Disability Imagery: A Bastion of Social Change

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**Introduction:** In the visual and material culture of the 21st century, image is power. This inquiry used thematic analysis to examine the meanings of disability imagery on a continuum from tragedy to an inevitable and celebrated part of human diversity and provocateur of social change. Five themes emerged: disability as tragic (exclusion, isolation, fear); disability as inspiration porn (disabled people are brave or special just for living); close but not quite (some positive imagery segregation and impairment are foregrounded); and celebration of disability as human diversity (the goal for change).

- **Tragedy**
  - Million Dollar Baby

- **Close but not quite**
  - Asher Nash

- **Celebration of disability as human diversity**
  - Alison Lapper
  - Fashion
  - #disabledandcute
  - Disability as sport

**Locus of social change**—imagery that integrates disability into the fabric of human activity, contexts, beauty, messiness, daily life.

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