

**GENEVA
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DISABILITY AND ARMED CONFLICT

Handicap et Conflit Armé



Quai Wilson (Geneva), 30 April — 30 May 2019

There is no truth in photography, just honesty. No single image can tell a full story or give you complete insight into a person's character. We as photographers simply attempt to catch a fleeting moment, a fraction of light that gives momentary insight into another life.

A project as complex and nuanced as this means I could never tell the whole story. Every person has their own opinion on how we should represent those with disabilities and in my mind that thinking is dangerous as we stop seeing people as individuals. There is no 'right' way to tell a story, no single narrative in portraying the experience of somebody living with a disability. Reality is not black and white.

This project is intensely personal to me. I don't often refer to it but I too am living with a severe disability. In documenting those affected by war, my life became intertwined with theirs when I lost three limbs to a landmine. The price I paid for doing my work was huge, but the gift I received in return, it's equal – I understand these stories in a way no other photographer could.

Some days I feel unstoppable and that I have overcome the barriers that injury have placed in front of me. Some days I feel weak, I sit and cry thinking I'm not

strong enough. Who am I? I am stubborn, I am strong, I am unbreakable, I am difficult, I am vulnerable, I am weak, I'm scared, I'm angry, I'm grateful, I'm normally happy but at times, I'm not. That's who we are - living with disability means we are neither hero nor victim; we should not be pitied nor put on a pedestal. We are you. We are like every other human; complex, contradictory and wonderfully unique and all we ask is to be seen that way.

These photographs and stories give you a glimpse into the lives of others. I would hope they do so with an honesty and insight you don't always get to see. The good, the bad, the laughter, the tears: life as it is.

No one person should face disadvantage because of race, culture, religion, gender identity, age, sexual orientation or disability. No person should face a life of prejudice because of an injury, or be denied their human rights due to their disability. In all these conversations it can no longer be about us and them; it is simply about us. And we will only move forward, when we move as one.

GILES DULEY
Photographer and CEO of
Legacy of War Foundation

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