

for and by people with disability

starecase

Issue 6 • December, 2014



STELLA FOREVER

STELLA YOUNG

24.2.1982 - 6.12.2014

THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

ABUSE AT YOORALLA IS JUST

ONE EXAMPLE, SAY

INQUIRY ADVOCATES

- Works by Josie
- Taking Back Transport
- We Need to Talk About Rupert
- Disability Rights Doctor Who Style
- The Dignity of Slavery

NEW YEAR 2015

plus

MINISTRY RESHUFFLE



PRODUCED AT SPASMODIC INTERVALS WITHIN A MINISCULE BUDGET



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Why we will miss Stella

FROM THE GREEN CHAIR

None of us could write an article about Stella Young.

We thought about it. In a month that has been filled with words, bled out across disability blogs, tearily spoken from lecterns, we wondered what more there was to say about Stella.

We could have spoken about our individual friendships. That if someone read her mobile phone messages, some of us would have probably have gone to prison, or at least Coventry. About a million conversations, online, in person, wine, coffee, music - at disability awards and at ridiculous conferences where many of us were rolling our eyes at the sky.

We could have spoken about her advocacy. About her deceptively tiny red-spotted shoes, that would be impossible to fill. Nobody who is currently operating in the Australian disability sector - or further afield - has Stella's genius with words, her gift for taking difficult concepts and wrapping them in the simplest of packaging, tying them together with personal stories and finishing them off with a pithy epithet. That rare gift which made some blush, most roar with laughter and others nod in recognition, a dawning light of realisation on their faces.

Stella was a superb wordsmith, a thoughtful and passionate advocate, a talented comedian. The hole in our hearts and our lives is not just because of the enormous gap left in the Australian disability rights movement - it is because we have lost a friend.

We miss you, Stella. Thanks to Craig for doing the writeup. Condolences to your family and others who loved you. And we promise that we won't be shit.

- Pretzel



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A bunch of people with disability

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ENDETH THE ANNUS HORRIBILUS DISABILITAS

WE'LL BE GLAD TO SAY GOODBYE TO 2014, SAYS CRAIG WALLACE

Let's be honest, 2014 was a pretty ordinary year for our community; a rollercoaster ride of bad news, bad attitudes and stuff that no one expected. It was, to paraphrase HRH an Annus Horribilis - a Latin phrase, meaning "horrible year". Not just for people with disability but for many Australians. Let's face the worst of 2014 and ask why 2015 might offer better things ... 2014 - the year we didn't want to have

Tabloid shock: Barely a Sunday or a public holiday went by without a Sydney Daily Telegraph headline revealing hordes of photo shopped disabled rorters siphoning funds from WWII veterans while fighting Jihad with a bad

back and running three furniture removal businesses. After all the positive attitudes and goodwill built up during the NDIS campaign it seemed an awful waste to label people with disability as bludgers and rorters. Who'd hire a rorter?



Budget hell: Budget night in Canberra brought us a fist full of pain with cuts to DSP, stringent new tests for young people and a host of cuts by stealth to various organisations running human services.

Service shock: While we welcomed the continued the continuation of the NDIS, States and Territories continued a headlong rush out of disability service provision withdrawing some

services way too soon. Even parts of the Commonwealth stopped talking to each other with a bizarre decision to axe specialist information services for people with a disability. Some peaks lost funding just before Christmas and while a shakeup was needed no one can imagine we need less advocacy as the NDIS rolls out.

Missing Commissioner: Just when we finally seemed to be getting specialist disability supports right the Government took the breathtaking decision not to appoint a dedicated Disability Discrimination Commissioner. This is despite disability complaints being the leading caseload at the Australian Human Rights Commission and everyone seeming to agree that Commissioner Graeme Inness was pretty hardworking and an alright kind of bloke. No one was terribly convinced that this was anything other than a crude slapping down of the position for daring to upset the heavy hitters running a certain retail outlet with a poor line in Christmas Gift cards.

Ramp down: At the same time the wonderful ABC Ramp Up community, which gave us such a voice for years on the national broadcaster disappeared amidst a sea of squabbling and cuts surrounding the national

broadcaster. **Our star ascended:** At the moment the very moment she was about to take the world by storm, the remarkable, talented Stella Young died at the ridiculous age of 32. And like her manager we feel so robbed. Most of us know that this woman did more than any of us to raise the profile and presence of disability in the public domain. At the very moment we needed a media savvy 21st Century champion we got the right one. We miss her.

2015 - Annus Mirabilis? Or the year we come back?

The wheel turns: Sooner or later as an election draws nearer the Abbott Government is going to realise that managing the electorate with the combination of a loudhailer, a fire hose and pepper spray isn't the path to popularity and that they need some friends.

And people with disability want to be your friends. Really. There are things we can work on together like reforming DES services, delivering a decent NDIS and opening up jobs and opportunities. There's a freedom agenda for disability too. Just ask plane travellers. Let's try engaging. It might actually work. And if not then politics seems a very unpredictable business these

days. Here today. Out tomorrow. Your loss.

NDIS - it's still here: Against the backdrop of the worst Budget for social programs since the 1970's the NDIS still stands Spinx-like against a sandstorm of cuts. When the new Minister talks about the NDIS he doesn't talk about cutting it, he talks about it as the holy grail of social programs against which others should be cut. Did we ever, seriously imagine disability would get here?

Abusers - watch them run: There comes a moment when a social practice just becomes unacceptable and for the abuse of vulnerable people with disability this is such a time. Whether or not there is a national inquiry or a State one, abusers of people with disability are starting to feel the same laser light of scrutiny on them. People who advocate for institutions are increasingly doing so in closed groups, behind walls, becoming as secretive and trapped as the people stuck in the places they defend against all reason and evidence.

Attitude TV: While Ramp Up is unlikely to come back anytime soon there is a thirst for information about this whole disability thing amongst the great Australian public. Graeme Innes may have left

the hallowed halls of the AHRC but he is bursting back onto the scene with all the vigour of the 1969 Elvis Revival Concert with plans to bring Attitude TV to Australia. Viewers had a taste of Attitude TV, NZ style, on ABC1 with the story of Cody Everson and gave it an early thumbs up. And instead of waiting for the Government to come and fund it, they're crowdfunding it. Support it now: With some work, Attitude TV in Australia could be bigger and better than in NZ. A fantastic combination of magazine style programming and disability news, produced by and for people with disability ourselves.

Reclaiming our NDIS: Up till now we have had reviews and evaluations of the NDIS done by politicians, senior bureau-

crats, consultants and specialists but we have missed the voices of participants themselves. Given that Govt has said the NDIS is a trial it's time that we had a jury that was made up of ordinary people, that considered evidence from people with disability who were actually using the NDIS in the trial sites. A trial deserves a Jury, one that hears from witnesses, takes evidence and weighs it up. For that reason PWDA are convening a Citizens Jury on the NDIS that will provide the first user-led national scorecard which is formed, assessed and delivered by Australians who have helped fund this scheme and those who have direct experience as participants within the seven trial sites. The process kicked off with a social media forum on 29 November 2014 and the hearings will

occur in early 2015. It's not 2001: The last time there was a welfare reform debate the whole disability community was as zonked out as a walk in character on Breaking Bad. This time there are new people and good oldies who have stuck around combining with new platforms and new energy. The NDIS campaign has awoken disability as a political force – and like Pandora's box you can't put us back. My Board is full of people under 35 and many parents, carers and people with disability have found common ground. We may argue like a group of cats and dogs, but when we're in a corner we stick together.

In 2015 we won't take the Daily Telegraph calling us all rorters, slackers and wasters. We'll make the media coverage the issue for Government and

ask them to get their own house in order on disability and jobs, especially its poorly performing Disability Employment Network and record on jobs inside the Public Service. Let's raise a glass to the New Year – to people lost, things gained and battles we'll keep fighting.



DISABILITY

俳句

HAIKUS

With thanks to contributors on Facebook and beyond.

On the government saying people with disability need to get into work -

They say we need jobs
How many public servants?
Two point nine percent

On accessible toilets filled with cleaning gear -

The cleaning gear is
In the hotel loo – handy if
You don't need to piss.

On auto captioning -

A brand new language
Youtube auto captioning
Just like Swahili.

On the soft bigotry of low expectations -

Low expectations
Shape my life and all it holds.
Will this ever end?

On life -

Does life have meaning?
Purpose, soul, hope, rights, and
choice,
Determination

On ability -

Looking out at you
I see myself reflected;
Not able enough

On online accessibility -

Need to call again
When registering for help
Avoid angry staff

On Stella Young's driving skills -

My guide dog injured
By a wheelchair user
Stop zooming, Stella!

On Mitch Fifield's Parliamentary letterhead -

It's proudly printed
By ADEs, says Fifield
For three bucks an hour.

On inaccessible government correspondence -

Missed the appointment
But the letter went to you!
And other blind folk.

On being patronised -

Pat me on the head
You are asking for trouble
So patronising

He patted me once
I licked his hand and panted
He won't do that again

On faith healing -

I will heal you, friend
Hand on head - I stood up fast
Should he have looked
shocked?

On personal experience -

My mind so broken
through limitless pain I see
how little you know

On disability and mental health

Crips look really weird
With their wheels, sticks and
permits
Glad I am not one

Think before you park
Or I will let down your tyres
No cars on footpaths

Wheels are freedom
I go to places never seen before
Wheeling forward forever

Wheelchair enabled go
Bound by your perceptions
flawed
Perfect spirit bold

Legs are redundant
Because I have wheels instead
My life rolls ahead

My mind so broken
Through limitless pain I see
How little you know

I am a person
Who sees and hears things you
don't
Treatment resistant



WORKS BY JOSIE

JOSIE WEBSTER

ON PAINTING

Josie Webster is an artist. She just also happens to have Down Syndrome.

Josie Webster is an artist. Despite the fact that the system was determined to put her in a box marked 'special' and keep her there. Not despite the fact she has Down Syndrome...that's not relevant. Seventeen year old Josie hit media headlines last year when she, along with the other students in her education support unit, was not invited to the school ball. Her mother, Julie Barrett Webster, remembers that day. "Then that marvellous afternoon in early December came when I went on



"That box marked 'special' just exploded."

Facebook and saw all the lovely photos of the Year 10 children, all mainstream kids that she attended primary school with, dressed up and going off to their formals. My heart sank. I cannot describe the hurt," she says.

"Are they not part of this school community?" Julie poured a few glasses of wine and made a video. A video tribute about her daughter, who was excluded from the school formal along with others from her education support unit. As the media reacted and the school scrambled to counteract damaging publicity, Josie and her family were hammered by abuse on social media and letters from the education department.

It had not been the family's first battle with a lack of inclusion in education. Educated at a mainstream primary school, Josie expected that her education journey would continue in the same way it had progressed to date.

She was wrong.

"I sensed at the very first IEP meeting that there were low expectations," says Julie. "Cooking was only available if the 'support unit' could get access to the kitchens 'when the mainstream classes weren't using them. You can guess how frequently that occurred. Some days involved bowling or sailing, other days sport and a third day, community access. There was not much time for the basics when you added back in metalwork, art and music to the timetable."

Josie's skills began to wane. Always an avid reader, she stopped writing short stories or short sentences. She stopped carrying a book under her arm and lost interest in learning. Worst of all, she was segregated from her peers. Julie says that the support unit is segregated in every sense of the word, and that that is the nature of a support unit.

"There is extremely limited opportunity for inclusion and in my view limited opportunity for meaningful individual education as well. Morning assemblies go for ten minutes and the rest of the time our kids are packed off to D

Block and remain there and on the silver seats for the whole day unless they have another lesson. I went to a swimming carnival one year and most of the children from the education support unit were seated under a shade sail together and given books and uno cards...they had to sit together and watch. Watch the others swimming."

The opportunities presented to Josie were limited – over the years, she became an expert at 'find a word' and puzzles. First to finish the work, she was given a worksheet or a 'find a word' activity. Bored, she left school one day and walked home. Four main roads and a forty minute walk, and after that, a 'risk management' plan was put in place. There was no funding for playground supervision, so classroom aide time was deployed. A series of 'tit for tat' arguments ensued. Tensions grew between Josie's mother and the school and eventually, Josie left the school. The situation had become untenable.

As a sixteen year old school leaver, Josie didn't meet the legal requirements for all Australian children to be in compulsory education. The options were limited. Mainstream school would offer only four to six hours of aide time, education support would limit inclusion. Supported and segregated, or included and left to sink.

Julie investigated options at TAFE. No luck. There is limited funding for 'access courses' for those with intellectual disability – such as warehousing, packing and picking – and only two places left. Julie says she hung up and wondered if Josie would even like doing that kind of work. Eventually she found Josie a local college who ran two hour courses for the intellectually disabled, and Josie was enrolled in Computers in the morning and IPad in the afternoon. One day a week.

St John's Ambulance Cadets seemed like a good option, but it was over an hour away. The family rang and investigated every option in their community.

"We tried a sustainable gardening placement in a local community garden once a week on another day, but soon realised that there is only so much you can do and going back each week and watering your seedlings waiting for them to grow was actually very boring. We would pot up some seeds, water our plants and then I would look at Josie and say, well what do we do now – wait for them to grow I suppose. She would look at me and shake her head and laugh. We canned that after about four weeks." It was out of sheer desperation that Julie called the local art gallery and asked if there was something available for Josie. The mosaics and pottery classes were full, and all they had left was painting and drawing for beginners. Julie hesitated.

'I told them that I didn't think she'd manage that', as I had really only ever seen her draw stick figures,' she says. 'But there was nothing else, so I decided we should give it a go.'

Josie enrolled in the class and the tutor was pleased and surprised at her talent. Julie, however, was shocked. In the four years that Josie attended high school, she had never brought home a drawing of anything but stick figures... there was never any indication that Josie was a talented artist.





That box marked 'special' just exploded.

The iPad course was dropped, Josie enrolled in a TAFE course through OTEN (Distance Education) in a Certificate I of Adult Basic Studies. It is a vocational course which involves learning workplace skills. And she is continuing her art studies. There is funding available at the end of Year 12 for 'Transition to Work' or 'Community Participation', but as Josie did not finish Year 12, it was indicated that an early

application would probably fail with a recommendation to send her back to school to complete Year 11 and 12. Julie doesn't believe that is a good option, and neither does Josie.

"When I thought about it, I realised what she is doing is so much better anyway and she is excelling and learning more not being in a traditional educational setting. Her activities are geared to her personally and not what the usual channels dictate.

"We make the choices, we

see what works and what doesn't. Inclusion and varied experience is the key. We should never fall into the trap and limit our children. We must always try and give them the opportunities to work and live 'outside the box'.

"It is time educators started to think outside the box with our children also, and focus on what may be possible - not what is not possible."

To view Josie's work, go to <https://www.facebook.com/worksbyjosie>



NOT VICTIMS OR HEROES

WE ARE AGENTS OF OUR OWN DESTINY,

SAYS GRAEME INNES ON A NEW TV SERIES ABOUT DISABILITY

Graeme Innes has been busy.

The end of December marked the start of a pilot series, Attitude TV, a NZ series designed to smash stereotypes about disability. Innes is the Chairperson of the Attitude Foundation, an organisation built for one purpose - to tell the stories of people with disability.

"Disability is viewed by many in Australia in a limiting and negative way," says Innes.

"What this Foundation seeks to do is change this attitude. We are not victims or heroes, but agents of our own destiny."

Televised documentaries

are powerful tools that can change people's thinking, attitudes and behaviour, the Foundation says. Attitude aims, through the telling of stories, to promote an understanding of the issues surrounding disability.

"As a person with disability and having been the disability discrimination Commissioner for eight and a half years, I know the importance of telling compelling stories about disability when engaging with the community," Innes says.

The documentaries are part of an international series that have screened in 26 countries. The documentaries will focus

on compelling stories, told with insight and understanding.

The Foundation has an ambitious goal - to raise \$50,000 in just fifty days.

Innes worked with others at the Human Rights Commission to produce the video series '20 years, 20 stories'. It became apparent to him that the short videos had a profound impact on people's lives.

"Nothing conveys a message like video," says Innes.

You can watch the Attitude series on iView or ABC - go to <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/programs/attitude/>



VIOLENCE AND ABUSE IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE

There is a man who Jules Anderson calls 'The Monster'.

He is the man who went to jail for raping her.

The Monster is a man named Johnny Vinod.

He was Jules' support worker and worked for a disability organisation called Yooralla.

Johnny Vinod raped other women and hurt other disabled people.

A lot of the people who were hurt by Johnny Vinod were too scared to talk about what had happened.

Johnny Vinod told another resident, Craig McDonnell, about how he wanted to hurt people.

The only reason that Johnny Vinod was caught is because Craig McDonnell reported him.

People say that Craig McDonnell is a hero for reporting Johnny Vinod.

Before Johnny Vinod got caught, he left Yooralla.

That is when other residents started making reports about other rapes.

There was a story on Four Corners which was about the Yooralla abuse.

There were other staff members at Yooralla who abused people.

Some people who worked at Yooralla say that staff did not do their job to keep others safe.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF ARE HURT OR ABUSED BY A STAFF MEMBER?

- Ask someone you trust to help you make a complaint
- You can ask an advocacy organisation, a friend or a family member
- You can make a complaint to the police if you have been hurt or if you have been abused
- Call 000 or the National Disability Abuse Hotline on 1800 880 052 for help

Disability advocates say that abuse and neglect happens all the time in Australia.

a National Inquiry so that people can tell their stories.

abuse happening.

They say that Australia needs

If people tell their stories, we can work out ways to stop

You can read about the National Inquiry at the website address below.

www.nationaldisabilityabuseinquiry.com

Abuse is when someone hurts you.



This might be:

- physical violence – hurting your body
- emotional abuse – hurting your feelings or threatening you
- financial abuse – controlling your money or stealing from you
- sexual abuse – when someone does something to you in a sexual way that is not ok, especially if don't want them to do this, or if you are young.



Neglect is when someone does not look after you properly.

THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

We know it's happening out there. We think it's a tip of the iceberg. We think that it's happening in far more services than we dare think about. And we think that it's not only happening in Victoria, it's happening across the country."

That was a comment from Valid's Kevin Stone, one of many disability advocates who is calling for a National Inquiry into violence, abuse and neglect in institutional Settings.

Here are the facts. People with disability are raped and abused in care settings every day. Crimes against them are often not brought to trial, because they are regarded as 'unreliable witnesses' - in the absence of footage or independent witnesses, their abusers walk away. The

statistics say that ninety percent of all women with intellectual disability will be sexually abused in their lifetimes.

A new website that collates those stories, www.nationaldisabilityabuseinquiry.com, aims to highlight those stories and bring to light Australia's hidden shame - hidden violence and abuse against the disabled. There is no national, coordinated legislation to prevent and address violence against people with disability, including family/domestic violence - there is no independent, statutory mechanism to address these issues. Support is mounting for a national inquiry.

If you would like to tell your story, sign your organisation up as a supporter or sign up for updates, go to the website and click 'join us'

YOORALLA ABUSE -

THE TIP OF THE

ICEBERG

- 90% of women with an intellectual disability have been sexually abused, with more than two thirds abused before they turned eighteen
- Crimes against people with disability often go unreported
- People with disability in Australia continue to experience violence in residential and institutional settings



RESHUFFLE REDUX

E xcerpt from the
Prime Minister's
lost reshuffle
speech notes -

"In appointing Scott Morrison today I am also announcing a revamped approach to the Government's approach on disability and jobs. The Liberal Party is the party of freedom and choice and there are few freedoms as basic as the ability to move around the community and find meaningful employment. Work means money and is one way to get social connections and independence. There is evidence that being out of work for a long time damages physical and mental health.

I know its rotten living on a pension. No one would

choose to worry incessantly about the rent, light, gas, food, clothes and to have disability costs like taxi's and equipment which no one covers. To be in a situation where: if you're scooter breaks down, that's it, you're trapped.

Yes, we'll make sure welfare goes where it needs to, but that's a secondary issue - we need to get real and address the underlying barriers. We believe that to receive a fair go, you need to have a go, but you also need to get a fair go. People with disability have been without one for far too long.

If anything, we should be aiming to provide whatever support we can to encourage people to take up work and then shoring up more

CRAIG WALLACE

RESHUFFLED

This week Prime Minister Abbott announced a major reshuffle of the Ministry with a focus on an enlarged Ministry for Social Services headed by the current Immigration and Border Protection Minister Scott Morrison.

In an exclusive for this edition of Starecase our Canberra correspondent, Craig Wallace, has found a missing page from the Prime Ministers notes accidentally torn out of his speech and tangled up in the Parliamentary Christmas Tree along with a crumpled front page of the Sydney Daily Telegraph.



“
They deserve
better treatment
from all of us.”
- ‘The Prime
Minister’s Notes’

generous arrangements for those who need a safety net so they can live better lives and be freed from the stress and misery of poverty.

So starting today here is what Scott and I will do to make it happen:

1. We'll remove the barriers: Let's make transport, buildings and streetscapes accessible and mandate it by law, not by waiting for people to complain. Let's be firm but fair with people like the transport industry, coach operators and the Property Council and bring forward universal access to places and spaces. Let's not wait, let's do it now.

2. We'll make work worthwhile: Let's do something about the costs of taxis, clothing, equipment maintenance, help around the home and housing for those in work. We Liberals are the party of incentive so let's ensure that our income support, housing and service system doesn't penalise people who do work by ripping away their income in the form of penalties, reduced services and increased charges.

3. We'll create resilience: Being work ready and surviving at work is about more than doing a bit of training. It's about being social, confident and connected. Let's invest in programs to get young people with disabilities

involved in youth development, to develop life skills and the social networks you need to succeed. Let's look at innovative programs like job shadowing and career exploration to enable people with disabilities to discover their skills and capacities and to enable employers to discover what they can do.

4. We'll set targets for government and the businesses we buy from: I know that there are people who hate mandatory goals and targets, but the reality as we enter 2015 is that people with disabilities are now so invisible in workplaces that we need some measures which break through and provide a pool of people who can

mentor, support and show what we can do.

5. **Start an internship program ourselves:** Visibility and presence need to start at the top. In the US there have been programs which have placed students with disabilities into serious placements with members of Congress. Each day a parade of businesspeople, community leaders and ordinary constituents pass into the offices of our MP's. What a sign of leadership, visibility and presence it would be to have people with disabilities interned in real jobs right at the top. My Government will start by appointing people with disabilities as paid advisers to write our disability policies so that we get the best advice and get it right.

6. **Make the job network step up:** It's not just people with disabilities who need to step up, it's also some of the providers who put people in the hard basket and sell people's problems and not their abilities. There are some great employment providers, but there are some that aren't crash hot and others, which need more support. We'll fix it. I'll also be asking Scott to take a hard-line approach with Government agencies that don't walk the talk here.

7. Flexible working

arrangements: Let's put in place tax and incentives, which encourage employers to offer flexible working arrangements like part time work as well as work from home. I believe that working mothers should have choice through parental leave, well so should people with disabilities.

8. **Disability Commissioner:** I have talked to the Attorney General and we have agreed to reappoint a dedicated Disability Discrimination Commissioner to handle the huge backlog of disability discrimination cases in employment.

9. **Change attitudes:** And most of all let's have a staged national three year marketing campaign – like that suggested by Mark Bagshaw and Graeme Inness – to help all Australian's to see people with disabilities as a diverse group that includes people who can do anything. Let's back it up with proper benchmarked research, like they do in the UK, to find out what attitudes really are and how to change them. I'll also be meeting with the ABC Managing Director Mark Scott to see what we can do about restarting the ABC Ramp Up website in honour of Stella Young who made such a wonderful contribution to journalism and disability rights.

10. Lastly I want to reset the discussion to begin that very important change of attitude so I'm calling a moratorium on calling people bludgers. I'll start by saying that the Government that I lead does not believe that people with disabilities are lazy or welfare dependent. People with disabilities are like you and me, but united by one extra thing – they happen to face additional barriers and discrimination.

They deserve better treatment from all of us and it's about time they got some.”

<Tony – at an appropriate point you may wish to symbolically crumple the newspaper front page in your kit & toss it over your shoulder. Note: Don't toss this page over with it – Peta>

ENDS

Tony Abbott is the Prime Minister of Australia. Craig Wallace is the President of People with Disability Australia. He has a vivid imagination and apparently spends too much time near the Parliamentary Christmas Tree.

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT RUPERT

SOMEBODY NEEDS TO SAY IT.
THE DAILY TELEGRAPH IS OUT OF CONTROL, SAY ADVOCATES

In a year filled with political decision-making designed to impact heavily upon people with disability and their families, Murdoch's publication distracted its readers with 'slackers and rorters'.

'Slackers and Slouch Hats' screamed one headline which told us that we were all rorters who are taking the Australian public for an expensive ride. 'NSW Disability Support Pensioners now outnumber Australia's total war wounded by more than 44,000', said the Daily Telegraph (22 May, 2014).

Former disability discrimination commissioner Graeme Innes called it a new low for Australian journalism – but it wasn't entirely new. In 2011,

the Telegraph published a similar article entitled 'Disability pensions are a losing battle – work shy v war wounded'.

Angry people with disability and their families flooded the newspaper with complaints and took to social media with a vengeance. They pointed out that the 'slackers' on the 2014 front page aren't disabled, or even Australian. They are Swedish students at the University of Orebro, and the Telegraph purchased the picture as a stock image.

In December, the Press Council considered whether its standards of Practice were breached by material published on the front page of the Daily Telegraph in May, and decided that they were. Here's their decision;

The Daily Telegraph
WE'RE FOR SYDNEY
DAILY TELEGRAPH.COM.AU
\$1.30 THURSDAY, MAY 22, 2014

NSW DSP RECIPIENTS: 270,415
NATION'S WAR WOUNDED: 226,016

NSW Disability Support Pensioners now outnumber Australia's total war wounded by more than 44,000

SLACKERS & SLOUCH HATS

EXCLUSIVE
GEOFF CHAMBERS

The state's army of disability pensioners has hit record levels with NSW's tally of DSP claimants soaring to 270,415 in the past three years, outnumbering Australia's war-wounded by more than 44,000.

FULL REPORT PAGES 8-9

Work shy v war wounded

New pension claims in Australia in 2009-10

Skeleton or tissue injury:	25,965
Psychological:	24,707
Intellectual:	6,619
Cancer:	5,665
Circulation:	5,544
Nervous system:	4,330
Respiratory system:	3,256
Immune system:	2,306
Brain impairment:	2,147
Chronic pain:	2,118
Sensory organs:	2,019
Unidentified:	1,774
Gastrointestinal:	1,166
Urogenital:	875
Congenital abnormalities:	812
Visceral disorders:	594
Infectious diseases:	421
Other:	597
TOTAL:	91,131

Ugly set of numbers

- Number of NSW residents on disability support pension: 252,165
- Number of people who did not work at all in 2009-10: 723,389
- Number of people rejected for disability pension in 2009-10: 51,578
- The unemployment rate is 4.9 per cent – 585,700 Australians
- The disability pension is worth between \$322.70 and \$670.90 a fortnight

Get set for Santa his rain, c...

SANTA took some time out from present-judging yesterday to enjoy the Sydney weather. But he might need to pack the raincoat on Christmas Eve with a cultured shower and storm predicted over the festive period. While the days will be warm, afternoons...
FULL CHRISTMAS COVERAGE PAGES 10-11

Injured fighting for their country (1885 to 2011)

Sudan:	3
Boer War:	538
World War I:	155,000
World War II:	64,553
Malayan Emergency:	20
Korean War:	1216
Indonesian Confrontation:	9
Vietnam:	2398
Gulf and Afghanistan:	181
TOTAL:	225,916

* Does not include 2003 Iraq War

PM calls on man who turned back boats to fix welfare

STOP THE BLUDGERS

PAMEL MEERS

THE man who stopped the boats yesterday declared he will now stop the bludgers. In a sweeping cabinet reshuffle, immigration minister Scott Morrison will now be tasked with putting rorters back to work and clearing...

CONTINUED PAGE 1

Services portfolio, they responded with the headline 'Stop the Bludgers'. Fair to assume that they didn't take the Press Council's adjudication very seriously.

It would also be fair to assume that the Telegraph's attitude towards DSP and other welfare recipients isn't much different from that of its owner, Rupert Murdoch. Our Rupert, who tweeted last year 'Aust election public sick of public sector workers and phony welfare scroungers sucking life out of economy' (7th Sept 2013). And back in 2008, he had warned the public that 'the bludger should not be our national icon.' (ABC News Online, 3 November, 2008). Good one, Rupert.

Are we really a community of leaners, not lifters? Graeme Innes doesn't think so. He says that there are barriers in society which force us to be leaners. Forty five percent of disabled Australians live in poverty, putting us last among OECD countries. Government, rather than leading the way in an area desperate for positive change, has 2.9 percent of its workforce as people with disability, and we make up 15% of the working age population. And despite the rhetoric about getting people off welfare, there is no plan to get people with disability into work.

In 2011, the Australian Institute of Criminology compiled statistics about welfare fraud across the top fifteen benefit types. The Disability Support Pension slid in at an unremarkable third place, with 301 rorters Australia wide. Parenting payment (single) romped in at first place with 1,280 cases of fraud, and Newstart at 1,045 – but it is easier to target people with disability, so single parents have stayed off the Telegraph's front page. For now.

The Telegraph's continuing war against people with disability is depressingly unproductive, but at Starecase, we're nothing but helpful. We've given you six ways to utilise the Telegraph in ways that are far more productive than reading it.

And if you have time, drop the Telegraph a line to tell them why you are not a rorter, a slacker or a sloucher. It's 2015 - and this year, we're going to fight back.



MAKING THE DAILY TELEGRAPH USEFUL

AN INSTRUCTIONAL FOR
FOR PEOPLE WHO LIKE
TO RECYCLE RUBBISH

Disabled? Resigned to being described as a 'rorter' or a 'leaner'?

We understand that people with disability in Australia are lifters, not

leaners, and that most of us do it hard.

Here are six ways you can use the Daily Telegraph to make your life a little easier.



1.

Use your Daily Telegraph to spread out over a park bench for warmth or comfort.

Subversive disability fun fact - Australia ranks 29 of 29 OECD

countries for poverty amongst people with disability, and people with disability have a greater risk of homelessness than the rest of the general population. A 2011 study found that half of all people with disability were turned away from homelessness services or referred to other services.



2.

You can buy 'new' shoes from the op shop, even if they are too big - if you stuff the toes with the Daily Telegraph, they will fit - even if they fit really

badly. If you're a wheelchair user, console yourself with the fact that you won't buy them often.



3.

Stuff your jacket with the Daily Telegraph to stay warm this winter.

Subversive disability fun fact - Although there are some

government rebates for the cost of electricity for people with disability, the cost of disability far outweighs the rebate entitlement, especially for those who require temperature regulation and who must have heating and cooling systems installed.



4.

Make a pirate hat and pretend you are on holiday.

Subversive disability fun fact - The cost of a holiday is out of reach for many Australians

with disability, especially those who require support. A recent decision by government ensured that recipients of the NDIS are now limited when travelling overseas - they are only allowed to travel for four weeks per year.



5.

Use the Daily Telegraph as a kneepad when praying in church for food, money or a job. This also works for people who are begging in the street.



6.

And finally - the best use we can think of for the Daily Telegraph. We considered using it to make height adjustable wheelchairs at no cost, or to start fires - but the winning idea has to be using the Telegraph for toilet paper. We can't think of a more appropriate use.

YOUR CUT OUT AND KEEP PARKING VIOLATIONS

THE AUSTRALIAN DISABILITY PARKING

WALL OF SHAME - OUR GIFT TO YOU

Ever wished that you had a pen and paper at hand when some parking miscreant bounds out of their car, permitless, leaving you unpacking your wheelchair and glaring after them?

Your wait is over. Thank you to the Australian Disability Parking Wall of Shame for these handy leaflets to disseminate to people who park illegally in disability parking bays. We love them!

PARKING VIOLATION

Please check one:

- I'm in a hurry
- I'm afraid of exercise
- I'm better than everyone else
- I just don't care

There's no good excuse - it's the wrong thing to do and *it's against the law.*

please...  **RESPECT BLUE SPACES**

PARKING VIOLATION

Laziness is not a disability.

please...  **RESPECT BLUE SPACES**

TO VICTORY!



DISABILITY RIGHTS DOCTOR WHO STYLE

It's Christmas which means the Doctor Who Christmas Special on ABC 1. Hooray!

Doctor Who gets a mixed rap on disability rights and it's a rich topic of discussion on forums with so many of the villains on the show being thinly disguised tropes for disability.

Craig Wallace argues that most of the disabled characters in Dr Who are villains or "monsters" but what the heck, they are empowered ones:

The social model: After he is blown to bits in an explosion Davros doesn't just accept that the world is now full of stairs and able bodied people he needs to battle around.

No! He simply says 'I'm going to make the rest of you like me now'. None of you will ever use stairs for a very long

time and you will all be stuck to the floor reliant on static electricity until you get your stuff together. Try being ableist now.

Once you find your pride you will emerge. You will grow stronger.

Granted it's an extreme take on the social model of disability but it gets you there.

Don't cure me: The Cybermen are a warning that expecting technology to come along with a wonder cure and take away all your disabilities and defects comes with a price - namely that you may stop being you. Identity deleted.

Disability pride: The Sontarans may be small and squat but they pull above their weight. These potato folk are powerful and dangerous. They don't pretend to be anything other than short

HOW ARE DISABILITY RIGHTS RELATED TO DOCTOR WHO? DOES IT MATTER?

Craig Wallace is the President of People with Disability Australia.

In between being a costume wearing Doctor Who fan.



statured warrior people. They have pride in who they are. The one time they actually become size conscious and grow taller - in The Two Doctors - they seem confused, lost and ineffectual - reduced to a plot device in a story about alien cannibals.

Pride takes practice or put another way, Sontar Ha!

Economic and personal empowerment: Sil, played by an actual actor with disability, may be slimy and green but his life looks like a cameo from the National Disability Strategy. He's rolling in money. He's got individualised supports (otherwise known as porters and personal slaves) and he seems to have no hangups about using relationship services.

He is also forging ahead in the mainstream and way ahead of his time, pioneering concepts like reality television and exerting political influence in the mining rights debate on Varos that make Gina and Twiggy pale in comparison.

Euthanasia, abuse and

institutions: The Mutants on Solos embody the idea that killing people based on a narrow perception of their value and abilities is a hideous one. They may have appearance differences and make odd noises but that's simply part of who they are.

The Marshall, a boorish Hitler-meets-John-Bull figure, regards them as loathsome subhumans and is obsessed with purifying Solos of their taint. He even tries to gas them all in a cave and when that doesn't work he bombards their planet with missiles.

He doesn't just want them out of the way so he can use Solos, he just wants them dead out of pure loathing and prejudice.

The Government sends an official visitor type investigator to Solos but he is wimpy, ineffectual and demurs once he actually sees a Solonian, like a politician snowed after a one off visit to an institution.

At the end we see their inner beauty as they emerge in a

rainbow of colour and ascend to better things thanks to the campy glory that is 1970's BBC colour separation overlay.

ASD/Aspergers: Sure Romulus and Remus may have the title role in what is widely regarded as the worst ever Doctor Who serial but these Aspie twins are the only ones who actually seem to have anything resembling a constructive or coherent role.

While the Doctor is off being plain nasty, Azmael is the most useless time lord since Castellan Kelner (the best thing he does is die) and Mestors plan just makes no sense, it is the Twins who at least have a sensible reason for being there as they use their calculus powers to stabilise a planet.

They get to do their jobs and go home never to be seen on stage or screen again. It's a case of single mindedness as an asset given a swift exit from the fourth wall was no doubt wished for by most of those in this trainwreck opening story served up to poor Colin Baker.

YOUR FREE DISABILITEACUP CROCHET PATTERN

In 2012, Australia was divided - by members of the disability sector who did, or did not, support the idea of holding a DisabiliTEA.

The concept was introduced by the Every Australian Counts campaign, but many disability rights campaigners boycotted the idea, saying that 'change doesn't get made by being polite'.

The late Stella Young refused to attend a DisabiliTEA. "We should really by now be at the stage where we stand up and object ... not having these nicey-nicey cups of tea," she said.

We agree.

Amongst Stella's passions were knitting and crocheting - she was a confirmed knitting tragic who loved yarn and bright patterns.

So to honour guerilla knitters everywhere, here's your free teacup crochet pattern - if cup of tea advocacy is not your style, knit or crochet up a storm instead!

Afternoon Tea Cup and Saucer
Lion Brand® Martha Stewart
Crafts™/MC Cotton Hemp
GAUGE:

16 sc + 18 rnds = about 4 in. (10 cm).

EXACT GAUGE IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO THIS PROJECT.

NOTES:

1. To change color, work last st of old color to last yarn over. Yarn over with new color and draw through all loops to complete st. Fasten off old color.

2. Rnd 4 of the Tea Cup is worked through the back loops; all other rnds are worked through both loops.

3. Tea Cup Handle is worked as a tube in continuous rnds then sewn to Tea Cup.

TEA CUP

With A, ch 2.

Rnd 1: Work 6 sc in first ch. Place a marker in first st for beg of rnd; move marker up as each rnd is completed.

Rnd 2: Work 2 sc in each st around - 12 sts at the end of this rnd.

Rnd 3: *2 sc in next st, sc in next st; rep from * around - 18 sts.

Rnd 4: *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 2 sts; rep from * around - 24 sts.

Rnd 5: *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 3 sts; rep from * around - 30 sts.

Rnd 6: *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 4 sts; rep from * around - 36 sts.

Rnd 7: *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 5 sts; rep from * around - 42 sts. Change to B.

Rnd 8: With B and working through front loops only, *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 6 sts; rep from * around - 48 sts.

Rnd 9: *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 7 sts; rep from * around - 54 sts. Fasten off.

Make a second Tea Cup and Saucer, switching colors A and B.

FINISHING
Sew Handle to Tea Cup. Weave in ends.

FINISHING
Sew Handle to Tea Cup. Weave in ends.

Fasten off.



SAUCER

With A, ch 2.

Rnd 1: Work 6 sc in first ch. Place a marker in first st for beg of rnd; move marker up as each rnd is completed.

Rnd 2: Work 2 sc in each st around - 12 sts at the end of this rnd.

Rnd 3: *2 sc in next st, sc in next st; rep from * around - 18 sts.

Rnd 4: *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 2 sts; rep from * around - 24 sts.

Rnd 5: *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 3 sts; rep from * around - 30 sts.

Rnd 6: *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 4 sts; rep from * around - 36 sts.

Rnd 7: *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 5 sts; rep from * around - 42 sts. Change to B.

Rnd 8: With B and working through front loops only, *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 6 sts; rep from * around - 48 sts.

Rnd 9: *2 sc in next st, sc in each of next 7 sts; rep from * around - 54 sts. Fasten off.

Make a second Tea Cup and Saucer, switching colors A and B.

FINISHING

Sew Handle to Tea Cup. Weave in ends.

TAKING BACK TRANSPORT



THE WA SELF ADVOCACY AND PEER SUPPORT

NETWORK ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

BY SAMANTHA JENKINSON

Western Australia supposedly has the most accessible public transport system in Australia. 80% of buses are accessible, almost all train stations are accessible, and the state is the one most likely to meet the transport standards in the time allocated. But when you struggle through sand to get to the bus stop, or miss your stop because the route changed and there was no announcement, or you can't go the loo at the 'accessible' station, you don't think to yourself "Gee we are lucky. They have it so much worse in NSW". Every state has its good and bad.

In WA almost all the train stations are accessible for wheelchairs and there is a minimal gap or lip. However, if you can't get over the small

gap or it isn't accessible you have to ring at least an hour in advance to get an assistant to meet you with a ramp. In Melbourne most stations have a gap and some height difference, but every driver carries a ramp and if they see you waiting they hop out and help you in, no booking required. Recently in WA the Self Advocacy and Peer Support Network ran a survey and forum on public transport and found these type of issues came up:

Trains • An inability to locate assistance at the train station and the need to book in advance, or provide your own assistance. • Threats and bullying from other passengers to both individuals and carers, coupled with a lack of guards. • Inaccessible stations - gaps between platform and train,

no accessible toilet, length of ramps too long. • Unreliable elevators - needing repair, delays for repair, doors closing too fast. • No announcement on train if elevators are out of order • Inaccessible path of travel to the train station (inaccessible buses /stops, distance to station, linking footpaths) • Lack of audible onboard announcements on arrival at specific platforms • Train door buttons difficult to locate and/or press and doors don't open automatically • Passengers not relinquishing priority seats to people with disabilities • Sensory overload during busy times • Inward facing seats resulting in anxiety

Buses • Some people unable to get over lip and up ramp independently and there is no or limited help from drivers. • People with intellectual

disability may need help knowing where to get off the bus, especially if a route changes and they are unaware

- No audible announcement at stops, so there is a reliance on the driver to inform of individual's stop
- Inability to hail correct bus due to not being able to read numbers on the bus.
- Drivers stopping and starting before passenger is secure
- Lack of secure seating on bus, for wheelchairs and seat belts on bus seats.
- Inaccessible buses still in use
- Ramps difficult to navigate and broken sometimes leaving buses inaccessible for days and up to a week (especially CAT buses)
- Guaranteed accessible routes sometimes have inaccessible buses in a row
- Accessible buses too infrequent
- Not made aware of next accessible

bus • Promised accessible routes not accessible. • Phone Application difficult to use and doesn't show if bus is accessible or not

Apart from these direct issues what is a more disturbing truth is that for real access their needs to be communication between different areas of government, and the reality shows a lack of coordination and responsibility on issues which cross Public Transit Authority, Main Roads and Local Councils - such as ensuring accessible bus stops and shelters, footpaths and signage. State governments are pushing the costs down to local governments for things like bus shelters which are an essential part of the standards for public transport. Worse still is that there seems to be no priority of funding for

accessible public transport and related infrastructure. Is it because we are already better than other states and so don't need to work as hard now? Yet new train lines to the airport do seem to be a priority.

The Self Advocacy and Peer Support Network has pulled these issues into a report which they will be presenting to State politicians in a bid to raise the priority of an accessible and integrated public transport system. In the meantime we urge all people with disabilities who use public transport in WA to call the 13 62 13 info line and feedback directly to the PTA when you come across an access issue.

Every complaint raises our profile and our insistence on access being a priority.



THE DIGNITY OF SLAVERY

OR 'WHY MY SHOES ARE CHEAPER AT KMART'

SAMANTHA CONNOR ON SHELTERED

WORKSHOPS AND EMPLOYMENT

We used to call them sheltered workshops.

That's a thing of the past – they're now branded as 'Australian Disability Enterprises', places where people with disability are routinely placed and where you can earn as little as \$1.79 an hour. A kinder term, but 'lipstick on a pig' in the eyes of many. Workers are scaled by 'productivity scaling' – despite the fact that the government's own productivity scaling tool (BSWAT) was declared discriminatory and illegal last year, productivity scaling in different forms continues in sheltered workshops around Australia. Sheltered workshops using the BSWAT tool have three years to stop using it, but their employees, or 'participants', are routinely paid far below the minimum wage.

That's the picture in Australia, not in countries like the UK. In England, a social

enterprise approach is used, where the organisation trades in the market and takes on a degree of business risk, as well as receiving a subsidy in compensation for possible reduced productivity of disadvantaged workers in order to allow it to compete on a level playing field with conventional organisations. Workers are paid the minimum legal wage, £6.50 (\$11.80 AUD).

But a scandal hit the UK last month, where a welfare reform minister offered a 'full and unreserved apology' after information was leaked that he told a conference that some disabled people were 'not worth' the minimum wage. He faced immediate censure from charities, disabled persons groups and the Prime Minister and offered an immediate apology. From a news report;

"You make a really good point about the disabled. There is a group where actually, as you say, they're not worth the full wage," Freud

said. "...without distorting the whole thing, which actually if someone wants to work for £2 an hour, and it's working can we actually..."

In a statement issued by the Department for Work and Pensions, Freud said: "I would like to offer a full and unreserved apology. I was foolish to accept the premise of the question. To be clear, all disabled people should be paid at least the minimum wage, without exception, and I accept that it is offensive to suggest anything else."

An outraged Downing Street distanced itself from the minister by saying there could be no exceptions to the

minimum wage. The Prime Minister said, "Of course disabled people should be paid the minimum wage and the minimum wage under this government is going up and going up in real terms. It is now at £6.50. We will be presenting our evidence to the low pay commission, calling for another real-terms increase in the minimum wage."

Come again?

A scandal because a politician holds views that people with disability should be paid under the minimum wage? But our country does that every day!

Two pounds an hour – well



All disabled people should be paid at least the minimum wage, without exception."

over double what Australia legally pays people with disability working in Australian Disability Enterprises – is a cause for national outrage in Britain, but causes barely a murmur in Australia. We speak with disdain about Indian sweatshops, but buy the shoes that disabled workers have packed and paired at Kmart with nary a word. We segregate people with disability into ‘special’ employment settings and exploit them financially, with a menu of work options that generally include menial, tedious and repetitive work. And we use meaningless phrases to validate our abrogation of our responsibilities – ‘dignity of work’ to justify paying people a few dollars an hour, ‘Australian Disability Enterprise’ instead of sheltered workshop.

So what does that look like for people with disability in Australia, where those with a disability earn wages equivalent to those paid in third world countries?

I sat next to a man a few months ago who struck up a conversation with me. He was intelligent, casually dressed, personable. I did not know that he had a disability until he told me. And eventually the conversation turned to his past employment, which included a stint in a sheltered

workshop, being paid \$2.50 per hour.

“And the work,” he said.

“The worst kind of work. The most boring stuff you could imagine, and people have worked there for years. No wonder they are bored and unproductive – who in the real world has the same job for forty years?”

That view is reinforced by disability rights organisations, who say that packing goods, pairing shoes and sorting recycled clothes for decades in an ADE is isolating, financially exploitative and does not allow people to be able to progress in employment in the same way others do.

Samuel R. Bagenstos, the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the U.S. Department of Justice, agrees.

“[W]hen individuals with disabilities spend years – indeed, decades – in congregate programs doing so-called jobs like these, yet do not learn any real vocational skills, we should not lightly conclude that it is the disability that is the problem. Rather, the programs’ failure to teach any significant, job-market-relevant skills leaves their clients stuck. As a recent review of the literature concludes, “[t]he ineffectiveness of sheltered workshops for helping individuals progress to competitive

employment is well established.”

A 2011 report - “Segregated and Exploited: The Failure of the Disability Service System to Provide Quality Work.” – argues that people with disability have the right to spend their lives in the most integrated setting appropriate for them as individuals and that this could just as sensibly be applied to the employment setting.

A full and equal life in the community can’t be achieved without a meaningful, integrated way to spend the day.

All of this means nothing without listening to the stories and understanding that this is about real life for a community of Australians, who deserve to be afforded the same basic human rights as other Australians.

I hear them every day, those stories. Not just from people with disability - from their families and government and from those who run sheltered workshop operations. I can see the competing interests and the frustrations and understand the tensions. That does not abrogate our responsibility to treat people with disability as equal citizens with workers’ rights.

‘I earn \$4.33 per hour, and I’ve worked there for over ten years. If you are working there, you are not legally allowed to

apply for another job until you quit that one.’ – a sheltered workshop employee in WA

‘As a supported employee of (name of sheltered workshop), this letter is to give you information in regards to obtaining ‘open employment’ with a disability employment service. Open employment is when people work for an employer that is not (name of sheltered workshop). Examples are McDonalds, Kmart, KFC. To be eligible for open employment, you need to be assessed by Centrelink. (name of sheltered workshop) can assist you with this. One of the eligibility (sic) is you cannot be registered with any other government funded employment agency. This could affect your employment at (name of sheltered workshop). If you would like to discuss this opportunity in more detail, please speak to your supervisor.’ - a letter sent to sheltered workshop employees in WA

‘They have separate lunchrooms, the employees and the staff...that’s what they call them. The staff are the people who don’t have a disability. They started calling the employees that when someone made a complaint about the word ‘participants’, but they still get paid less than half the basic wage.’ – a staff member at a sheltered

workshop in Queensland

‘In some places, they pick up the workers and drop them off in buses, and they take the transport costs out of their wages.’ – a South Australian disability advocate

‘He likes his friends there. He’s been there for twenty two years and likes going to work. I’m sixty now and I can’t look after him all day. He’s never had any funding – I don’t know what I would do if he was not at work.’ – a mother of a forty year old man with an intellectual disability

‘I can’t buy a house and I can’t earn too much money because I will lose my pension if I do. And I can’t move out or rent or do anything, really. I can’t buy my mother a birthday present.’ – a sheltered workshop employee

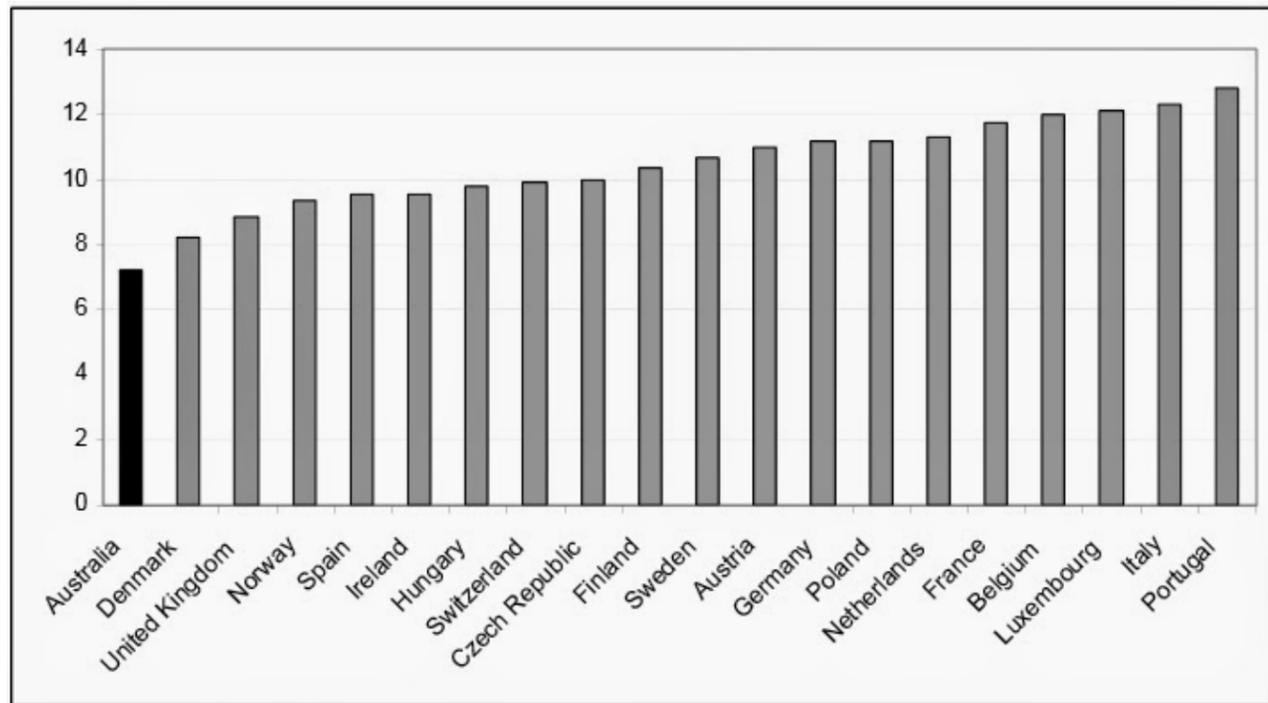
‘She’s too disabled to work anywhere. She doesn’t work, really. I can’t imagine her doing anything else’ - parent of a young woman with a ‘severe and profound’ intellectual disability

‘He worked as a swimming teacher at (a therapy clinic). They passed him around in the pool to learn how to handle young people with cerebral palsy, and he knew the difference between when he

Supported Employee Milestones Supported Employee Service Recognition January to March 2014			
40 Years		15 Years	
Mark Somers Osborne Park Key Sharp Osborne Park Gregory Smith Osborne Park Louise Godfrey Osborne Park		Matthew Stacey Osborne Park Mark Preen Osborne Park Denise Bowen Osborne Park Brett Hicks Osborne Park Julie Dace Osborne Park	
35 Years		10 Years	
Owen King Osborne Park Alan Lawrence Osborne Park Suzanne Leitchford Osborne Park Jennifer Carle Osborne Park		Lynette Guest Osborne Park Christopher Guest Osborne Park Allison Rush Osborne Park Andrea Denton Osborne Park Marian Gavthorne Osborne Park Gordon Dace Osborne Park Colin Cook Osborne Park Ryan Bordin Osborne Park Sarah Warren Osborne Park Jordan Hunter Osborne Park Kathy Leary Osborne Park	
30 Years		5 Years	
Stephen Chamberlain Osborne Park Kathleen Grigisch Osborne Park Ronald Hynes Osborne Park Anna Nero Osborne Park Gordon Peard Osborne Park Della Reed Osborne Park Catherine Maynard Osborne Park Peter Flynn Osborne Park Patricia Anderson Osborne Park Alan Gallop Osborne Park Patricia Oliver Osborne Park Timothy Trovatiello Osborne Park		Lorraine Dunn Osborne Park Natalia Buchholz Osborne Park Gerry Martin Osborne Park Cameron Wood Osborne Park Anton Petrusi Osborne Park Heather Jansen Osborne Park Lorna West Osborne Park Stefania Cortellazzi Osborne Park Cameron Stemmings Osborne Park Emma Halzenga Osborne Park Jessie Halzenga Osborne Park Neil Ciddle Osborne Park Ross Davidson Osborne Park Avaane Wallers Osborne Park Catherine Campbell Osborne Park Samantha Rose Osborne Park Michelle Hobbes Osborne Park	
25 Years			
Tony Purcell Osborne Park Paul Prouman Osborne Park Deborah De Freitas Osborne Park Peter Szewc Osborne Park John Dyk Osborne Park Catherine Cranigan Osborne Park			
20 Years			
David Nik Osborne Park Christopher Lyon Osborne Park Margaret Reimann Osborne Park Kylie Andrews Osborne Park Carolyn Saller Osborne Park Michael Brandis Osborne Park			

A page from the Activ newsletter which provides a list of ‘Supported Employee Service Recognition, January to March 2014’ Many of the employees have been working for over thirty or forty years.

“I’m sixty now, and can’t look after him all day...I don’t know what I would do if he was not at work.”



A OECD graph that shows that Australia has the lowest of a range of countries for job duration.

was in the pool recreationally or when he was at work - he would hold himself differently. He was paid award, casual rates.' - parent of a young man with spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy, a 'severe and profound' intellectual disability and a vision impairment

'The average job tenure in Australia is about seven years - in Portugal, it is almost thirteen years.' - OECD.Stat; Australia at Work W1

'They gave me an award when I had been there for twenty five years and they said it was like I was one of the family.' - a sheltered workshop employee

'The NDIS is a great welfare reform, but the elephant in the room is that it is not tied

to bricks and mortar. The NSW government has withdrawn from providing residential accommodation for people with disability. Without people being able to work for a normal wage so they can pay rent or save like others do, there is a great risk of homelessness or further disadvantage...it's hard to be supported well when you are living on the street.' - a NSW disability advocate

'It is a mistake to isolate the hourly rate of a supported employee as the only benefit they receive....they are given the opportunity to experience the dignity of work and to socialise with peers.' - Mitch Fifield, Assistant Minister for Social Services and Manager of Government Business in the Senate.

'I wonder if anyone has told the people working in overseas sweatshops that they have the 'dignity of work'. Or that they're 'respite' for the family.' - a WA disability advocate

'They were better, more honest, when they called them 'sheltered workshops', I thought. At least then they were regarded as a stepping stone to employment, somewhere you could get 'ready' or get 'trained' for work and try a variety of different kinds of work that would suit your skills and employment aspirations - now you're stuck there forever.' - a long term employee at a sheltered workshop in WA

'He is paid \$4.79 an hour, and after extracting

Your super account details for the

	Member Account
Opening balance	\$63.97
Employer contributions	\$85.43
Contributions tax	-\$0.31
Administration fees	-\$65.00
Insurance premiums	-\$83.39
Earnings	\$4.79
Closing balance	\$5.49

An image of a workers super account details, which show payments of \$65 in administration fees, insurance premiums of \$83.39 and a closing balance of \$5.49.

administration fees and insurance premiums, he is left with \$5.49 per annum in his super fund - who else would be happy with that?' - parent of a young man working in a sheltered workshop

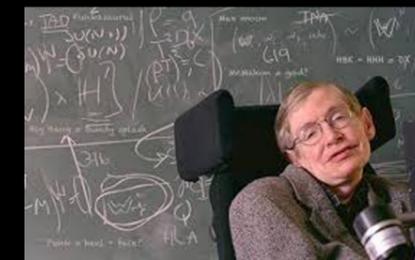
Is it possible, shutting sheltered workshops and moving people to integrated employment within the general workforce? Without a doubt. In the US state of Vermont, a quiet revolution has been taking place. The abolition of sheltered workshops has seen more than a third of Vermont's disabled citizens employed, with average pay rates more than \$2 above the federal minimum wage. All that is needed is a change in attitude and a collective will to make it work.

At the heart of it all lies the great dilemma - that treating people as second, or

third, or fourth class citizens suits our agenda. We do not have to pay for people's disability care and support when they are at 'work', and it is easier to segregate and isolate and exploit people than to change cultures and environments so that people can

enter mainstream, competitive employment. They are out of the way, and happy - they love their 'mates', they've worked alongside them for twenty or thirty or forty years. And at the end of the day - our shoes are cheaper when we buy them from Kmart.

DISABILITY QUOTES



'My advice to other disabled people would be, concentrate on things your disability doesn't prevent you doing well, and don't regret the things it interferes with. Don't be disabled in spirit as well as physically.' - Stephen Hawking



'I've had tons of bullies who would call me retarded, even on my Facebook page. It's sad and it really hurts. I want to tell people not to use the word. Don't say your friend's retarded when they do something foolish. If you have a disability, keep working hard. Whatever it takes, do it, and don't be mean to people.' - Lauren Potter

'Dwarves are still the butt of jokes. It's one of the last bastions of acceptable prejudice.'

- Peter Dinklage



'There are enough people in the world who are going to write you off. You don't need to do that to yourself.'

- Susan Boyle, The Woman I Was Born to Be: My Story

STELLA FOREVER

STELLA'S MEMORIAL SHOWED US ALL SHE WAS

AND ALL SHE COULD HAVE BEEN

BY CRAIG WALLACE

I have friends who say they can't watch Stella's memorial. I know why but they should because it was a celebration of a life well-lived and a chance to vent the rage we feel about what has been lost. We need to know what's been lost to grieve it.

Graeme Innes struck the right note when he said that he would have been proud to have Stella write his obituary but never expected to be giving yours. I feel the same. Nelly Thomas her Director caught the mood and moment when she gazed out upon a Melbourne Town Hall crammed full of people and spilling over into Federation Square beyond.

"I know that I'm meant to say that she would have been surprised to see all this fanfare but she wouldn't. She would have loved this. I can

imagine her saying – 'I had to die to get you all to my bloody gig did I?'

The hunger for audience was true because Stella was a star – a world class A list celebrity bursting from the chrysalis. She had things to say that needed and deserved an audience. If you are good at holding a spotlight, you thirst for it. You need it, because it's what you were put on earth to do.

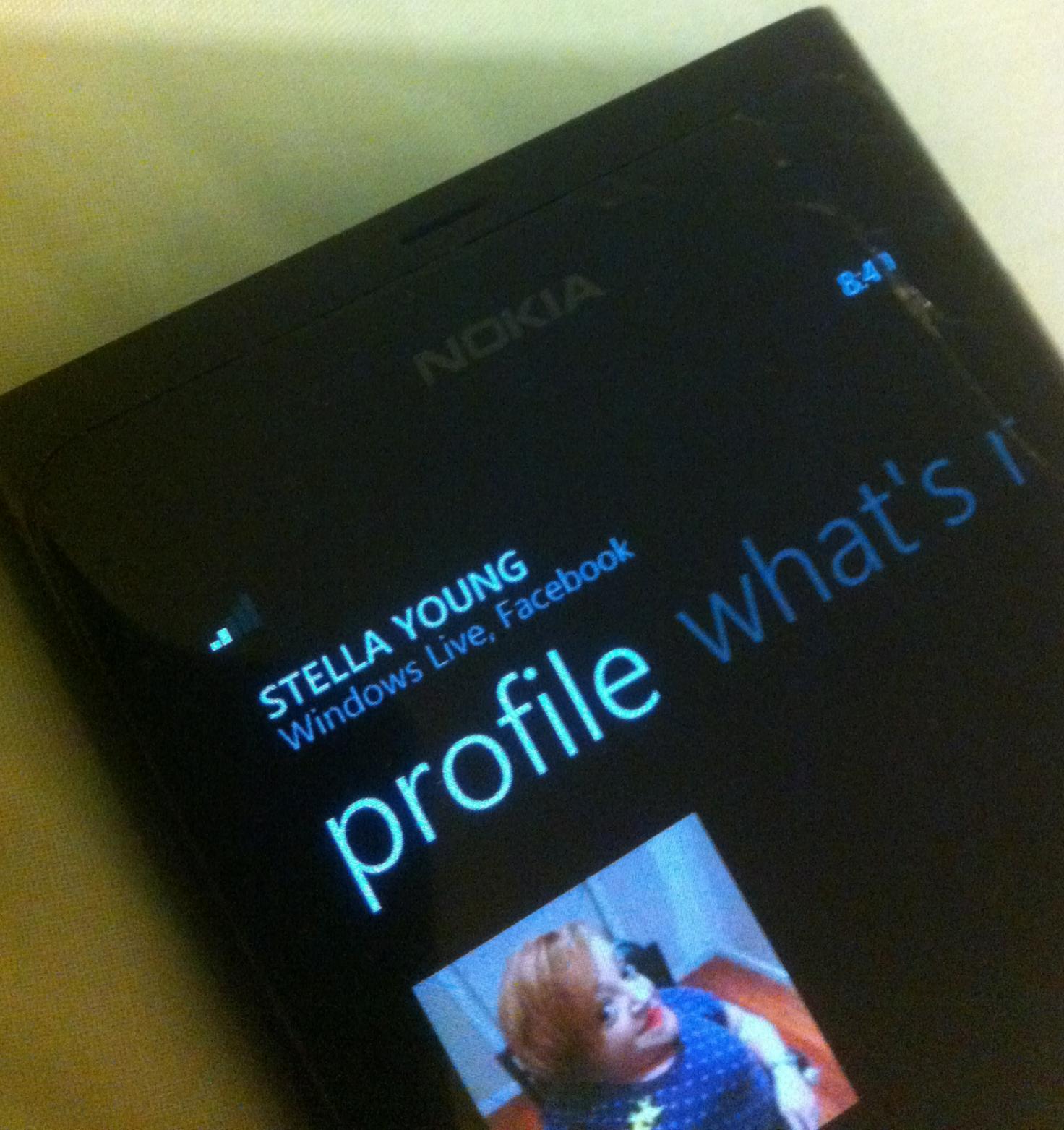
It was because she was so funny, bright and eloquent that she cut through our dusty conservative disability world where we've had the same conversations ad nauseam for years.

I don't know how many awful meetings I've had since representing the disability community where people have droned on about Social Role Valorisation and inclusion to people who nod and offer sweet tight knowing

smiles but don't really get it or intend to do it.

Of course, Stella knew what these concepts really meant but she also knew how to take them and turn them into 21st Century sound bites that would actually cut through and force you to do something. That would bite, but not sound cranky, theoretical or bitter or trip over the minefield of secrets, lies, booby-traps and political correctness in our community. Everything in disability is hard. Making change seem easy is astonishing and a sign of exceptional talent.

Sick of endless charity memes holding us all up to a ridiculous standard? Well it doesn't need a 10,000 word essay. Just label the whole phenomena "inspiration porn" – a laser sharp killer blow of ridicule against a wall of charity inspired sludge that will stick with these kinds of





She was a blazing comet streaking across our skies lighting all in its wake."



portrayals forever. They will never get away with it again. Not completely.

Her long term friend Bryce Ives nailed it when he talked about Stella as a practitioner and teacher of the hard art of personal pride. "Pride takes practice, practice it everyday" he boomed just having had the same motto inked on his arm. He honoured Stella's parents Greg and Lynne Young, who came from her hometown of Stawell, and her sisters Romy and Maddie,

for giving Australia "the most extraordinary Stawell gift". Against the negativity injected into our lives by parents cossetted in tea and sympathy for having the misfortune to birth us into the world - here were Stellá's parents being fulsomely congratulated by a whole nation for bringing her to us.

I say I'm angry because like Nelly I wanted to see what Stella did next. While I was appalled at the decision to end ABC Ramp Up I quietly

knew she'd outgrown subbing other peoples work.

When I saw the Ted Talk going viral & heard about Tales from the Crip doing a world tour I thought here it is - the moment she storms the world stage.

It was only a matter of time. She was, as far as I know, a republican but she would have gone and done a Royal Variety Performance laced with crip jokes, gentle republicanism and stories about kites. She could have

MC'd it. Will and Kate would have been introduced to her - she'd have loved it and so would they. The pants would have been charmed off them, just as Germaine and Clive James won the hearts and minds of a generation of Britons.

She would have had her own TV show or joined The Panel or had a guest casting in Game of Thrones or returned to the ABC for some kind of break-out knitting show - "Cardigan Cabinet" where she got the great and bold to reveal secrets over furious cross-stitching.

She could have stormed the US talk show circuit. There would have been an academy award where an ageing Dustin Hoffman wondered how on earth to lower the microphone stand while she barrelled onto the stage.

You see, Stella was the one of us who could have made it. Gone all the way. She wasn't a snowflake - she was a blazing comet streaking across our skies lighting all in its wake. And most of all she loved you - oh Starecase reader and crip friends. Yes you.

Stella Barton, a year 9 student mentored by Young, used a voicepad to express her love for her friend as the best possible role model: "Thank you for showing me how to live with pride as a young disabled girl." Stella hadn't gotten so busy and self-

obsessed that she wouldn't spot and mentor young people.

Nelly said that her love embraced us all like a warm blanket. And it did.

A few days later I'm back on home turf in Canberra and doing what I do best when miserable - shopping. I call into a Telstra Shop. I show them my battered Nokia Windows Phone. It's been dropped many times at airports, in the office and onto hard kitchen tiles. Once I threw it out of my car window while parked on the side of the Gungahlin Drive Extension after an annoying radio interview. I had to grab it off the expressway with my Ezi reach between trucks thundering past.

I bought this phone as it's beautiful for texting and moving between platforms but a while ago the internet on it stopped working, it can't email, tweet or post and it barely works as a phone. It's a joke for the head of a national body to have a phone like this. Serious journo's and politicians exasperated and saying they can't hear a word.

As I was trying to get a taxi from the Melbourne Town Hall after the Memorial it stopped working and sent a taxi to the airport rather than to me. Something must finally be done.

As I move around the shop

the eager young salesman explains to me what the new phone will do. Everything it seems. I probably only have to wave it over a bowl of pot noodles to cook them.

As we are about to exchange sim chips and credit cards I ask "What about my texts? Will they move over to the new phone? Will they stay on the old one?"

A pause. He says they might but he can't be sure. They might just vanish.

And it hits me. All those texts from Stella. Some naughty and gossipy. Most brief and pretty mundane. "Hurry up Wallace", "You're a gem", "Thanks - knew I could rely on you xx" or even "Mmm...not sure about that one". You see a bit of praise from Stella Young was like a bouquet of flowers from someone else. You knew she meant it.

I snatch the phone and wheel out of the shop to a puzzled frown from the eager sales guy. Maybe soon it will be time, but not yet.

Craig Wallace is the President of People with Disability Australia, was involved with the development of ABC Ramp Up and worked with Stella on many articles from late 2010 onwards.



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO

CONTRIBUTED TO THE 2014 'IN' EXHIBITION

PICTURED: MR TOM SOFTLY, MOTORCYCLIST

IN