

On the (Mis) representation of Disabled Masculinity and Femininity in Arab Film and Television

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Introduction

Disability, both physical and cognitive, is underrepresented in Arab film and television. Contemporary productions which feature people with disabilities, though attempting to promote their visibility in mainstream media, are mostly problematic in their representation (Al-Zoubi & Al-Zoubi, 2022). Using stereotypes, they homogenize the disabled experience and create an inaccurate understanding of this community for the audience. Critics of these portrayals have acknowledged that a character's disability-induced difficulties can be aggravated by other categories of social identity. However, the existing literature has rarely addressed gender as one of these categories (O'Dell, 2022).

The concept of intersectionality can help understand the oppression that men and women with disabilities experience. Coined by American civil rights advocate Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, the term refers to the interrelatedness of different social identities and hierarchies, which creates overlapping experiences of injustice (Davis, 2008). Although originally used to expose the simultaneous subordination of black women to racism and sexism, intersectionality extends beyond race to include categories like class, sexuality, and—central to this study—disability. In a patriarchal-ableist society, people with disabilities are subject to gender expectations on the one hand and stereotypes around disability on the other (Hunt et al., 2021). Failure to meet certain gender norms, coupled with the stigma of being disabled, can marginalize these individuals, and make them question their sense of masculinity or femininity.

Crenshaw (1991)'s "representational intersectionality" relates intersectionality to the media. It refers to the media's capacity to promote stereotypes and normalize discrimination by failing to consider, in its representations, how different social

identities converge. In this sense, when the media does not acknowledge the intersection of gender and disability, prevalent stereotypes of both identities are reinforced. This can culminate in the symbolic annihilation of men and women with disabilities, based on the conceptual idea that representation in the media “signifies social existence” (Gerbner, 1972), symbolic annihilation refers to the erasure of a group’s true and diverse identities due to insufficient and stereotypical portrayal in the media (Carter, 2012). The reinforced stereotypes around disabled masculinity and femininity can thus symbolically annihilate people with disabilities by perpetuating the misconception that they have limited ways of experiencing and expressing their gender.

This paper studies how Arab films and television series depict the intersection of gender and disability. A comprehensive literature review examines common stereotypes of each identity—gender and disability—as they are portrayed in media, as well as the portrayal of individuals that experience both gender and disability. The literature review is used as a framework for a content analysis of the Lebanese drama *The Tale of Amal* (Remy, 2001), showcasing its traditional and limited representation of disabled masculinity and femininity. Lastly, the paper provides media policy recommendations which, if applied, can contribute to an accurate and inclusive portrayal of men and women with disabilities and prevent their symbolic annihilation in Arab entertainment.

Literature Review

Though limited, existing studies on Arab films and television series commonly address the ability of movies and T.V. shows to manipulate viewers’ values and imprint new ones in their minds, shaping their attitudes toward social groups and issues (Abdelmogeth & Mossad, 2018; Al-Zoubi & Al-Zoubi, 2022; Kharroub & Weaver, 2014). This effect becomes problematic, however, when the messages conveyed in these productions are of a stereotypical nature.

Gender in Arab Entertainment

The representation of gender in Arab film and television is mostly reflective of traditional conceptions of ideal masculinity and femininity, mirroring a patriarchal social order where men are considered superior to women (Abdelmogeth & Mossad, 2018). The ideal man should be an independent financial provider for his family; women are seen relative to their domestic labor, which is supposed to be done for free and in service of the family. In an analysis of gender representation in 15 Arab and three Turkish drama series, Kharroub and Weaver (2014) find that women are outnumbered by men not only as characters, but also as workers. The few working female characters (26%) are mostly occupants of jobs perceived as feminine, such as teaching and being a secretary, while higher-paying and more respected roles, like doctors and engineers, are typically played by men. Also, unlike their male counterparts, whether female characters work is dependent on their marital status, with the portrayal of married women frequently limited to their roles as responsive wives and devoted homemakers rather than as workers outside of the household. For example, the Syrian serial *Bab Al-Hara* shows women working within the home whenever they appear on screen—cleaning, washing, and cooking—whereas men are preoccupied with larger community matters, such as conducting business, resolving conflict, and resisting the neighborhood’s French occupiers (Zaatari, 2015). Though popular in Arab entertainment, such portrayals normalize the public sphere as men’s

territory while women are confined to the private domain. Thus, women are deprived of the chance to achieve their full potential and their dependence on men is reinforced (Abdelmogeth & Mossad, 2018).

Also presented as markers of true masculinity and femininity are, respectively, aggression and obedience. Patriarchy equates manhood with dominance; violence is often used to achieve this dominance (Feder et al., 2010). This reality is a recurrent theme in Arab entertainment: 2002 research on Egyptian Ramadan serials has found that, over the course of 500 episodes, 43% of female characters were subject to violence from men (Skalli, 2006). Similarly, popular Egyptian films—such as *Bobbos*, *Taymour and Shafika*, and *Omar and Salma*—portray, sometimes in comical tones, the harassment and abuse of female characters, leading to a trivialization of gender-based violence (Shoaeib, 2021). Some productions portray this violence as not only a manifestation of patriarchal power dynamics, but also as a necessary disciplinary tool for disobedient women. In *Bab Al-Hara*, for instance, men repeatedly practice domestic violence to guarantee, through the infliction of fear, the obedience of their womenfolk (Zaatari, 2015). The show further endorses this practice by having female characters endorse male aggression, perceiving it as a corrective policing measure that allows the maturation of “bad” women into “good,” or obedient, women. A “prerogative of men” (Zaatari, 2015, p. 25), violence reaffirms men as the strong authority and women as their weak followers. In the public sphere, violence is celebrated as evidence of the character’s masculinity, particularly when it leads to victory over adversaries.

Media narratives that promote these gender stereotypes are complicit in the normalization of hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Masserschmidt, 2005). This form of masculinity encourages the use of emotional and physical intimidation, and male competitiveness in the public domain, to ensure domination over femininity and marginalized masculinities—that is, men who belong to minority groups. Though masculinity is not static, its definition often changes in different contexts, hegemonic masculinity has become a globalized ideal.

Disability in Arab Entertainment

Stereotypes around disability are thought to stem from superstition and an inadequate education about medical conditions (Barnes, 1992). Though knowledge is widely accessible today, these stereotypes persist due to their continual reproduction in mainstream media. As of 2022, approximately 70% of the portrayals of people with disabilities in Arab films and television series have been found to be stereotypical (Al-Zoubi & Al-Zoubi, 2022). Among several inaccurate stereotypes, these people are often depicted as dependent and helpless. For example, the Syrian television drama *Behind the Sun* features an autistic adult who, upon the hospitalization of his caretaking mother, becomes lost in the streets and, subsequently, a homeless person (O’Dell, 2022). This and similar presentations of disability as incapacitating not only strip its possessor of their sense of autonomy, but also render them pitiable by the dominant, nondisabled or able-bodied society and audience (Barnes, 1992). In other words, people with disabilities are frequently portrayed as victims that should be pitied. The sentimentalization of disability is also achieved by presenting the character as a defenseless and an easy target of violence. Over the years, Arab entertainment has repeatedly depicted its disabled characters as victims of different forms of abuse:

Egypt's 1993 film *Toot-Toot* has a mentally impaired protagonist who gets sexually assaulted (Alkayed & Kitishat, 2021) and, more recently, the 2021 Lebanese series *Ashti ya Beirut* subjects a child with down syndrome to multiple threats and kidnapping (Al-Zoubi & Al-Zoubi, 2022).

People with disabilities in Arab productions have also been portrayed as the other extreme—not as innocent victims but as villainous perpetrators of violence. Media tends to integrate the widespread misconception that emotional distress, caused by dissatisfaction with disability and a failure to assimilate into society, results in aggressive tendencies (Longmore, 2003; Barnes, 1992). The first Arab film revolving around a disabled protagonist, the 1958 Egyptian movie *Cairo Station* is an example of disability vilification. The main character Qinaawi, who has a limp, is “framed as the avatar of darkness, violence, and perversion generated by a repressed self unable to express itself and its needs” because he is not able-bodied (O’Dell, 2022, p. 5). In the film, society’s persistent treatment of Qinaawi as a pitiable and sexually impotent man fuels his aggression, causing him to engage in gender-based abuse and attempted murder. This portrayal of people with disabilities as evil is criticized for being sensationalist—it dramatizes disability for marketing purposes at the expense of accuracy (Alkayed & Kitishat, 2021). The mistreatment of the disabled is in fact believed to cause their withdrawal from social interaction and does not turn them into “aggressors,” as these stereotypes suggest (Barnes 1992).

Gender and Disability Unite

Using an intersectional lens, scholarly research is beginning to address how gender and disability intersect, whereby the simultaneous experience of disability and gender stereotypes influences the way men and women express their gender identity (Hunt et al., 2021; Rich, 2014; Shuttleworth et al., 2012). Specifically, this section investigates how the previously described stereotypes of gender and disability can come together to either facilitate or complicate the achievement of ideal masculinity or femininity.

The Dilemma of Disabled Masculinity

Researchers have suggested that a physical or cognitive impairment can make men feel less masculine—an effect that has been termed “the dilemma of disabled masculinity” (Shuttleworth et al., 2012). This effect is defined by the contrast between hegemonic masculinity and disability stereotypes. In other words, because hegemonic masculinity requires men to be powerful, dominant, and independent (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), it is thought to be incompatible with the experiences of helplessness, vulnerability, and dependence commonly associated with disability.

The masculine social role most often compromised due to disability is that of the breadwinner (Hunt et al., 2021). In a patriarchal society, men’s economic power, achieved through active and competitive participation in the public sphere, is juxtaposed with women’s confinement to the domestic domain and their financial dependence on men (Kharroub & Weaver, 2014; Abdelmogeth & Mossad, 2018). Symbolic of female subjugation and male dominance, the breadwinner status thus helps men meet the standard of hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Therefore, an impairment that inhibits the attainment of this power undermines a man’s sense of masculinity and places him in a state of confusion and disappointment in relation to

his gender identity (Hunt et al., 2021; Shuttleworth et al., 2012). This, according to Hunt et al. (2021), is often accompanied by a reversal of traditional roles: An inability to provide for the family exposes the wife to the public sphere and renders her responsible for financial provision as well as the care of her husband. The man becomes dependent, for his personal and economic wellbeing, on the person on whom he would normally impose his dominance over. In other words, he has become feminized. This renders him liable to ostracization or worse, retribution for his failure to meet the standards of heteromascularity.

A Double Understanding of Disabled Femininity

It has been postulated that women are doubly feminized by the intersection of gender and disability stereotypes (Rich, 2014). In other words, women become “twice as female” (Hunt et al., 2021, p. 67) because their classification as the passive and weaker gender is reinforced by the passivity and weakness that disability is believed to cause. This implies that disability may facilitate women’s fulfillment of traditional conceptions of femininity as they are placed in a position of ultimate dependence on others.

Other scholars, however, have argued the opposite: The intersection of gender and disability makes women feel less feminine (Hunt et al., 2021). In feminist scholarship, gender has been repeatedly referred to as a continuous performance (Butler, 2006; Paludi, 2010)—that there are certain behaviors one must engage in to assert their membership in a gender category. For women, these behaviors have been limited to domestic, marital, and maternal responsibilities. Because some women with disabilities are not capable of performing these activities to the satisfaction of society’s expectations, they may be subject to feelings of doubt and insecurity regarding their femininity. Asserting their status as legitimate women thus requires greater effort from them than their able-bodied counterparts (Dotson et al., 2003). This may cause them to turn to over compensatory behaviors; in other words, these women might engage in exaggerated efforts to prove their femininity, involving themselves in situations and identities they do not necessarily aspire to. For example, in a traditionally patriarchal environment, women may believe that being in a relationship boosts their femininity. Fearing their disability might lower their chances of finding a significant other, women with disabilities may settle for unhappy and, in some cases, abusive marriages to avoid the social discrimination that affects unmarried women (Galvin, 2005).

This literature review has provided an overview of common gender and disability stereotypes perpetuated in Arab film and television. It has also shown what recent research (Hunt et al., 2021; Rich, 2014; Shuttleworth et al., 2012) has suggested regarding the simultaneous influence of these stereotypes on men and women with disabilities, particularly in relation to how they negotiate and express gender identity and their feelings of masculinity or femininity. The analysis of the Lebanese drama *The Tale of Amal* in the following section reveals how its characters, faced with gender and disability stereotypes, embody the “dilemma of disabled masculinity” and the “double understanding of disabled femininity.” Limiting male and female characters with disabilities to these representations implies that there are only a few ways for the disabled to experience gender. These representations thus erase disabled people’s diverse identities (Hunt et al., 2021), which consequently contributes to their symbolic annihilation in the media.

Disabled Masculinity and Femininity in *The Tale of Amal*

In her analysis of the Lebanese serial *The Tale of Amal*, O'Dell (2022) is one of the few scholars to address the intersection of disability and gender in a contemporary Arab production. Released in 2001 but last rerun in 2022 on the Lebanese channel LBCI, this show is marked by its exploration of diverse disabilities as experienced by three characters. Composed of thirty episodes, the story follows the grinding lives of recently wed Amal and Habib in a rural village, the former devoted to serving the village, and the latter wanting to leave it (Remy, 2001).

In Episode seven, Habib gets caught in an accident while doing road construction work in the village's mountains. The explosion causes him to lose his left arm and leg. Over the course of the remaining episodes, he is shown struggling with his acquired disability. The second disability the show portrays is blindness. Born with a visual impairment, Habib and Amal's daughter Nabila gradually loses her sight due to the unavailability of appropriate health care services in the village. A time lapse then reveals the third disability featured in the show, as Nabila is married to a man with dwarfism.

Although the attention O'Dell (2022) pays to the relevance of gender to these characters' disabilities, her analysis remains rather superficial. This is due, in part, to her use of an intersectional lens that covers not only disability and gender, but also economic status; in other words, her consideration of a third factor (class) has, to an extent, yet again put gender on the backburner. Another reason is that her paper is not intended to interpret the representation of disability as a multidimensional experience. Rather, it reviews and criticizes Arab entertainment's objectification of disability as a crutch for social messaging. This means that, in the media products she analyzes, disability is used as a "prosthetic" (p. 1) to stimulate discourse about other social issues such as abortion, poverty, and religious differences, rather than as a potentially transformative representation of a disabled person.

This section therefore draws on O'Dell's insights to provide a closer inspection of how *The Tale of Amal* portrays the interplay of gender and disability stereotypes. Using the concepts of disabled masculinity and femininity outlined in the literature review, content analysis is employed in the discussion of the character arcs of Habib, Nabila, and Nabila's future husband, revealing the way each of them negotiates their sense of masculinity or femininity in the face of a congenital or acquired disability. The lived experience of a relative of mine who has watched this series is also provided as an example of how members of the disabled community perceive and react to stereotypical portrayals of disability.

Habib and Nabila's Husband: Compromised and Overcompensated Masculinities

Habib begins as someone whose masculinity is criticized by those around him, namely his wife and mother, as he fails to meet certain gender expectations. Insistent on abandoning the village and haunted by his debts, he loses himself in late night entertainment with his companions, causing him to neglect his responsibilities on the farm and his role as a financial provider. In Episode five, for example, Habib sleeps in after a long night out and is reprimanded for having left his wife to work by herself. His mother, outraged by his behavior, urges him to "be a real man" and take

over providing for the household. It is the constant pressure to meet this standard of masculinity, paired with the love he feels for Amal, that pushes him to seek serious work at the construction site despite his lack of experience in this field.

Episodes six and seven showcase Habib's growing sense of fulfillment as he earns approval and recognition from his society for beginning to live up to his manhood. But when the accident takes place, he is suddenly robbed of his capacity to work and, subsequently, any sense of masculinity he had acquired. Habib then becomes an allegory for the dilemma of disabled masculinity: the stereotype of the helpless disabled person in contrast to society's definition of a real man. He is angered by the pitying looks and comments he receives—such as the word "miskeen" that translates to "poor man"—and the constant attention others pay to his needs. He is left in a state of shame and confusion as the compliments he used to receive for his strength and independence are replaced by infantilization, highlighting his incapacitation. As a result, he rejects any offer of help with his personal care and grows particularly displeased at the sight of his wife working, and the reversal of gender roles (Galvin, 2005), as implied in Habib's quote, "Now that I am crippled, things are upside down." In her analysis, O'Dell (2022) claims Habib's bitterness over his helplessness is a result of his "not being used to being dependent and relying on care" (p. 19). Though she makes it evident that his frustration is justified as disability can be a substantial loss



Figure 1. Habib snatches water from Amal's hands, refusing her help to drink [Episode 9]

for someone who was previously able-bodied, she makes no connection between this frustration and his masculinity. In other words, she does not acknowledge that the reason he was not used to "being dependent and relying on care" was also a result of his being a man, thus overlooking the interaction between gender and disability.

To recuperate his compromised masculinity, Habib falls into the common trap of both gender and disability misrepresentation: he resorts to violence. His dissatisfaction with society's treatment leads him to abandon his family and move to the city. There,

he employs street boys in a variety of jobs, such as selling lotto cards, and physically punishes them for their shortcomings. As one of the boys, in Episode 25, says, "Yes, he might whip us from time to time, but he still gives us jobs to do." Having acquired the fearful respect of these boys, Habib believes he has recuperated the power and dominance characteristic of hegemonic masculinity, detailed by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005). The respect he seeks from these children helps him restore his masculine honor, much as the violence exercised by the male characters of *Bab Al-Hara*, as described by Zaatari (2015), helped them perpetuate the subordination of their womenfolk. Therefore, through Habib's portrayal, *The Tale of Amal* addresses the complexity of disabled masculinity but stereotypically; his character arc reflects both the hegemonic masculinity celebrated in patriarchal societies and the simultaneous victimization and vilification of disability.

The complexity of Habib's character, however, is in contrast to the superficial treatment of Nabila's husband. The epitome of disability exclusion and misrepresentation, this character remains unnamed and the participation he has in the narrative is mostly second-hand: He is spoken of and described by other characters rather than speaking for himself onscreen. He is only shown in three episodes, and the scenes where he appears reveal him emotionally and physically abusing Nabila. Despite her pleading, he refuses to let her return to the village to see her mother and threatens to beat her with a belt. On another occasion, Nabila attempts to escape; but when he finds her, he begins hitting her with a stick and insulting her. He is described by other characters as a person who is "worse than an animal" and who treats his wife like one. In Episode 26, during the dramatic scene following Nabila's mother's death, he stands in the margin of the scene and is not seen participating in this mourning. Instead, a viewer catches a smile on his face while Amal laments her late daughter. Additionally, his character is erased from the narrative in the next episodes and his character arc is not given any conclusion.

Despite his disability, Nabila's husband possesses authority over not only Nabila but also other women in his home. By claiming, on Episode 22, that he could do "anything he wanted" with Nabila because she was his wife, he talks about her as though she is a possession of his, an object over which he has total control. Through emotional and physical intimidation, he embodies hegemonic masculinity. But because he is not granted enough screen time, the viewer remains unaware of his feelings regarding his own disability, making it difficult to establish his position relative to the dilemma of disabled masculinity. Yet, his portrayal as, in Barnes' (1992) words, a "sinister and evil cripple" makes him akin to Habib during his villain phase: Like Habib, he is feared and obeyed by those who, according to the logic of hegemonic masculinity, are inferior. In her analysis, O'Dell (2022) likens his character to Qinawi from *Cairo Station*, whose violence and monstrous nature are an overcompensation for his lacking masculine body. The similarity of his behaviors to those of Qinawi and Habib therefore qualify him as a man whose sense of masculinity may have been threatened by his treatment as disabled, and who sought, through his antagonistic nature, a recompense for the power disability has supposedly deprived him of.

Through these two characters, *The Tale of Amal* proves to be a flawed attempt at the representation of disabled masculinity. It pairs stereotypes characteristic of hegemonic



Figure 2. Nabila's husband is unbothered by her passing, while her family mourns [Episode 26]

masculinity with those of disability victimization as well as vilification to construct both Habib and Nabila's husband. The intersection of gender and disability stereotypes in these two characters may perpetuate a misconception about disabled masculinity: Men with disabilities are less manly and should seek compensation, through violence, for their lost manliness.

Nabila: Sacrificial Disabled Femininity

Over the course of the series, Nabila can be seen as an embodiment of both overt or excessive feminization—what Rich (2014) calls “double feminization”—and the de-feminization caused by disability, discussed in the previous section. Since the first episodes, her character is in a state of ultimate passivity due to a combination of gender and disability stereotypes. This passivity is reflected in her confinement to the home. As a child, despite showing interest in accompanying her brothers to the fields and school, her parents emphasize that she is safer inside. “Besides,” says Amal in Episode six, “when you get older, we will find you a good husband to take care of you.” As a result, and regardless of her visual impairment, Nabila is made to perform domestic chores, like cooking and cleaning, within the household. Here is a clear intersection between gender and disability: Her confinement is a consequence of gender, which stipulates that women should remain at home, and her disability, which stipulates that women with disabilities are weak, according to normative stereotypes. The gender aspect becomes clearer when, after acquiring his impairment, Habib is encouraged to learn to read, whereas Nabila is asked to focus on her chores. She has therefore become “twice as female” (Hunt et al., 2021) and experiences “double feminization” (Rich, 2014) for staying at home, performing domestic work traditionally associated with women.

As for Nabila's de-feminization, it is more implied than stated. An example includes when her brother, trying to console her for not being able to attend school in Episode five, says, “Once you get cured, all the men in the village will want to marry you.” Despite his good intentions, what his statement insinuates is that the marriage expected of the women in their society was something Nabila's disability blocked her

from attaining. In fact, Nabila expresses a rejection of the idea of getting married early on when, in Episode 15, she argues that she desires to live with her mother until either one of them dies. However, her attitude toward marriage changes when a neighbor informs her, in Episode 19, that a man was interested in her. Nabila is convinced but not because she desired marriage; rather, she feels pressured by societal demands. When she expresses hesitation to her neighbor, the latter tells her that every girl's future was having a husband. Nabila, holding onto the hope of being like every other woman in her society, and pressured by the belief that she was a burden to her aging mother, agrees to marry without even knowing the suitor's name. Nabila thus becomes someone who agrees to marriage out of a fear of staying single or, more specifically, out of a fear of being perceived as less feminine. Her feelings of de-feminization therefore led her to an act of overcompensation, and to perform her gender as society deemed appropriate, through the act of an arranged marriage (Butler, 2006; Paludi, 2010).

After her marriage, Nabila is kept out of the narrative until she is shown dead in Episode 26. O'Dell (2022) claims that her death symbolizes the motives underpinning her marriage: Having performed her gender duties of marrying and becoming a mother, her status as disabled offered her no other function but leaving. Her character arc and subsequent elimination from the story serve as a good example of the symbolic annihilation (Carter, 2012) of women with disabilities: She is stereotypically represented as passive because of both her disability and gender. And, once she had fulfilled this stereotypical narrative, she was removed, highlighting, both the mis- and underrepresentation of disabled femininity.

Conclusion

The analysis of *The Tale of Amal* provided in this paper has revealed the problem with this and similar Arab productions representing disability. By failing to acknowledge the ways gender and disability stereotypes intersect, these media productions oversimplify disabled masculinities and femininities rather than addressing and celebrating their diversity. Based on this analysis and that of other scholars, this section provides media policy recommendations that can contribute to a more accurate and inclusive portrayal of men and women with disabilities.

Describing the stereotypical representation of women in Arab entertainment media, Kharroub and Weaver (2014) have found that when women are actively involved in the production and writing of the product, female characters are presented in a more accurate and respectful manner. Similarly, O'Dell (2022) claims that the only way to tackle the ill portrayal of disability in media is to allow people with disabilities themselves to "seize the means of production" (p. 22). Thinking through and acknowledging gender and disability simultaneously, then, means allowing people with this lived experience to dictate how they are portrayed in film and television media. In other words, people with disabilities should participate in or lead the production process, as well as star in these productions. Quoting Barnes (1992), "Disablist imagery will only disappear if disabled people are integrated at all levels into the media." Therefore, production houses working on disability representation should issue a policy requiring the recruitment of disabled individuals behind and in front of the cameras to avoid a reductionist and offensive representation of people with disabilities.

Barnes (1992) also suggests engaging media workers in disability equality training. This paper, in addition, recommends incorporating gender into disability equality training courses to ensure that the sessions employ an intersectional lens. Importantly, these trainings should ideally be led by a person with disabilities who can speak from personal experience. Relatedly, media organizations should consider consulting gender and disability specialists before developing and later marketing their products. This way, they would have the opportunity to postpone production to resolve any remaining harmful representations in their work, rather than having to pull their products from the market following audience criticism.

These recommendations, if followed by Arab and international media producers alike, can help to gradually integrate diverse disability experiences into their products and make disabled men and women feel more visible. Such products will then be able to acknowledge and celebrate people with disabilities for who they are rather than what society expects them to be.

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