# Charlie Hunnam from the first televised rimming in Queer As Folk to portraying serial killer Ed Gein



At just 18, Charlie Hunnam took on a role that would both define his early career and spark complex conversations at home. Portraying Nathan Maloney in the original UK version of Queer As Folk in 1999 [Charlie is pictured left. Credit: Channel 4], Hunnam stepped into uncharted territory for television, delivering an honest depiction of gay desire and adolescent confusion at a time when such stories were rarely told. For Hunnam’s father, a traditional scrap-metal merchant from Newcastle, the show’s raw portrayal led to a blunt question: 'Are you gay? Is this your life now?' This query, as Hunnam later reflected, was less about sexuality itself and more about a generational clash and the strained expectations surrounding his future.

While the character of Nathan brought Hunnam critical recognition and placed him firmly on the acting map, it also exposed him to criticism and even hostility from some quarters. He recounted facing a near-violent confrontation by strangers uncomfortable with Nathan’s storyline. Meanwhile, his family struggled to reconcile this new, public persona with the trajectory they had envisioned, particularly his father who hoped Charlie would follow in the family scrap-metal business. As Hunnam told Variety, choosing acting was not only about career ambition but also survival: 'I just knew I couldn’t survive in that world.' His response to his father—'No, Dad, I’m not [gay], but if I was, would it really matter?'—revealed both his maturity and the underlying tensions of navigating identity within a traditional family environment.

This personal complexity did not simply dissolve, but Hunnam found a kind of healing through later roles, notably as Jax Teller in Sons of Anarchy. This role marked a significant departure from the vulnerable Nathan Maloney, showcasing a dark, brooding anti-hero that catapulted Hunnam into Hollywood stardom and offered his family a more conventional figure to understand and support. His career has since been marked by a series of transformative roles that push the envelope—most recently his chilling portrayal of real-life murderer Ed Gein in Netflix’s Monster: The Ed Gein Story. Hunnam’s meticulous preparation for this role was notable; GamesRadar reported he uncovered a rare police interview recording that even Netflix's top researchers had failed to find, and director Max Winkler praised his dedication to embodying the terrifying figure’s complex psychology.

Hunnam’s journey from a groundbreaking queer teen on British television to a leading man unafraid to explore the darkest facets of human nature underscores both his versatility and commitment to authenticity. His role choices illustrate a deliberate reinvention, moving from the representation of youthful vulnerability and queer identity to embodying deeply troubled, often disturbing characters. This evolution reflects not only his talents but also a broader shift in cultural storytelling which embraces complexity over simplicity. Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dnamagazine.com.au/charlie-hunnams-dad-thought-he-was-gay-after-queer-as-folk/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.edgemedianetwork.com/story/158849> - In an interview with EDGE Media Network, Charlie Hunnam recounted how his father, a traditional scrap-metal merchant from Newcastle, questioned his sexuality after watching him portray Nathan Maloney in 'Queer As Folk'. Hunnam's father asked, 'Are you gay? Is this your life now?' Hunnam responded, 'No, Dad, I’m not, but if I was, would it really matter?' This conversation highlighted the generational gap in understanding and the challenges Hunnam faced in reconciling his acting career with his family's expectations.
3. <https://www.thepinknews.com/2025/10/01/charlie-hunnams-dad-asked-if-he-was-gay-after-queer-as-folk-role/> - The Pink News reports that after Charlie Hunnam's role in 'Queer As Folk', his father, a tough scrap-metal merchant from Newcastle, questioned his sexuality, asking, 'Are you gay? Is this your life now?' Hunnam explained that his father struggled to understand his acting career, which deviated from the traditional path he had envisioned for his son. This conversation led to a period of familial tension, which Hunnam later healed through his work on 'Sons of Anarchy'.
4. <https://www.instinctmagazine.com/hunnams-says-his-dad-thought-he-was-gay-after-queer-as-folk/> - Instinct Magazine discusses how Charlie Hunnam's father, a traditional scrap-metal merchant, questioned his sexuality after watching him in 'Queer As Folk'. Hunnam's father asked, 'Are you gay? Is this your life now?' Hunnam responded, 'No, Dad, I’m not, but if I was, would it really matter?' This conversation highlighted the generational gap and the challenges Hunnam faced in reconciling his acting career with his family's expectations.
5. <https://www.gamesradar.com/entertainment/crime-shows/charlie-hunnams-prep-for-monster-the-ed-gein-story-led-him-to-some-crazy-s-including-somehow-discovering-a-recording-that-netflixs-best-researchers-couldnt-get/> - GamesRadar reports on Charlie Hunnam's intense preparation for his role as serial killer Ed Gein in Netflix's 'Monster: The Ed Gein Story'. Hunnam located a rare 70-minute police interview from the night of Gein’s arrest—a recording even Netflix's top researchers couldn't find. Director Max Winkler praised Hunnam’s dedication, noting that Gein’s voice fell somewhere between Mark Rylance in 'Jerusalem' and Michael Jackson in tone. Hunnam said he interpreted Gein’s voice as shaped by his efforts to please his domineering mother.
6. <https://www.gamesradar.com/entertainment/sci-fi-movies/monster-star-charlie-hunnam-says-he-only-starred-in-pacific-rim-to-work-with-guillermo-del-toro-i-couldnt-care-less-about-giant-robots-fighting-giant-monsters/> - GamesRadar reports that Charlie Hunnam revealed he took the lead role in 2013’s 'Pacific Rim' primarily to collaborate with director Guillermo del Toro, rather than enthusiasm for the film's concept of giant robots fighting monsters. Despite the film’s success—earning $410 million worldwide on a $190 million budget—Hunnam admitted he had no emotional connection to the script. 'Pacific Rim' launched a franchise that includes a 2018 sequel ('Pacific Rim: Uprising') and a Netflix animated series ('Pacific Rim: The Black'), with a new prequel series announced. Hunnam is set to appear next in 'Monster: The Ed Gein Story', portraying the notorious serial killer in Ryan Murphy’s anthology series, premiering October 3 on Netflix.