan. Zupan became Paraplegic when he fell asleep in his best friend's truck after a party, when his best friend Igoe was driving home later that night he got into a car accident unaware that Zupan was in the car.

Zupan was thrown out of the truck bed and into a canal where he held on to a branch for 14 hrs. Zupan was asked during the film by a reporter if he could turn the clock back to that day of the accident would he have changed the outcome, he replied with " No, My injury has led me to opportunities and experiences and friendships I would never have had before" . One opportunity that presented itself was wheelchair rugby where he was a member of the bronze medal-winning U. S. team in 2004. But it wasn't just

rugby and his extreme accident that made him stand out, it was his attitude of himself and his fellow Paraplegics.

Zupan and many members of his USA Rugby team view themselves as normal people. For instance, in one part of the movie they played a prank on an Olympian worker. By phoning down to the hotel lobby that they needed help lifting a box but in all reality the box had the player Bobby in it to scare the worker. Through out the movie, Paraplegics seem to be humorous and passive aggressive towards un-respectful people that don't understand their condition. But they also feel that it is necessary for people to be educated about the impairment so they develop Spread Phenomenon.

Spread Phenomenon occurs when we tend to associate one disability like mental impairment with a person who has physical disability. Zupan doesn't like the fact that people think Special Olympics is the same as Paralympics, this is considered a Spread Phenomenon. Zupan and USA team also don't like many stigmas' that are associated with Paraplegic conditions. For instance, Scott Hogsett who is one of the members for the USA team describes a situation when a family friend was wondering why Scott was outside enjoying himself; this was a stigma about him.

The family friend made the assumption that Scott in no way shape or form is able bodied but in all reality is capable of many things which includes going outside. Even with all the discriminated Fallacies towards Paraplegics, they don't let people's assumptions bother them in fact all of the people in the documentary live a happy and family oriented life. Joe Scoares coach of the

Canada Paraplegic Rugby team, has a son and wife that he loves very much and enjoys being around during and before games. The Teams themselves also conveys family, because each team member has a special connection with each other.

In the movie there is one scene were they are all playing cards with each other talking about women and past experiences they had with each other that embodies what a families all about. Overall, this movie helped me change my perspective on people with disabilities and impairments. By allowing me to throw away my preconceived notions about people and try to understand people for who they are and not what they have. Reference: Page Rubin, H. (Director) & Shapiro, D (Director). (2005). Murderball [documentary]. United States: Paramount.