

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- How does Murderball represent disabled people?
 - Does Murderball shift this representation of disabled people yet again?
 - Does it present us with familiar or conventional ways of thinking about disabled men or shift these in an even more dramatic way? Does it encourage a paradigm shift?
 - Where does it present us with familiar images?
- Where does it disrupt our expectations/ make us see the disabled in a different way/ challenge popular/dominant ways of thinking?

Disabled men are not represented as victims

How?

- Sexual prowess, successful with opposite sex – 3 out of 4 end up with girlfriends
- Assertive, aggressive, competitive
- Warriors (battle-scarred – men and machines both) refs to Mad Max
- As 'real' men – athletes (not 'disabled' athletes) – like other guys
- Tension, energy – not passive, static etc – moving and noisy

There was an explicit reference made to Mad Max in the film. What does this add to our understanding/ the representation of these disabled men?

- Warriors – battle-scarred etc
- Action, risk taking, thrill seekers, adrenaline
- Conventions – similar – close ups on machines, loud music, fast paced editing

What elements of the traditional sports narrative are already evident? Why does the text draw on these elements, do you think?

- Series of games – build up of tension and suspense
- Rivalry – construction of 'goodies' and 'baddies'
- Tension when we see footage of games – crowd, noise, then slow motion and silence (before crowd eventually erupts), countdown on clock in final moments, focus on changing scoreboard, fast paced editing, heavy metal music (very masculine and aggressive)
- Not just a story about disabled athletes, it's a story of athletes – we 'forget' their disabilities
- Entertaining and exciting
- Not 'will they walk again?' but 'who walks?'
- A traditionally masculine narrative – supports the emphasis on masculinity

Represented as being the same as other young guys ie 'normal'

- Swearing, humour, risk taking, successful, achievers, interested in sex & girls & sport, competitive, aggressive/ assertive, active, relationships (fathers, sons, boyfriends, mates) etc
- What does it tell us (about popular/dominant attitudes, society, disabled men themselves etc) that this is how the film makers wish to represent them?

AUDIENCE - Who do you think is the intended audience?

- Probably young males (music, representations, sports narrative)

INVITED READING - Is it possible to resist the invited reading/ response in any way?

- Some people felt that women are marginalized/ excluded – seen in very conventional ways (nurturers, worrying, sexual objects – used to make these men seem ‘normal’ and successful)
- Some felt that in their efforts to make these men seem like alpha males, the more difficult times, the more intellectual men, those not quite as ‘hetero’, the experiences of their partners/ families etc may be silenced.
- Some felt excluded by this ‘locker room’ macho focus.
- Some felt that they must be insecure in masculinity if have to focus on it so much.
