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PARAPLEGIC BODIES: SELF AND SOCIETY

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In this dissertation it is argued that humans constitute themselves as subjects in a complex of interrelationships between body, self, and society. The effects of these interrelationships are examined through the ways in which traumatic paraplegics constitute themselves as subjects following their accidents. Subsequent to paralysis there is a radical break in how paraplegics experience their bodies, in what they are physically able to do, and in the ways in which their bodies are interpreted socially, assigned meanings, and allocated space in which to do and be. Experiential accounts of paraplegia are presented as a means to exploring the implications of these changes in the ways paraplegics constitute themselves as subjects.
Firstly, and most importantly, I would like to express my gratitude to the paraplegics who so generously gave their time and selves to take part in this study. Without them the study would have no purpose or foundation. I sincerely hope that the honesty and integrity with which they responded to my questions is reflected in this dissertation.

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