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An exploration of the adherence of journalists in Australia to established media guidelines on the depiction of people with disability

Shawn G. Burns

University of Wollongong

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An exploration of the adherence of journalists in Australia to established media guidelines on the depiction of people with disability.

How do journalists use frames to depict people with disability in the media?

Why do journalists apply particular frames?

What impact does that media coverage have on community perceptions of people with disability?

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Arts - Research

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By

Shawn G. Burns

University of Wollongong
2011
Abstract

The representation of people with disability in the news media has been the focus of attention in Australia and beyond for many years. There has been much written about how people with disability are shown in television news bulletins and daily and non-daily newspapers. At the heart of much of this writing has been discussion about the frames journalists use to represent people with disability. This thesis seeks to build on that work by exploring the adherence of journalists to existing media guidelines in Australia on the representation of people with disability. This work incorporates a mixed methodology to explore the way people with disability are presented in newspapers and television; why they are presented that way and what impact that representation has on the general public’s perception of people with disability.
Acknowledgements

I will not pretend this has been an easy process. News reporters do not easily extract themselves from the world of short and sharp sentences to the world of academic writing. However, the purpose has not been overshadowed by the process and to that end it has been a rewarding experience. I am indebted to the many hours of suggestion, scrutiny and support of my supervisor Prof. Stephen Tanner has supplied over the past two-and-a-half years. The subject matter of this thesis is a shared interest of Stephen and myself and that interest has benefited the project. I also wish to thank my co-supervisor Susan Angel, who has offered support and suggestion throughout the process, both of which have been gratefully accepted.

It is important I recognise the contribution of those who were willing to take part in the interview process and to open themselves and their work to scrutiny. The journalists, academics and disability advocates who gave their time have assisted in making it a rounded product. My thanks go to Joan Hume, the creator of the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines. Joan is a long-standing advocate for people with disability and her work for the Disability Council of NSW in 1994 has stood the test of time. Thank you Joan.

Special mention must be made of my mother, Sue, who spent many hours transcribing interviews. Thank you Mum. And thank you Dad for assisting in your own way. I also thank my family-in-law. Much of the time spent on this thesis was spent tucked away in a room in my parents-in-law Pat & Brian’s home. I neglected some chores. Thank you Pat and Brian.

Finally, my thanks go to Gina and Mac. Macco, you put the smile on my dial and zing in my zang. Gina you are my dearest friend and closest ally. I don’t know where I’d be without you.
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Chapter 1 - Introduction

In 1994, the Disability Council of NSW commissioned researcher and writer Joan Hume to produce media guidelines to assist and advise journalists on the representation of people with disability. The relatively small A4 booklet addressed issues such as word choice, the use of stereotypes, and how to approach and prepare for an interview with a person with a disability. Hume, who was paralysed in a car crash in 1971, had written extensively on disability and was considered a logical choice to produce the guidelines.

Leone Healy (Disability Council of NSW) knew I was a competent writer, having edited many disability-related publications and that my Master’s thesis in English literature was on the depiction of people with disabilities in Australian literature. When she approached me to write the guidelines, I was thrilled; it was right up my alley.

- Joan Hume interview

The Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines form the backbone of this research as it investigates the willingness of journalists to embrace established media guidelines. In so doing, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1) How do journalists use frames to depict people with disability in the media?
2) Why do journalists apply particular frames?
3) What impact does that media coverage have on community perceptions of people with disability?

In 1994 the representation of disability in the media was perceived as such a pressing subject that Hume was commissioned by the Disability Council of NSW to produce the above mentioned media guidelines. This current work was started in late 2008 and included an interview with Hume to explore the reasons for the guidelines and their relevance more than 15 years later. The interview with Hume is a significant contribution to the qualitative aspects of the research, not only because it served as a reference point but, most importantly, it provided an explanation as to why the guidelines were necessary. According to Hume, the guidelines were important because they filled a gap in the system. The guidelines provided a tool kit for journalists and a reference for others to call on when addressing the question of disability representation. The interview is also a significant qualitative research tool as it allows the researcher to explain the world but
not measure it (Iorio 2004). The Hume interview also served as mechanism of introduction for this thesis.

The 2008 feature film Tropic Thunder featuring actor Ben Stiller as Tugg Speedman – a character who was famous for his stereotypical and degrading portrayal of a man with an intellectual disability - sparked outrage from disability advocacy groups. Hume recalled how a similar atmosphere of outrage and disillusionment was present at the time she was approached to create the media guidelines for the Disability Council of NSW. A list of movies about people with disability had been produced and many had received critical acclaim. The films, post International Year of the Disabled Person (1981), subsequently renamed International Year of People with Disability, included: Children of a Lesser God (1986), Rain Man (1988), Born on the Fourth of July (1989), My Left Foot (1989), and Scent of a Woman (1992). The films featured some of Hollywood’s biggest names, including Dustin Hoffman, who played an ‘autistic savant’ in Rain Man; Daniel Day Lewis, who played an Irish writer with severe cerebral palsy in My Left Foot; and, Al Pacino, who played an army colonel who is blind and intent on suicide in Scent of a Woman. Only one of the films, Children of a Lesser God, featured a ‘real’ person with a disability, Marlee Matlin - who is deaf (Hume interview).

So, in spite of all the International Year of the Disabled Person propaganda, the film media wasn’t getting the message about equal opportunity and equal participation in all aspects of life.

- Joan Hume interview

While Hume pointed to the film industry’s approach to disability as partial motivation for the Disability Council of NSW’s creation of the media guidelines, she highlighted coverage of disability by the news media at the time as the primary catalyst for action.

This research focuses much attention on stereotypical news media representation of people with disability and explores the frames used by journalists to depict people with disability. Hume contended newspaper and magazine articles had used stereotypes to depict disability for decades leading up to the creation of the disability guidelines. She said the ‘supercrip’ and ‘victim’ stereotypes (Clogston 1989; 1990; 1991; 1993; Hume 1994; Haller 1993, 1995; 1997) were prominent, among others.

Brave crip superhero, such as Christopher Reeve’s story; sob stories about doom ‘afflicted’ accident ‘victims’ usually ‘wheelchair-bound’. Confined to iron-lung,
cute little cerebral-palsied kids with calipers being patted on the heads by
beaming politicians and bountiful do-gooders.

- Joan Hume interview

Hume contends these images contributed to the push to establish guidelines for journalists
to refer to when reporting on people with disability.

“Many of these articles not only defamed and distorted the images of people with
disabilities but used deeply and offensive language, such as outlined in the
guidelines.”

- Joan Hume interview

As stated, this work uses the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as a reference
tool. The quantitative data collection in this work is based on a search of words and
phrases highlighted in the guidelines and the qualitative data analysis also makes use of
recommendations on stereotypes and clichés included in Hume’s work (1994). Questions
have been asked about the distribution and publicity given to the Disability Council of
NSW Media Guidelines and their subsequent impact. Hume is among those to express
cornern about the process adopted to make sure the guidelines reached their target
market:

“I personally believe the guidelines were not properly promoted and,
consequently, sunk without apparent trace.”

- Joan Hume interview

Hume, however, points to adaptations and adoption of the award-winning guidelines as
proof of quality (Western Australia Government 1984; Dept of Secretary of State Canada
1988; Citizens with Disabilities - Ontario 2005; Queensland Government: Disability
Services Queensland 2005; Hazelton 2006; NZ Disabled n.d.). “I know, even today,
people with disabilities still circulate and quote from them [Disability Council of NSW
Media Guidelines], so they can’t have been that bad.”

- Joan Hume interview
Structure of Thesis

The Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines are used for a number of purposes in this thesis, including (1) as a discussion leader with journalists, academics and disability advocates; (2) to identify terms collected in the quantitative data phase; and therefore (3) to provide a basis for the discussion about framing. Much of this thesis is concerned with the frames journalists use to represent people with disability and the issues they face. The discussion on news media framing of disability also addresses its widely debated agenda-setting capacity. Newspapers and television journalists are often criticised for the priority they place on certain elements of a story ahead of others. This process is widely known as “framing” and tends to be applied, whether consciously or subconsciously whenever a story is developed for presentation in the media. Entman (1989, 1991) and others have focused much attention on the media and journalists’ capacity to frame stories in such a way that an apparently complete image or perspective is presented to the reading, viewing or listening public, and yet the reality is that much of the image or perspective may be left out of the frame, whether deliberately or unintentionally.

This raises a separate, but parallel, question about the agenda-setting capacity of the media. Agenda-setting, according to Bogardus (1951), is when the media’s “… choice and treatment of news decides whether favourable opinion on a subject is to be made or unmade”. Newspapers and television news bulletins are often criticised for the priority they give to people, places and events ahead of others. If framing is the representation of a particular person, place or thing, then agenda-setting is recognition of the impact of the framing decision.

Journalists are trained to ask questions that address the 5Ws & H - who, what, where, when, why and how (McKane 2006). This work uses the journalistic credo to help answer questions about framing. Case study research techniques have been used to identify how journalists frame stories about, or involving, disability and what is the impact of using those frames. Interviews have been carried out with journalists, media and disability academics and disability advocates to answer the 5Ws & H of disability representation in the news media. It is important to identify the use of frames and/or models and stereotypes used to represent people with disability but it is also important to explore why certain frames are used and the impact of using those frames. The case studies and interviews with journalists, media and disability academics and disability advocates for this study provide an insight into the reasons frames are used and their impact. Significantly, the case studies and interviews also provide material for future
scholarly exploration, including, but not limited to, journalists’ understanding of disability.

An extensive literature review has been carried out as part of this research. The literature review (Chapter 2) sets the context for this research by canvassing work in the fields of journalism and disability studies. The literature review considers the various aspects and influences that play a part in the news media representation of people with disability. Consideration has also been given to the history of media guidelines on the representation of people with disability and the space Australia has filled in the disability discourse. Chapter 2 also explores the various pieces of legislation and codes of ethics in place to monitor and guide journalists when producing items about people with disability and/or the issues they face.

Chapter 3 introduces and discusses the methodology that has been adopted for this research. The mixed methodology incorporates qualitative and quantitative research methods. The approach has been widely used by disability and media academics when analysing the representation of people with disability in the media.

The quantitative aspects of this research rest largely on an analysis of newspaper and television coverage of disability over a one-month period between November 17 and December 17, 2008. The research uses the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as the basis for textual content analysis. The methodology also uses a set of media models of disability devised by academics John Clogston (1990, 1993) and Beth Haller (1993, 1995) to explore the frames journalists use to represent people with disability. To this end, framing theory such as that espoused by Entman (1989) is an integral part of this research.

The qualitative research methods incorporated in this research include case studies and interviews. The case studies and interviews are used to help answer significant questions posed by this research: (1) how do journalists use frames to represent people with disability? and (2) what is the potential impact of these frames on the general public’s perception of disability from an agenda-setting perspective? Yin (1994) and others contend that case study methodology is well placed to answer the ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions of qualitative research.

The quantitative content analysis is discussed in Chapters 4-5. These chapters provide the scaffold with which the substantive structure of the research is delivered. Chapter 4 is
Chapter 6 is dedicated to case studies of news items captured in the research data collection phase. A selection of items (10 newspaper and eight television) was chosen by the researcher as broadly representative of those news items that were about people with disability and/or the issues they faced. The case studies provide greater insight in the articles that have been analysed and discussed at length in preceding chapters. The case studies also provide an opportunity to explore the specific tone of individual items and the potential impact of such images on the reader and/or viewer. The case studies are reflective of the quantitative data analysis in Chapters 4-5 in that they are broadly in proportion to the findings on traditional and progressive disability representation.

The qualitative aspects of this research are continued in Chapter 7 with an analysis of interviews carried out with journalists, disability advocates and disability and media academics. The interviews provide insight into the thought processes of journalists on the representation of people with disability, the role established media guidelines play in the completion of their daily reporting duties, and the consideration journalists give to the impact of their work on the general public. Likewise, the interviews with disability and media academics provide this work with substantial qualitative data to help answer the questions it poses. Primarily, the interviews with the academics help answer the question of why and how journalists use particular frames, the interviews with the disability advocates also help answer these questions while providing a measure of the impact such representations of disability may have on the general public’s perception of disability.

Chapter 8 provides a summary of, and conclusion to, this research. The conclusion considers the questions posed by this research and delivers its findings. The conclusion also considers the shortfalls of the research and identifies potential future avenues of investigation in the field.
Joan Hume produced a set of media guidelines in 1994 that she and the Disability Council of NSW hoped would advise journalists and others on better ways to represent people with disability the media. This research has taken those guidelines 16 years later and, to a degree, put their relevance and impact to the test.
Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Introduction

There is some evidence to suggest that since the awareness-raising achievements of the first United Nations International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981, the language used to depict and represent people with disability has changed (Haller 1997; Haller et al. 2006) in a positive sense. Society, to a large degree, has acknowledged the need to move away from the use of words and terms that people with disability have found offensive, stereotypical and inaccurate and this acknowledgment is best represented by the establishment of guidelines on appropriate language to be used in the portrayal of people with disability. The theme of the subsequently renamed International Year of People with Disability was “full participation and equality” (United Nations 2003) and it proved a catalyst and motivation for the creation of media guidelines on the use of language and images to represent people with disability.

This chapter examines the history of media guidelines, the role media has played and continues to play in the representation of people with disability and its impact on society, the space Australia occupies in the field of disability representation, the evolution of the models of disability and, particularly, the formation of the media models of disability.

While some researchers and scholars in the field have acknowledged movement toward the use of less stereotypical, cliché, oppressive and offensive language, there is still a strong belief by journalism academics that more needs to be done to educate and expose working and student journalists to people with disability and the truly representative language that describes them and the lives they lead.

Some academics (Haller 1993; Darke 2003; Mallet 2004) also contend that journalists still have a long way to go in using acceptable language to depict people with disability. “The representation of disability in the media in the last ten years is pretty much the same as it has always been: clichéd, stereotyped and archetypical” (Darke 2003).

One of the questions to be considered by this thesis is why, particularly given the widely held view that the media has the ability to influence public opinion on a wide range of issues? This view is reflected in the agenda setting theory discussed later in this chapter. From a disability perspective, this view is supported by Auslander and Gold (1999). Auslander and Gold ask the question: ‘does the mass media produce what the general public thinks or does the general public dictate what the mass media produces?’
conclude, in part, that the media is capable of shaping public opinion: “… the media influences attitudes through how it covers a given issue (i.e. a story’s emphasis and colour)” (Auslander and Gold 1999, p. 10).

This research, to a large degree, is about the ‘how’ in the above Auslander and Gold statement.

The research considers the use of an important tool, namely media guidelines, that can assist journalists in their coverage and thus representation of people with disabilities. Organisations and groups across a range of countries have established various guidelines to address this issue. Some of the guidelines are not specifically ‘media’ targeted. Some are delivered as advice and tips on the depiction of people with disability to the entire community.

The motivation for the creation and/or compilation of the guidelines seems relatively uniform, that being to assist those working in the media industry and beyond to use language in their depiction of people with disability that avoids negative stereotypes and focuses on the person or issue rather than the impairment. The guidelines are closely aligned with what is known as the ‘social model’ of disability. The social model of disability puts the person ahead of the disability; it espouses people-first language and also considers ‘disability’ to be socially imposed on people with physical, cognitive and psychological impairment.

At the heart of the guidelines is the concept: ‘words matter’ (Strong 1989; Fowler 1991; Hume 1994; Phillips 2001; Haller et al. 2006; Hazelton 2006; Snow 2008). Words do matter in the media, particularly, as they have the ability to not only reflect public opinion on given issues but also the capacity to frame public opinion. From an Australian perspective, this view is reflected by Bullimore (2003) who argues the media provides information about our society but it also plays a part in ‘constructing for us a picture of that society’.

The proponents of media guidelines, in the case of people with disability, are, in many instances, reiterating the old adage: a word paints a thousand pictures.

As Haller, Dorries and Rahn state:
We suggest that even something as mundane as the words used to refer to a group are important because they have ramifications both for the self-perception of people with disabilities and what the general public believes about disability (2006, p. 2).

Media guidelines history

The history of media guidelines on the depiction of people with disability can be traced to 1981, the International Year of People with Disability and its immediate aftermath. The year focused, for the first time, global attention on people with disability and, in so doing, raised questions about mass communication and its impact on people with disability. Subsequently, recommendations from the ‘Improving Communications about People with Disabilities’ seminar held in Vienna, Austria, in 1982 (United Nations 1982) have been acknowledged as influential in the development of media guidelines on the portrayal of people with disability (Human Resources and Social Development Canada 2006).

Media guidelines on the portrayal of people with disability have been established in a range of countries and states and have also been adopted and adapted by individual groups, organisations and companies.

For example:

- United States Department of Labor, *Communicating With and About People with Disabilities*’ 1995 (U.S. Department of Labor - Office of Disability Employment Policy 1995);

- European Congress, *The European Declaration on Media and Disability*, 2003 (European Congress on Media & Disability 2003);

- Dept of Secretary of State of Canada, *A Way with Words: Guidelines and Appropriate Terminology for the Portrayal of Persons with Disabilities* (Dept of Secretary of State Canada 1988);

• Language Guidelines were established for the Special Olympics in Australia in 2007 (Special Olympics Australia 2007);

• New Zealand, *Words Matter: A Guide to the Language of Disability* (NZ Disabled n.d.); and

• University of Technology Sydney, *Language Matters: Guidelines for the use of non-discriminatory language at the University of Technology, Sydney, 2005* (Caddy 1994).

The guidelines use similar language and have largely similar goals. Some, like those produced by the Canadian Department of the Secretary of State, address both words and images; others, like the U.S. Department of Labor, deal specifically with words.

The approaches are similar but not identical and the differences are significant. The unifying factor within the multitude of guidelines is the concept ‘words matter’, as the following examples exemplify.

• “Words can also create barriers or stereotypes that are not only demeaning to persons with disabilities, but also rob them of their individuality” (Special Olympics Australia 2007).

• “The purpose of this booklet is to promote inclusiveness and the fair and accurate portrayal of people with disability” (Hazelton 2006).

• “Positive language empowers. When writing or speaking about people with disabilities, it is important to put the person first” (U.S. Department of Labor - Office of Disability Employment Policy 1995).

• “Since words are a mirror of society’s attitudes and perceptions, we should all put great thought into how we present information about people with disabilities” (Dept of Secretary of State Canada 1988).
Disability & media debate

Debate over the role of the media in the depiction of people with disability can be traced back to the middle of the last century.

The size and length of the debate is represented in the online Media & Disability Bibliography Project being carried out by the Media & Disability Group, AEJMC, under the guidance of Beth Haller at the University of Towson (Haller 1997). The criteria for inclusion in the bibliography includes: “Articles should have some connection to both media issues and legally defined disabilities.” (Haller 1997) As of September 2008, the online bibliography had in excess of 1000 entries, which excluded disability press articles. Bibliography entries, in what is an ongoing project, so far date back to Sigerest’s *Civilization and disease* (1945).

The media/disability conversation continues (Ellis 2008; Tanner et al. 2003; Haller et al. 2006; Power 2007) and is dominated by research out of the United States (Clogston 1993; Haller et al. 2006), the United Kingdom (Oliver 1990; Oliver 1996), Canada (Dahl 1993) and Australia (Goggin and Newell 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005; Meekosha 2003; Power 2003, 2007; Tanner et al. 2003; Tanner et al. 2005). It is significant to note an entire edition of the Asia Pacific Media Educator (2009) was dedicated to reporting vulnerability and the media’s representation and treatment of disability was widely addressed (Ellis 2009; Goggin 2009; Green and Tanner 2009; Richards 2009).

The conversation has followed a similar path to that of the development of the social model of disability, in that it has championed the concepts of people-first language and ‘nothing about us, without us’ (Charlton 1998). Haller and colleagues (2006) have looked to expand the debate by investigating the use and appropriateness of terms such as ‘wheelchair-bound’ in the depiction of people with disability in the media.

Examination of the self-representation of people with disability has also been undertaken. Thoreau (2006) investigated the self-representation of people with disability on the internet. The research focused on the representation of people with disability on the high profile and often controversial United Kingdom-based and BBC-run ‘Ouch’ web site (BBC 2009).
There is little difference in opinion among academics working in the field on what needs to be done about the representation of people with disability in the media. There is widespread acknowledgement that significant progress has been made but there is room for improvement and the need for the education of journalists to go further. Journalism academics (Tanner et al. 2003; Haller et al. 2006; Power 2007) have proposed and, in Haller’s case, established media toolboxes or information packs to assist journalists in their writing and representation of people with disability.

A divergence does, however, exist in regard to the models of disability. Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) have developed media models of disability (discussed later in the chapter) which break away from the overarching models of disability. The media models of disability have been created in acknowledgment of the media’s capacity to influence societal views and its reliance on stereotypes and consumable and palatable imagery when portraying disability.

Clogston and Haller’s media models of disability are used as a quantitative and qualitative reference tool throughout this work.

The Australian picture

There has and continues to be research carried out into the representation of people with disability in the Australian news media (Goggin and Newell 2000, 2002; Power 2003, 2005, 2007; Tanner et al. 2003; Tanner et al. 2005; Green and Tanner 2009; Richardson 2009; (Ellis 2008, 2009; Ellis and Kent 2010) but, there is also relative consensus that it remains an area requiring greater research attention (Tanner et al. 2003; Power 2007). The question of media representation of disability in Australia has been addressed in various forms but media disability representation in the context of adherence to media guidelines has not been considered. It is one thing to conclude, as Tanner and colleagues (2003) and Power (2007) have, that more needs to be done in the education of journalists in regard to the depiction of people with disability, but it is another to acknowledge the existence of educational tools and to analyse the degree to which they are used and their content adhered to. There needs to be an understanding of the ‘Australian picture’ of media representation of people with disability.

Power (2007) provides a contemporary perspective on the situation in Australia. Power carried out a content analysis of daily newspapers in a database and searched for key words associated with people with disability and subsequent identified articles were also
analysed using the media models of disability developed by Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995).

Power concluded that more needed to be done to make journalists aware of the need for them to use appropriate terminology in describing people with disabilities. “It seems likely that Australian journalists are not well enough educated in understanding modern philosophies of disability” (Power 2007, p. 121).

Tanner et al. (2003) address the question of media ‘drivers’ and the newsworthiness of disability. The work explores, through content analysis and first-person interviews, the relationship between the media and small community organisations. The work particularly focused on the Special Olympics Australia organisation and its ability to secure positive and accurate media coverage, if any coverage at all for people with intellectual disabilities.

Tanner et al. (2003) raise the question of newsworthiness and the ability and capacity of community organisations to garner media coverage within the framework of a media seemingly obsessed with the stereotypical images of disability and pre-conceived notions of what is and isn’t newsworthy. The work concluded that such organisations struggle for media coverage for a variety of reasons, including journalist attitudes, news ‘priorities’ and inadequate media/organisation liaison.

Richardson (2009) contributes to the discussion with his examination of the potential for news organisations to adopt voluntary codes about the representation of disability. He found there was a mix of enthusiasm and resistance within some organisations and individual newspapers to consider more closely the use of media guidelines about disability. While he considers differing generational perspectives within the industry to be a factor, he places greater weight on the power of journalistic independence in explaining varying degrees of journalistic adherence to guidelines.

The most profound issue for most journalists is that they feel certain terminology is about “political correctness” and therefore is about salving sensitivities instead of “telling it like it is”, which they perceive to be their central professional responsibility (Richardson 2009, p. 42).

As the Tanner (2003) research concluded a need to establish a tool kit for such community organisations to assist them in capturing media attention and to expand
journalism education to include greater awareness of people with disability, this work highlights the degree to which journalists adhere to guidelines on the depiction of people with disability and the potential for such guidelines to be incorporated in journalism training courses.

History of disability

Since the social and political revolutions of the eighteenth century, the trend in western political thought has been to refuse to take for granted inequalities between persons and groups. Differential and unequal treatment has continued, of course, but it has been considered incumbent on modern societies to produce a rational explanation for such treatment (Baynton 2001, p. 33).

Douglas C. Baynton, in Longmore and Umansky’s The New Disability History: American Perspectives, acknowledges the current stage of disability in an historical context. Baynton recognises modern society’s need to eliminate differentiation based on physical or mental impairment but goes further to place responsibility for positively addressing the situation on the society and not an individual, organisation or group.

The establishment of media guidelines covering the depiction of people with disability is an acknowledgement of society’s responsibility to do more about balancing the agenda. The guidelines may not provide a ‘rational explanation for such treatment’ but they are an acknowledgment of a situation in need of attention. That need for attention has a long history in the media. Historically, stories about disability have embraced stereotypes (Byrd and Elliott 1988; Panitch 1995); have been negative rather than positive; and have been demeaning and inaccurate (Zola 1985).

Marilyn Dahl observed in her discussion on disability as a metaphor that the media promotes certain images of people with disability by ‘selectively covering certain events and ignoring others’ (Dahl 1993). She went on to observe that journalists who were invited to a press conference by the National American Federation of the Blind, “… ignored the political topic [that was the subject of the conference] and wanted to instead photograph and report on the various walking aids, lead dogs, and other stereotypical symbols of blindness” (Dahl 1993).
This example not only serves to support the claims of academics (Zola 1985; Byrd and Elliott 1988; Panitch 1995), it also underlines the importance of drivers of news media (to be discussed later) and the need to consider how and why journalists frame stories and set the agenda.

Definition of disability

The definition of disability remains an open debate, after-all, what one person may see as disability another may not. Significantly, people with disability and disability advocacy groups have taken up the debate. In the true spirit of ‘Nothing About Us Without Us’ (Charlton 1998), the debate is dominated by those upon whom it most impacts.

The delineation between ‘definition’ and ‘models’ is, at best, blurred. For many, ‘impairment’ (physical or mental) is quantifiable and definable but disability is socially constructed and, in some views, inflicted and largely indefinable.

On the latter, Charlton states:

… disability is based on social and functional criteria. This means, first, that disability is not a medical category but a social one. Disability is socially constructed. For example, if a particular culture treats a person as having a disability, the person has one. Second, the category ‘disability’ includes people with socially defined functional limitations. For instance, deaf people are considered disabled although many deaf individuals insist they do not have a disability. People do not get to choose if they have disabilities. Most political activists would define disability as a condition imposed on individuals by society (Charlton 1998, p. 8).

This is supported by Albrech and Levy, who argue: “We contend that disability definitions are not rationally determined but socially constructed.” (1981, p. 14)

However, the social definition in its broadness creates problems for researchers, particularly those involved in quantitative analysis, who rely on the accuracy and accountability of figures. Quantitative research relies on what Albrecht and Levy refer to as the “so called ‘objective’ criteria of disability …” (Albrecht and Levy 1981, p. 14)
Generally speaking, disability is a condition that somehow impedes a person from doing what they want to do, from carrying out day-to-day activities. This is reflected in the *Oxford Dictionary* definition of disability as: “… a physical or mental condition that limits a person’s movements, senses, or activities” (Oxford Dictionary Online 2009).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) published an international classification of disability in 1980, ahead of the International Year of People with Disability (World Health Organisation 1980). The International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps, was reviewed and redefined in 2001 and in 2007 the WHO produced what it called the ‘new definition of disability’. It states:

“Disability is characterized as the outcome or result of a complex relationship between an individual’s health condition and personal factors that represent the circumstances in which the individual lives.”

(World Health Organisation 2001, p. 17)

The WHO argues that the environment in which one lives influences disability. It contends that disability is complex and different for every individual. One individual’s health conditions and personal factors may react with the societal environment to produce a disability for one person, where it would not necessarily do so for another individual in another place.

An environment with barriers, or without facilitators, will restrict the individual’s performance; other environments that are more facilitating may increase that performance. Society may hinder an individual’s performance because either it creates barriers (e.g. inaccessible buildings) or does not provide facilitators (e.g. unavailability of assistive devices) (World Health Organisation 2001, p. 17).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) largely adopted the definition of disability provided by the WHO in 1980. The ABS in its 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, which was later repeated in its 2003 survey of the same name, defined ‘disability’ as:

... any limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. Examples range from hearing loss which requires the use of a hearing aid, to difficulty dressing due to
The ABS definition is well removed from the social definition of disability. It remains firmly entrenched in the medical model of disability, which allows the ABS to more efficiently and simplistically carry out its primary task, which is to deliver statistical information.

In contrast, and as Erlandson highlights: “The WHO-ICF model is an integration of two earlier conceptual models of disability: (1) the medical model and (2) the social model” (Erlandson 2007, p. 33).

Models of disability

The debate over the general models has also led to a refining of the concepts into two, now widely accepted, categories - 1) the medical model of disability, and 2) the social model of disability.

The medical model is, basically, considered ‘traditional’, whereas the social model is widely acknowledged as ‘progressive’ and has been developed by people with disability and academics over many years.

The British Red Cross, in what it dubs a 10-minute briefing, is succinct in its definition of the two models.

It says:

The social model of disability is a different way of thinking about disability … The aim is to help people to see the person first, not the disability. That helps remove much of the fear and anxiety that people have about disability, and can clarify what changes need to be made in society. Instead of emphasising the disability, the social model puts the person at the forefront. It emphasises dignity, independence, choice and privacy. A key concept of the social model is that society disables people. Words are important, not because of the need to use the fashionable correct terms, but because the terminology reveals the thinking behind them (2009).
In regard to the medical model, the British Red Cross says:

The medical model, naturally enough, concentrates on disease and impairments. It puts what is wrong with someone in the foreground. It is concerned with causes of disease. It defines and categorises conditions, distinguishes different forms and assess severities. Perhaps the most important consequence of the medical model is that bringing the impairment into the foreground risks pushing the person into the background. They become less a person, and more a collection of symptoms (2009).

The key difference between the two is that the medical model concentrates on the impairment or the disease at the expense of recognising the person. The social model, on the other hand, recognises the person, acknowledges the impairment or the disease but places the responsibility for ‘disability’ with ‘society’.

Oliver, who is credited with conceptualising the general models of disability, has, however, warned against too prolonged a discussion and debate about the models of disability and their various manifestations.

This is dangerous in that, if we are not careful we will spend all our time considering what we mean by the medical model or the social model, or perhaps the psychological or more recently, the administrative or charity models of disability. These semantic discussions will obscure the real issues in disability which are about oppression, discrimination, inequality and poverty (Oliver 1990, p. 1).

Discussion about the general models of disability is significant to this research, as the British Red Cross puts it, “… words are important … because the terminology reveals the thinking behind them” (British Red Cross 2009). Elements of Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller’s (1993, 1995) media models of disability can be seen in the general models of disability. Clogston and Haller’s ‘cultural pluralism’ model is encompassed in the people-first philosophy of the general models of disability.

While the discussion about the various models of disability is important in underpinning this thesis, it is also necessary to explain why media coverage of disability is important. This raises questions about prevalence, to which the thesis now turns.
The difficulties in settling upon a clear definition of disability are mirrored in the length and complexity of the debate over the so-called ‘models of disability’.

However, a discussion about the depiction of people with disability in the media would not be complete without an understanding of the way disability is perceived, both by people with disability and others.

Most relevant to this study, John Clogston provided a set of five ‘media models’ of disability (1990, 1993) and, as cited by Power in his 2007 paper *Disability in the News* (2007), Haller added a further three models (1993, 1995). These models are an off-shoot of the larger ‘general’ models of disability.

Clogston (1990, 1993) devised the media models in the framework of newspaper articles and split them into what he termed ‘traditional’ or ‘progressive’ perceptions.

The first group of perceptions can be designated as Traditional and is based on consideration of non-mainstream groups of deviants, or flawed or stigmatized individuals (Goffman 1963). The second group, called the Progressive, views the non-mainstream individual as one who has the ability and right to participate in all aspects of society (Clogston 1989).

The media models of disability, according to Clogston (1990, 1993), and adopted for analysis by Haller (1993) and Auslander and Gold (1999) are:

1) Medical - emphasis on the physical disability as an illness, individual is portrayed as dependent on health professionals for cures or maintenance. The individual is passive and is a patient who suspends regular activities for the duration of “illness”.

2) Social Pathology - person with disability portrayed as a disadvantaged client who looks to the state or to society for economic support which is considered a gift not a right.

3) Supercrip - person is portrayed as deviant because of ‘superhuman’ feats or as ‘special’ because he or she lives a regular life ‘in spite of’ their disability.
4) Minority/Civil Rights - person with disability shown as a member of a minority group with legitimate political grievances.

5) Cultural Pluralism - person with disability considered a multi-faceted individual, whose disability is considered just one aspect of many. No undue attention is paid to the disability. Individual is portrayed as are others without disability.

Haller (1993, 1995), cited in Power (2007) expanded the ‘media models’ list with:

6) Business - people with disability and their accessibility to society are presented as costly to society in general, and to business especially.

7) Legal - people with disabilities are presented as having legal rights and possibly a need to sue to halt discrimination.

8) Consumer - people with disability are presented as an untapped consumer group. Therefore, making society accessible could be profitable to business and society.

Clogston considered his first three models as ‘traditional’, the next two as ‘progressive’. Of the Haller additions, the legal and consumer models are considered progressive and the business model is traditional - where ‘traditional’ is stigmatising and ‘progressive’ represents people with disability as full and active members of society (Power 2007).

This research is primarily concerned with the media models of disability listed above and they will be used throughout the content analysis process but it is important to have an understanding of the general models of disability in order to situate the study.

Prevalence of disability

The Australian Bureau of Statistics conducts its Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers every five years. The survey is used, among other things, to measure the prevalence of disability in Australia.

An Australian Bureau of Statistics survey carried out in 2003 found one in five people in Australia had a reported disability, using the aforementioned definition of disability. That equates to 3.9 million people or 20 per cent of the population (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2004). The gender breakdown was largely the same, 19.8 per cent of males and
20.1 per cent of females had a reported disability. The survey also revealed little change in the disability rate between 1998 (20.1 per cent) and 2003 (20 per cent). Likewise, there was little change in the rate of profound disability between 1998 (6.4 per cent) and 2003 (6.3 per cent).

Prevalence is also a significant factor when considering the media’s depiction of people with disability. The drivers of media or the criteria of ‘newsworthiness’, to be discussed later in this chapter, include ‘impact’. The ABS figures show almost four million Australians with disability, therefore one fifth of the population is directly impacted by disability and its issues and weight of numbers alone should, one could argue, warrant a significant degree of media attention to those issues.

As Tanner, Haswell and Lake observe:

> Add to this family, friends, carers and other people who work in the disability field, and the number of people who stand to be ‘interested’ in stories involving disability potentially becomes much larger (2003, p. 85).

The point is reinforced when the global picture of disability and the number of people with disability is taken into account.

The Metts report ‘Disability Issues, Trends and Recommendations for the World Bank’ estimated the number of people with disability in the world in 2000 as being between 235 million and 549 million (Metts 2000).

Newell and Goggin question how it can be that the commercial potential of such large numbers of people be consistently relegated to the back of the line.

> Given the scope and scale of disability, why then do people with disabilities still continue to be an after thought when it comes to most aspects of everyday life? (Goggin and Newell 2002, p. xiii)

Legislation
The discussion of journalists’ adherence to media guidelines on disability would be incomplete without reflection on existing Australian legislation and media industry codes of conduct.

It could be argued there is no need for issue-specific guidelines when media organisations and, in particular, journalists are governed by the laws of the land and guided by their industry codes of conduct. However, the argument is flawed in regard to the depiction of people with disability on closer inspection of the legislation and the codes of conduct.

Australian state, territory and federal legislation does provide protection against discrimination based on disability. The legislation varies, minimally, between the various jurisdictions but the main principles remain the same. The principles in all the legislation are aimed to prevent discriminatory acts against people with disabilities in various areas of society, including education, employment, access to premises, goods and services or facilities and accommodation.

Significantly, in regard to this study, the state and territory acts do not address issues such as the portrayal of people with disabilities in the media. The state and territory laws, which address the issue of discrimination against people with disabilities, are:

- Australian Capital Territory Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
- New South Wales Ant-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Act 1996 (NT)
- Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)
- South Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
- Tasmania Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (TAS)
- Victoria Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (VIC)
- Western Australia Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)

The question of discrimination against people with disability has also been addressed at a national level. The primary federal mechanism used to address issues of disability discrimination in Australia is the federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA).

The DDA legislates against the discrimination of people with disability and goes further to also make it illegal to discriminate against the relatives, friends, carers and co-workers of people with disability. In line with, but not identical to, the state and territory
legislation, the legislative powers of the DDA stretch into such areas as employment, education, provision of goods, accommodation, sport and access to premises used by the general public. Again significantly for this study, the national legislation does not dictate how the media should depict people with disabilities.

None of the Australian legislation specifies how people with disabilities should be treated in the framing of news and current affairs reports. However, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission has directly addressed this point, when it asked - who is protected by the DDA?

The DDA does not set out any specific rules to follow [with regard to correct language to use, and by implication, the ‘slant’ of reporting about people with disabilities] and is generally concerned more with what people do than how they talk (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2009).

The DDA covers 10 specific areas:

1. Employment
2. Education
3. Access to premises used by the public (including public transport)
4. Provision of goods, services and facilities
5. Applications for accommodation (for example, renting)
6. Disposal of land
7. Activities of clubs and associations
8. Sport
9. Administration of Commonwealth laws and programs
10. Requests for information

For the purposes of this study, it is worth highlighting the opportunity available to organisations to establish Disability Action Plans under the federal legislation. Under the DDA, Disability Action Plans can provide the tools for organisations to put in place processes that allow them to eliminate disability discriminatory practices as they deliver services, goods and facilities. Through the Disability Action Plans process, organisations establish the means by which they intend to deal with discrimination in these key areas. While organisations are not required by law to establish Disability Action Plans, it is reasonable to consider their use as a proactive response in regard to the DDA. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) developed its Disability Action Plan
(Australian Broadcasting Corporation 1994) and its subsequent Equity and Diversity Plan 2008-11 (Australian Broadcasting Corporation 2008). Again, in specific regard to this study, it should be noted ABC policy does not deal with the portrayal of people with disability in its organisation or, more specifically, its news and current affairs bulletins or productions. No commercial media organisation in Australia has registered a Disability Action Plan (Australian Human Rights Commission 2009).

United Nations ratification

In 2008 the Australian Government ratified the United Nations’ Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (see Appendix A for the federal government media release announcing the decision). Unlike the state, territory and federal legislation in Australia, the Convention specifically addresses the issue of stereotypes of people with disabilities. It also encourages the media to portray people with disabilities in a manner keeping with the intentions of the Convention (United Nations 2007).

It states that the signatories should:

… undertake to adopt immediate, effective and appropriate measures:

a) To raise awareness throughout society, including at the family level, regarding persons with disabilities, and foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities;

b) To combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities, including those based on sex and age, in all areas of life;

c) To promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities.

2. Measures to this end include:

a) Initiating and maintaining effective public awareness campaigns designed:

i) to nurture receptiveness to the rights of persons with disabilities;

ii) to promote positive perceptions and greater awareness towards persons with disabilities;

iii) to promote recognition of the skills, merits and abilities of persons with disabilities, and of their contribution to the workplace and the labour market;
b) Fostering at all levels of the education system, including in all children from an early age, an attitude of respect for the rights of persons with disabilities;

c) Encouraging all organs of the media to portray persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with the purpose of the present Convention;

d) Promoting awareness-training programmes regarding persons with disabilities and the rights of persons with disabilities.

For the purposes of this study, point ‘c’ is significant. The Australian Government, in ratifying the Convention, has committed itself to ‘encouraging’ the media to portray people with disability in a ‘manner consistent with the purposes of the present Convention’.

For the first time, the Australian Government has committed to raise matters of ‘portrayal’ of people with disability with the media. This step goes well beyond the establishment of Disability Action Plans as they currently exist. It is, however, also significant to note the use of the word ‘encouraging’. It is by no means a dictatorial stance.

Since the ratification, the UN has elected its Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Australia is an inaugural committee member, represented by Mr Ronald McCallum AO.

Codes of Conduct

The discussion about adhering to established media guidelines when depicting people with disability needs to acknowledge the prevalence of media codes of conduct in Australia.

The national broadcasters (ABC and SBS) and commercial and community broadcasters have codes of conduct that are designed to make sure broadcasting standards remain largely in line with community expectations and the United Nations’ Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations 2007).
The following highlights key sections within the various codes that apply specifically to the depiction of people with disability.

**ABC Code of Practice (radio, television, online and other media services)**

This applies to all content broadcast by the ABC and requires staff to avoid discrimination and stereotyping (Australian Broadcasting Corporation 2004).

It states:

Content should not use language or images which:

- disparage or discriminate against a person or group on grounds such as race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, disability or sexual preference, marital, parental, social or occupational status, religious, cultural or political belief or activity
- are not representative and reinforce stereotypes, or convey stereotypic assumptions
- convey prejudice
- make demeaning or gratuitous references, for example, to people’s physical characteristics, cultural practices or religious beliefs.

**SBS**

The SBS Code of Practice applies to all its television, radio and online services (SBS Corporation 2002).

The SBS code:

… seeks to counter attitudes of prejudice against any person or group on the basis of their race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preferences, religion, disability, mental illness, or marital, parental or occupational status. While remaining consistent with its mandate to portray diversity, SBS will avoid programming which clearly condones, tolerates or encourages discrimination on these grounds.

**Australian commercial television code of conduct**
The Commercial Television Code of Practice makes specific reference to the portrayal of people with disabilities in news and current affairs (FreeTV Australia 2004).

In addressing matters outlined in section 23 of the Broadcasting Services Act 1992, the Code states programs must not:

… provoke or perpetuate intense dislike, serious contempt or severe ridicule against a person or group of persons on the grounds of age, colour, gender, national or ethnic origin, disability, race, religion or sexual preference.

In regard to news and current affairs, the code states that programs:

… must not portray any person or group of persons in a negative light by placing gratuitous emphasis on age, colour, gender, national or ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, race, religion or sexual preference. Nevertheless, where there is public interest, licensees may report events and broadcast comments in which matters are raised (FreeTV Australia 2004).

The Commercial Television Code of Practice includes an advisory note addressing the preferred words and phrases to be used in the portrayal of people with disability. This Code of Practice is both strongly worded and instructional. Its advisory note is a concerted attempt to address the issues being addressed in this research.

The advisory note is in line with the methodology adopted in the Disability Council of NSW’s Media Guidelines and the Queensland government’s ‘A Way with Words’ (Hume 1994).

All three items list a series of words and phrases ‘to watch’ and ‘generally acceptable’ alternatives. Journalists working in the print media can also draw from a range of codes and policies, including the Australian Press Council’s Statement of Principles (2009), the Fairfax Code of Ethics – SMH Code of Ethics (2006) and the News Ltd Professional Conduct Policy }.

Australian Press Council

The statement of principles argues that:
Publications should not place any gratuitous emphasis on the race, religion, nationality, colour, country of origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, illness, or age of an individual or group. Nevertheless, where it is relevant and in the public interest, publications may report and express opinions in these areas (Australian Press Council 2009).

The Australian Press Council also specifically has the following guidelines in place:

**Reporting Guidelines**
**General Press Release No. 18 (February 1978)**

**The Mentally Handicapped**

The Australian Press Council stresses the undesirability of the identification of people in newspapers as mentally handicapped unless such an identification is relevant to the matter published.

The Council’s statement follows a request from the Australian Association for the Mentally Retarded. The Association said in a letter to the Council that unnecessary labeling of a person because of his handicap was detrimental to his progress and acceptance in society.

The Council accepts this point of view and commends it to the press generally.

**Reporting Guidelines**
**General Press Release No.91 (July 1987)**

**Disability - identification**

The Australian Press Council has been asked to issue guidelines on the publishing of the names or otherwise identifying wards of the State or those suffering disability or mental illness impairing their ability to speak for themselves.

The question was raised by a Victorian child and family organisation and a newspaper following the publishing of the names of two girls who were or had been wards of the State. The publication of the names was, in fact, at the request
of some of their relatives; although this identification did not add significantly to the thrust of the report.

The Press Council believes that normally the identification of young people as mentally disabled or wards of the State is undesirable, but hard and fast rules in such matters are extremely difficult to lay down.

There may be circumstances which justify the identification of the mentally disabled or wards of the State, but newspapers should consider carefully the reasons for publication and the possible consequences; every consideration should be given to the privacy of the wards themselves, their parents and relatives, and those who look after them.

The Press Council, it must be noted, continues to use terms such as “mentally disabled” in its reporting guidelines on disability. This phrase ignores the principle of people-first language and serves to reinforce the notion that people are defined by their impairment, rather than an impairment being something a person has.

**Commercial radio**

The Commercial Radio Australia Codes of Practice and Guidelines are largely dictated by the requirements mapped in the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (Commercial Radio Australia 2004).

The Codes are designed to ensure broadcasters have an appreciation and understanding of current community expectations regarding the material they broadcast.

The Codes seek to balance this requirement that prevailing community standards be recognised and followed with the protection of their right to freedom of speech.

The Codes state:

A licensee must not broadcast a program which … is likely to incite or perpetuate hatred against or vilify any person or group on the basis of age, ethnicity,
nationality, race, gender, sexual preference, religion or physical or mental
disability (Commercial Radio Australia 2004).

Interesting in the context of this research, the Commercial Radio Australia Codes of Practice and Guidelines do not make specific reference to the portrayal of people with disabilities. The Codes do, however, deal specifically with the depiction of indigenous Australians, women, suicide and people with mental illness.

The Commercial Radio Australia Codes of Practice and Guidelines are therefore significantly out of step with the approach adopted by Commercial Television Australia.

Subscription television

The Australian Subscription Television and Radio Codes of Practice direct that all broadcasters do not knowingly put to air programs or items that may incite or perpetuate hatred against or gratuitously vilify certain groups, including people with disability.

Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA)

The Media Entertainment and Arts Alliances was formed in 1992 through the merger of the unions representing journalists, actors and entertainment industry employees: The Australian Journalists Association (AJA), Actors Equity and The Australian Theatrical & Amusement Employees Association (ATEA).

The MEAA has its own Code of Ethics (Media Entertainment & Arts Alliance 2009) for journalists.
Clause two of the 12-point Code of Ethics advises journalists:

Do not place unnecessary emphasis on personal characteristics, including race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual orientation, family relationships, religious belief, or physical or mental disability.

It is important to note that while codes of ethics exist in various forms and, indeed, operate within individual media organisations like those included in this project, there remains very little actual enforcement of such codes. In fact, many codes are advisory rather than mandatory. The MEAA code, for example, only covers journalists who are members of the union. Even then, breaches of the code are rarely scrutinised, and when
they are investigated by the MEAA, the hearings take place behind closed doors, ironically away from public scrutiny. The company codes, on the other hand, are more likely to be enforced, although they can’t be read in isolation. Any interpretation normally takes into account other factors, including commercial considerations. The fact that the Press Council’s guidelines are identified as ‘principles’ also points to their fluidity and susceptibility to abuse. Much the same can be said of the various ACMA codes which appear to apply to journalists, but not necessarily to radio announcers, as the ‘Cash for Comments’ incidents that enveloped radio personalities John Laws and Alan Jones in 1999 testify. Although ACMA reaction to the July 2009 Kyle Sandilands and Jackie O “I was raped” incident on 2DayFM suggests the ACMA codes can be applied, such action came only after significant community outrage {Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2009}). This approach leaves such codes open to the criticism they are applied reactively, rather than proactively.

In short, this discussion suggests that the use of terms such as ‘guidelines’ and ‘principles’ confirm the advisory nature of such documents. The similarities in the codes and/or principles are most evident in their seeming lack of enforceability or inclination by the respective bodies to do so. This is, potentially, where the role of guidelines, like those produced by the Disability Council of NSW have a role to play. The guidelines provide journalists and student journalists with the tools required to represent people with disability fairly and accurately. If journalists are well versed, at an early stage, in the need for fair and accurate representation of disability and this is reflected in their work, the significance of unenforced codes of ethics and/or practice is reduced.

**Guidelines**

Three Australian states, Queensland, Western Australia and New South Wales, have guidelines that provide advice to the media on the representation of people with disabilities and two of the three states, Queensland and Western Australian, issue guidelines specific to the representation of people with disabilities. These guidelines - ‘A Way with Words’ in Queensland (Queensland Government: Disability Services Queensland 2005) and the Disability Services Commission’s ‘Putting People-first’ in Western Australia (Disability Services Commission 2008) - are largely based on the non-government supplied Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines (Hume 1994).

The Queensland Government’s publication *A Way with Words* states:
For decades, inappropriate terms and catchphrases were all too common in the media’s portrayal of people with a disability. In recent times, however, the media and the community in general have become increasingly aware that using inappropriate language when referring to people with a disability is offensive and demeaning …

It is discriminatory to set people with a disability apart from the general community to which they belong. Despite the growing number of people with a disability in the community, they are sometimes ‘invisible’ in the media, except when the story is about disability.

The views of people with a disability as a group or individually are seldom featured in stories dealing with general interest issues such as child care, transport or the environment. The purpose of this booklet is to promote inclusiveness and the fair and accurate portrayal of people with a disability. It is intended as an aid for professional communicators, such as journalists, writers, producers and broadcasters, and provides suggestions for appropriate language, interviewing techniques and media coverage involving people with a disability (Queensland Government: Disability Services Queensland 2005, pp. 1-2).

The guidelines in the Queensland and Western Australia publications and, indeed, the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines, follow closely a school of thought grounded in the concept that media reports should see people with disabilities as people-first; there should be no assumption that all people with disabilities are alike, or have the same interests.

The Disability Services Commission of Western Australia’s ‘Putting People-first’ guideline states:

This labeling influences our perceptions by focusing only on one aspect of a person - their disability - and ignores their other roles and attributes, for example that may also be a parent, a lawyer, a musician or a sportsperson. This guide aims to promote fair, accurate and positive portrayal of people with disabilities.

(Disability Services Commission 2008, p. 1)

The guidelines also deal with stereotypes and models of disability. But, in short, the guidelines state stories should not portray the success of people with disabilities as super
human feats or frame news reports in an emotive manner that highlights or focuses unnecessarily on people’s disability.

The Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines, as stated earlier, were largely the inspiration for the Queensland and Western Australia versions and, with that in mind, will be the media guidelines this research uses to code its collected data. Significantly, the NSW guidelines, written by Joan Hume (1994), note the power the media has in shaping community perceptions or attitudes and, as such, embrace the notion of agenda-setting.

The portrayal of people with a disability as helpless, mindless or suffering beings deserving of pity and sympathy is one of the many powerful stereotypes which can lead to discriminatory treatment (Hume 1994, p. 11).

Fowler expands on the theme when he says: “… I will show that language is not neutral, but a highly constructive mediator” (Fowler 1991, p. 1).

Haller, likewise, sees the media as crucial in establishing and or quashing stereotypes about people with disabilities.

“Journalists select the content and frame of the news, thereby constructing reality for those who read, watch, or listen to their stories” (Haller 1999, p. 2).

Saito and Ishiyama expand on Haller’s observation and contend that direct personal contact with people with disability is equally as important as exposure in the media when seeking to create positive attitudes toward people with disabilities (Saito and Ishiyama 2005).

While the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines highlight the power of the media to shape perceptions and opinions they also underline the consequent responsibility of the media to produce a fair and accurate portrayal of people with disability that does not use stereotypes.

The guidelines, which will be discussed at length later in this research, include some common stereotypes for journalists to avoid:

- Disability as a monumental tragedy;
- Disability as a punishment for sin;
- People with a disability are inherently evil;
- People with a disability are objects of pity and charity;
- People with a disability who do things like get married and have children are extraordinary;
- People with a disability lead boring, uneventful lives;
- Families, particularly spouses of people with a disability, are exceptionally heroic for living with a fate worse than death; and
- People with disability are asexual, eternal children (Hume 1994).

As has already been acknowledged, there has been significant scholarly discussion on: the history of disability, including models of disability and government legislation, media industry codes of ethics and media guidelines on the representation of people with disability. An exploration of the sort undertaken in this work, however, would not be complete without consideration being given to previous analysis of journalistic methodology and the environment journalists work in on a day-to-day basis. It is reasonable and necessary to understand the mechanism of news journalism before undertaking a critical analysis of the process and, particularly, the news media’s representation of people with disability.

The next section of the literature review explores what has been said about the journalism process, with particular reference to the drivers of news media and its framing and agenda-setting capacity

**Framing & agenda setting**

As was discussed in Chapter 1, the questions of how and why the news media chooses to represent or “frame” disability and the impact of those decisions is explored in this research.

The media is well placed and capable of setting the agenda (Cohen, 1963; Neuendorf, 1990). Many academics, led by McCombs (2002), contend that journalists, columnists, editors and commentators have the capacity to set the agenda by choosing one event over another to direct their attention to and, subsequently, that of the listening, viewing and or reading public.

McCombs in his discussion of agenda-setting refers to:
“The power of the news media to set a nation’s agenda, to focus public attention on a few key public issues, is an immense and well documented influence” (McCombs 2002, p. 1).

The capacity for the media, specifically the news media, to shape what the general public thinks about, if not what it thinks (agenda-setting theory), has considerable academic weight. According to Chaffee and Berger’s 1987 criteria for scientific theory, agenda-setting is a sound theory. Chaffee and Berger (1987) contend agenda-setting theory has explanatory power; it has predictive power; it is easy to understand; it can be proven false; it leads to further research; and it has organising power.

Bearing that in mind, an argument by Wall in her 2007 study of newspaper coverage of people with disabilities in New Zealand is also noteworthy. Wall and other academics have questioned and, indeed, warned against routine researcher acceptance of the media’s ‘potential to reinforce negative and inappropriate stereotypes of people with disabilities’ (Wall 2007). In a challenge to the agenda-setting theorists, she highlights the address given by Stuart Fischoff to the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association in Boston where he coined the ‘fundamedia attribution error’ (Fischoff 1991).

Fischoff questions the degree to which violence in society and other societal ills can be attributed in part or full to the images depicted in the media and the statement resonates in the disability representation discourse.

Fischoff said:

After 50 years and over 1,000 studies (a conservative estimate), there is, I submit, not a single research study which is even remotely predictive of the Columbine massacre or similar high school shootings in the last few years. Yes, there may be research which may predict fights on school yard grounds and may account for teenage aggression in the streets and spousal abuse after televised prize fights (and much research which argues the other way; research which you rarely hear about). But as for making the explicit connection between on-screen mayhem by the bodies of Stallone and Schwarzenegger, the minds of Oliver Stone and Wes Craven, and real-life singular, serial or mass murder, scientific psychology, albeit noble and earnest in its tireless efforts, has simply not delivered the goods. It asserts the causal nexus but doesn’t actually demonstrate it (Fischoff 1991).
Wall says researchers need to tread carefully when looking to lay the blame for society’s attitudes and perceptions at the feet of the media. Her observations are echoed by Goggin and others who consider media impact on setting the public agenda to be significant but not all powerful. Goggin, for instance, considers journalists and the media to be part of a society that continues to reinforce stereotypical frames of disability. Goggin said: “… the journalists themselves seem to be just part of a cultural framing of disability of which you read literature, you watch movies, read the newspapers you are getting a picture of disability presented. If you look at the way our workplaces, hospitals, schools are organised, that’s [the picture of disability] reinforced to our levels as well.” - Goggin interview

Like Wall and Fischoff, to varying degrees, Goggin contends the agenda-setting capacity and social influence of the news media needs to be kept in perspective. Goggin says consideration must be given to many means by which people can now devour their news beyond the traditional newspapers and mainstream television news bulletins. “I think you have to steer a course between saying the media’s an important part of how our society shapes itself but not oversubscribing massive kinds of influential role for the media that’s not there.” - Goggin interview.

The exploration of agenda-setting runs parallel to the concentration on media framing in this thesis. Media framing and its role in the representation of people with disability is at the heart of this research as it seeks to pinpoint particular words and images (Entman 1991) and “… identify journalistic intensions, news values, discursive structures, and content forces that integrate the words and images of a news story into a frame” (D'Angelo 2002, p. 881).

Frame analysis, first explored by Erving Goffman (1974), is considered “… a number of related, even though sometimes partially incompatible methods for the analysis of discourses” (The Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research 2008). Goffman considered framing to be an innate part of all social processes and necessary to facilitate understanding.

Media studies is one academic area that has taken Goffman’s framing analysis and turned it to its own purposes. Media scholars lean toward the active selection of frames, if not the manufacture of frames. Entman presents frames as a decision to highlight one area above another in order to promote that highlighted perception: “… to frame is to select
some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation” (Entman 1993, p. 52).

There are numerous assessments of the role the media plays in society. Most of these highlight the media’s ability to shape the way people think and its influence on personal choice and perceptions. C. Wright Millis (1959) observed when discussing the concept of sociological imagination that the media acts “as the bridge between our personal/private lives and the public world. We see ourselves and our place in society through mass media.” Cohen noted the media may not be successful much of the time in telling us what to think, but that it is stunningly successful in telling us what to think about (Cohen 1963), words later echoed by Neuendorf (1990). If Cohen and Neuendorf are to be taken as correct, the media is well placed and capable of setting the agenda. Journalists, columnists, editors, commentators and so on set the agenda by choosing one event over another to direct their attention to and, subsequently, the listening, viewing and or reading public.

Deering and Rogers highlight the media’s agenda-setting capacity with reference to cigarette smoking (Deering and Rogers 1996). Their argument is that prior to the early 1970s, while cigarette smoking was a major health problem, it was not seen as an important public issue. Since then, however, cigarette smoking has become a significant social problem and Deering and Rogers argue this is primarily because the issue developed a media profile. They claim various groups set about lobbying for change and recognised the capacity of the media to influence opinion. The lobby groups successfully redefined smoking and put a specific problem, framed in a certain way, on the media agenda (Deering and Rogers 1996).

The ability to grab the ‘agenda’ is not easy, as it is a scarce resource and the competition for its attention is strong. The likes of disability rights activists find themselves battling issues such as environmental sustainability, climate change, childhood obesity, breast cancer and binge drinking for ‘the agenda’ and the media’s attention.

McCombs in his discussion of agenda setting states:

Not only do people acquire factual information about public affairs from the news media, readers and viewers also learn how much importance to attach to a topic on the basis of the emphasis placed on it in the news. Newspapers provide
a host of cues about the salience of the topics in the daily news - lead story on page one, other front page display, large headlines, etc. Television news also offers numerous cues about salience - the opening story on the newscast, length of time devoted to the story, etc. These cues repeated day after day effectively communicate the importance in each topic. In other words, the news media can set the agenda for the public’s attention to that small group of issues around which public opinion forms (McCombs 2002, p. 1).

Media drivers

Newsworthiness

Journalists and editors say ‘news-sense cannot be taught - you either have it or you don’t’. That is a discussion outside the scope of this research but the question of newsworthiness does need to be addressed, as it is crucial in understanding the drivers of news and the capacity the news media has to accommodate disability issues on its agenda. Newsworthiness, unlike news-sense, is taught and has largely been broken into eight key areas. If a story falls within the bounds of the following six categories then, at least in the eyes of many journalism educators, it is seen to be newsworthy.

Mediamindshare.com lists the newsworthiness criteria as:

Impact - the more consequential, the more newsworthy; shrug your shoulders and ask yourself “who cares?” about this news - the answer should be “a lot” of readers or viewers or listeners.

Timeliness - the more recent that something has occurred, or is about to occur, the more newsworthy; if it’s already been out there awhile it’s “old news.”

Prominence - well-known individuals or institutions are more newsworthy - and that could mean “well-known” in your local community or in your narrow corner of the blogosphere, depending on who your readers or listeners or followers are.

Proximity - whether close geographically or “close to home” in a literal sense, i.e. close to readers’ values or concerns, greater proximity makes it more newsworthy.

The bizarre - “Dog bites man?” So what?! Happens every day and what else
would you expect Fido to do? But, “Man bites dog” or better yet, “Mike Tyson bites ear” (bizarre and a prominent individual involved) … now there’s a story!

Conflict - controversy and open clashes are more newsworthy to most people than everybody getting along; unfortunate, but just the way we are.

Currency - (not the $$ kind) - when something just becomes so talked about and is obviously an idea whose time has come, it gets reported on.

Human interest - something (or someone) the reader or listener or viewer can identify with or be entertained by, is more newsworthy than not (Tangeman 2007).

Other factors also come into play when assessing newsworthiness. Journalists and editors are the gatekeepers of news and are responsible for day-to-day decisions and judgements about to what extent an event may impact on people or the possible shock of an event or the appeal of a human interest story (Shoemaker and Reese 1991).

For example, scientist Rachel Carson has been warning of the environmental damage humans can cause to the planet since the 1960s, but it is in only relatively recent times that issues such as carbon emissions and climate change have taken any prominence on the media and public agendas (Carson 1962). This perspective is echoed by the Croteau and Hoynes’s observation:

News is the product of a social process through which media personnel make decisions about what is newsworthy and what is not, about who is important and who is not, about what views are to be included and what views are to be dismissed (2003, p. 135).

There are other factors that impact whether an event is reported or considered newsworthy. The factors include:

- Prejudice of media management

- The size of media outlets and the capacity to report on all but issues with the most impact or consequence
• Pressure from advertisers.

• Available reporting space. This is linked to the above point. In newspapers, the more advertising received the more space for editorial content that is available and the more space available for editorial content raises the likelihood of more second-string stories being run. Newspaper journalists, in particular, need to adhere to word counts and column design. Word count and time restrictions also impact broadcast journalists.

Ericson and colleagues (1987) noted story selection and how a story was covered was also impacted by the availability of resources. This point is expanded upon by Desbarats (1990) cited in Auslander and Gold (1999, p. 722) who argues “… the structure of the industry works against the development of journalists with specialised, in-depth knowledge in given areas.”

Shoemaker and Reese also contend decisions on newsworthiness are affected by organisational goals. Stories and issues that are known to lift a newspaper’s circulation or a television news bulletin’s ratings will be included, as increased circulation and ratings attract sponsors and advertising (Shoemaker and Reese 1991).

Based on the above discussion, the question of newsworthiness is clearly relevant to this research. Whilst news has it ‘drivers’, listed above, individual, personal judgements are made on what story runs. The question, in this instance, is: do stories about people with disabilities ‘run’ or, more succinctly, do they ‘sell’? Shoemaker and Reese’s ‘gatekeepers’ want their stories published or broadcast and they, in many instances, make the judgements about what they will cover and how they will cover it.

Conclusion

There has been extensive investigation of the representation of people with disability in the media. In the years since the International Year of Disabled Persons (1981), considerable steps have been taken to raise awareness of the importance of language and imagery that truly represents people with disability and avoid stereotypes and clichés. Multiple media guides have been developed to assist journalists and media organisations as they juggle the need to deliver consumable news and current affairs and the desires of people with disability to end discrimination and be fully included in society. There is academic agreement that the media is, literally, choosing its words more carefully. The
concept of people-first language and the message ‘words matter’ do appear to resonate within the news environment. However, the drivers of news and the capacity restraints of the news environment will continue to challenge the desires of people with disability, particularly regarding the use of stereotypical words and imagery.

The role of media organisations and journalists in framing what people perceive as disability has also been debated and has produced a chicken and egg-type scenario of its own. Does the media represent people with disability in a certain way because it is reflecting the view of the community at large or does the community at large have a perception of people with disability shaped by what is delivered in the media? This research will investigate the impact of media guidelines on the representation of people with disability on individual journalists. The exposure of journalists to people with disability has been acknowledged (Saito and Ishiyama 2005) as a significant influence on the representation of people with disability and that exposure can be, as a first step, delivered through the effective distribution of media guidelines and the establishment of media toolkits for student journalists.

The next chapter will explain the methodology used in this research.
Chapter 3 - Methodology

The rate of work addressing the representation of people with disability in the media has been steady since the early 1980s and Australian researchers (Meekosha et al. 1991; Goggin and Newell 2000, 2003, 2005; Jakubowicz 2003; Meekosha 2003; Power 2003, 2005, 2007; Tanner et al. 2003a & b; Tanner et al. 2005) are among the voices in the field. Many of these works have highlighted as important the role news media plays in shaping public opinion and the significance of language in the framing of news stories involving people with disabilities.

“It has long been considered that public opinion and attitudes towards social phenomena can be influenced and shaped by media presentations.” (Power 2007, p. 112)

This work has identified a gap in the research and addresses the area of media guidelines. This work is an exploration of the adherence of Australian journalists to established media guidelines on the representation of people with disability and seeks to answer three questions:

1) How do journalists use frames to depict people with disability in the media?

2) Why do journalists apply particular frames?

3) What impact does that media coverage have on community perceptions of people with disability?

Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework helps the researcher settle on a lens through which an issue will be investigated. The framework focuses the study. A significant piece of research has a strong theoretical framework. The theoretical framework goes specifically to the question, the data and the analysis to be incorporated in the research (Anfara and Mertz 2006). As with the framework of any substantial construction, the research framework must be sound, considered and, importantly, adaptable. If these elements are built into a research framework, it will, as Anfara and Mertz contend, produce stories that are told in “novel and interesting ways” (Anfara and Mertz 2006, p. 191).
The theoretical framework of this research incorporates elements of qualitative and quantitative research, described by Yin (1994) as the overarching methodologies of the social sciences. Case study has been chosen as the primary research method, as it has been widely adopted among media and disability researchers (Clogston 1989, 1990, 1993; Auslander and Gold 1999; Haller 1993, 1995, 1999; Tanner et al. 2003; Power 2007), and research method academics (Yin 1994) consider the case study method most suitable to answering ‘how’ and ‘why’ - questions both fundamental to this project as it asks: how do journalists represent or frame people with disability and why?

“Establishing the how and why of a complex human situation is a classic example of the use of case studies, whether by journalists or social scientists” (Yin 1994, p. 16).

The initial data collection and analysis will be quantitative in nature (Byrd and Elliott 1988; Barnes 1992; Auslander and Gold 1999; Haller 1999; Blood et al. 2002; Power 2005; Thoreau 2006; Tanner et al. 2003). The data collection process will include the counting of words, phrases and stories about people with disability over a specific period of time and in a specific selection of newspapers and television news bulletins. The position of stories on disability in news bulletins and placement in newspapers will also be included in the data collected. Placement can be measured a number of ways, including dividing pages into segments (Tanner 1990) and by applying the Gutenberg model as developed by Arnold (1981) and applied by Wheildon (1986). This approach measures placement according to reading involvement. A more simplistic approach is to rank articles by page or position within a bulletin.

Quantitative research is valuable in this instance as it provides a numerical value to the visibility of people with disability in the media. By collating the number of times words and phrases are used in the depiction of people with disability and the placement of stories about disability or people with disability in news bulletins or newspapers, we gain a numerical understanding of editorial importance placed on people with disability and journalistic practice.

Quantitative analysis also provides the opportunity to explore the presence of repeated messages and images of people with disability. This is significant “since its has been shown that repeated exposure to consistent images in the media do create beliefs and expectations about the real world” (Auslander and Gold 1999, p. 711).
This research, however, is dominated by the elements of qualitative methodology as it seeks to “explain the world rather than measure it” (Iorio 2004, p. 6).

The qualitative analysis will move beyond “how many” and explore the question “why” such words and phrases were used and the context in which they were used. A textual analysis will be implemented to explore the reasons why words and phrases are used and to consider the impact of those words and phrases. Textual analysis is a suitable element of the research framework as it will allow an exploration of how journalists make sense of their world.

“If we are interested in how cultures and subcultures make sense of reality differently, we can gather evidence for this by analysing text” (McKee 2003, p. 29).

The research seeks to explore and explain the primary world in which journalists operate - a world of words.

The journalists’ world of words is significant because it feeds directly into the acknowledged capacity of the media to influence the public agenda, impact what people think about and, potentially, what people think. Auslander and Gold (1999) champion this view: “… the media influences attitudes through how it covers a given issue” (Auslander and Gold 1999, p. 710). The way the media frames stories about people with disability - through the use of words and phrases - is, therefore, at the heart of this research. Framing and content analysis and interviews will be used to explore the adherence of journalists to established media guidelines. The way journalists present stories - the frame of the story - is significant. Some academics consider a journalist’s approach to, or framing of, a story to be a powerful influence on public perception (Entman 1989, 1991; D'Angelo 2002). Entman (1989, 1991) argues the media has the capacity to set the agenda rather than make people think a certain way. The framing of stories about people with disability can impact agendas and influence public opinion because “influence can be extended through selection of information” (Entman 1991, p. 349).

The content analysis will include the frames presented by the media models of disability (Clogston 1990, 1993; Haller 1993, 1995). As indicated in Chapter 2, the media models of disability split media articles into ‘traditional’ and ‘progressive’ perceptions of disability. Clogston and Haller devised the media models all news stories fall into.
Within the broader categories of traditional (t) and progressive (p) are the models: medical (t), social pathology (t), supercrip (t), business (t), minority/civil rights (p), cultural pluralism (p), legal (p), consumer (p).

The research theoretical framework is represented in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: Theoretical framework**

Framing and content analysis, incorporating case studies and interviews are used to assess the adherence of journalists to established media guidelines.

Content analysis is commonly used to assess media content (Janowitz 1968; Clogston 1990; Auslander and Gold 1999; Power 2007; Wall 2007; Tanner et al. 2003). McQuail (1989) considers content analysis a means by which to test the commonly held view that media coverage on a specific issue can affect public opinion on that issue.

The purpose of the cultural indicator analysis is often to test propositions about effects from the media on society over time, but it is also a method for the study of social change in its own right and for the comparison of different national societies and culture (McQuail 1989, p. 178).
Barnartt and Altman (2001) contend that content analysis can also be used to measure the performance of media. In support of McQuail (1989), they state:

“… looking at the sources used in news stories about disability allows for an investigation of how many diverse perspectives are, or are not, getting into the media” (Barnartt and Altman 2001, p. 231).

Framing is important when analysing media content. According to Haller (1999) and Barnartt & Altman (2001), journalists decide what goes into their stories and they help to construct:

“… reality for those who read, watch or listen to their stories” (Barnarrt and Altman 2001, p. 231).

Framing encourages the reader, viewer or listener to consider only what is shown within the frame and ignore what is left out (Blood et al. 2002).

Haller (2000) contends:

“How news stories about disability are played in the news media can sway public opinion about disability issues and toward the cultural representations of people with disabilities in general” (Haller 2000, p. 260).

Case studies and interviews are used in this work to further analyse the reasoning behind a journalist’s selection of story frame and the influencing factors; including the impact of the mechanics and drivers of daily news on the final outcome of a story. Case studies are a valuable research tool as they draw on a range of data sources (Tanner 1999) and have four defining characteristics: particularistic, descriptive, heuristic and inductive (Merriam 1988). These characteristics combine to provide a platform for “theory building” (Tanner 1999) by facilitating researcher capacity to discover new relationships rather than re-enforcing existing hypotheses (Wimmer and Dominick 1991).

The research will provide two case studies, one of newspapers and the other of television which will extract a selection of representative material for more detailed qualitative analysis.
The case study approach also accommodates analysis of individual environments. The research, through the use of case studies (interview process), provides insight into the machinations of the newsroom environment and allows the researcher the opportunity to:

“… examine how humans develop ‘definitions of the situation’.” (Feagin et al. 1991, p. 9)

Figure 2: Research process

The research process is explained in Figure 2 (above). It depicts the multi-staged method undertaken to compile the qualitative and quantitative data and the subsequent analysis process. As represented in Figure 2, the quantitative elements of the research are descriptive data analysis-based. Firstly, the popular media database FACTIVA was used to search for keywords and phrases highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines. Secondly, television news items about people with disability and or the issues they face have been individually analysed by the researcher for the use of the keywords and phrases highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines.

As indicated previously, these guidelines were written and produced in 1994 by Joan Hume. The guidelines have been widely acknowledged and referenced by other
organisations, groups and government departments (Citizens with Disabilities - Ontario 2005; Queensland Government: Disability Services Queensland 2005; Hazelton 2006; Disability Services Commission 2008; NZ Disabled n.d.) as influential in the formation of subsequent guidelines and it is therefore reasonable to adopt these guidelines as the template for this study.

The Factiva search included, but was not limited to, the following words: abnormal, subnormal, deformity, birth defect, cretin, cripple, disabled, dwarf, handicapped, insane, invalid, mentally retarded, Mongol, spastic and vegetative (all having been highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as unacceptable). The search also included phrases highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines, which include, but are not limited to: ‘confined to a wheelchair’, ‘deaf and dumb’ and ‘suffers from’. These are detailed in Appendix B

As mentioned earlier, tallies were made of the occurrences of each specified word and phrase in each newspaper and each television news bulletin. This process provided the material required to statistically assess journalist adherence to media guidelines on disability. The data was also coded in line with the media models of disability devised by Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) and referred to in Power (2007). Clogston and Haller’s media models are a significant representation of the frames journalists apply to stories about people with disability and/or the issues they face and provided the foundation of much of the framing analysis contained in this work.

The media models of disability, the first five of which Clogston (1990, 1993) devised and the final three Haller contributed, are, as stated by Power (2007):

1. the medical model, in which disability is presented as an illness or malfunction;
2. the social pathology model [in which] disabled people are presented as disadvantaged and must look to the state or society for economic support, which is considered a gift, not a right;
3. the supercrip model [in] which the disabled person is portrayed as deviant because of “superhuman feats, or as “special” because he or she lives a regular life “in spite of” their disability;
4. the minority/civil rights model, in which disabled people are seen as members of a disability community, which has legitimate civil rights and grievances;
5. the cultural pluralism model, in which people with disabilities are seen as multi-faceted and their disabilities do not receive undue attention;
6. the business model, in which disabled people and their accessibility to society are presented as costly to society in general, and to businesses especially;
7. the legal model, in which people with disabilities are presented as having legal rights and possibly a need to sue to halt discrimination;
8. the consumer model, in which people with disabilities are presented as an untapped consumer group and making society accessible could be profitable to business and society.

The qualitative elements are primary sourced (interviews) and case study-based and, primarily, conceptual analysis in character. Interviews were carried out with journalists who produced items identified through the FACTIVA search and researcher-conducted analysis, as containing elements that were considered contrary to ‘acceptable’ language and terms highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Guidelines. A series of semi-structured were also carried out with media and disability academics, and disability advocates and organisation representatives. (See Appendix H and I) The inclusion of multiple perspectives on disability and its representation in the media provided the research a fuller picture of, among other things, the impact of disability presentation on the disability community and the wider community. The semi-structured method was used as it a popular and proven social-sciences research method (Zhang 2006) and reflects the journalistic practice of listening to what an interviewee says and, potentially, following a new line of questioning based on their responses. (McKane 2006)

[The] semi-structured interview lies in between in terms of the flexibility of the interview process. Predefined questions, usually more open-ended than questions in a structured interview, are prepared, but in the course of interview, interviewers have a certain room to adjust the sequence of the questions to be asked and add questions based on the context of the conversations. (Zhang 2006)

Phase 2 of the project involves a series of purposive interviews with journalists identified in phase 1. Phase 1 identifies journalists as authors of articles on disability. These journalists were invited by letter and follow-up telephone conversation to participate in the study. The journalists were interviewed by the author and were asked a series of questions.

Among other questions (see Appendix G) journalists were asked whether they were aware of guidelines on the depiction of people with disability, whether they were aware
of the concept involving people-first language, whether they consider the depiction of people with disability an issue, whether they have had any personal contact with a person with disabilities and whether they consider the impact of their words on people with disability and society as a whole.

People-first language is a concept and/or practice espoused by Snow (2008) and others who claim people should not be defined by their disability – they are, as the name suggests, people-first. Snow (2008) contends:

People-first language puts the person before the disability, and describes what a person has, not who a person is. Are you ‘myopic’ or do you wear glasses? Are you ‘cancerous’ or do you have cancer? Is a person ‘handicapped/disabled’ or does she have a disability? (Snow 2008, p. 2)

Non-people-first language places importance on the disability ahead of the person and, in many instances, whether the disability has an impact on the story or not. The researcher considers the use of non-people-first language to be an aspect of the ‘traditional’ representation of disability. While it does not feature in the media models of disability (Clogston 1989, 1990, 1993; Haller 1993; 1995), Hume (1994) does place importance on the use of people-first language and aligns with Snow (2008) in the belief that people are, indeed, people-first and journalists should represent people with disability in that context.

Interviews were also carried out with academics who have written about media, disability and representation, and with disability advocates, who work with and on behalf of people with disability. The interviews were an important opportunity to gather and analyse the opinions of those who have been directly involved with people with disability. Both groups had reflected on the role of the media in portraying disability. Academics, in particular, were included in this phase of the study, with their responses providing a point of comparison with the journalists.

The qualitative elements of the content analysis also included a search for the use of stereotypes highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as ‘to be avoided’. The stereotypes include, but are not limited to: ‘disability is a monumental tragedy’, ‘disability is punishment for a sin’, ‘people with a disability are objects of pity and charity’ and ‘people with disability lead boring, uneventful lives’ (Hume 1994). Articles identified through the FACTIVA search as containing the key words and or key phrases will also be examined as to whether they were issue or personality driven.
In his *Disability Coverage of 16 Newspapers*, Clogston (1990) differentiated between stories that focused on the individual as personalising disability. This research method delivers consistency in approach for study in the same field and the potential for comparative study into the future.

The content analysis included newspaper headlines, pictures and picture captions and images and graphics used in the television news coverage. This was done to acknowledge the power of the image in the framing of a news story.

“Proverbial wisdom notwithstanding, pictures do lie in the sense that they depict spurious realities.” (Epstein 1973, p. 21)

It is noted the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines do not deal specifically with the question of ‘images’. They do, however, raise the significance of headlines in the depiction of people with disability in the media and provide examples of ‘positive’ headlines.

This approach is in line with that adopted by MacArthur (2007), where she cites van Dijk (1991) as demonstrating:

“… headlines, sub-heads, stand firsts and leading paragraphs are most frequently remembered parts of news articles and can shape the entire story’s framework of interpretation.” (Van Dijk 1991; MacArthur 2007, p. 35)

A headline and or the final shape of a news story, in newspapers particularly, is often something that is out of the control of the journalists. Editors and sub-editors wield considerable power in the final framing of a published or broadcast story. The process an article goes through before publication is known as ‘gatekeeping’, a phrase coined by White in his landmark 1950 study of a wire-services editor whom he named Mr Gates. The gatekeeping process is broken into layers and roles (see Figure 3). The process provides for journalists to have, at one end of the scale, stories published unchanged and, conversely, stories not published at all. Various ‘gatekeepers’ in the process can dictate the final shape of a published story or whether a story is published at all. Gatekeepers, therefore, have an impact on the frame of stories and the capacity to influence representation of individuals and groups. The gatekeeper process is depicted in Figure 3 below from Tanner (1999). The diagram represents the flow of information from community groups, individuals and activists through the various ‘gates’ in the newsroom.
Some, as the diagram depicts, are successful and faced limited difficulty getting their message across to the media consumer, but others face a far more arduous task, and many fail to get past the first ‘gate’.

Figure 3: Gatekeeping process (Tanner 1999, p. 80)

The use of interviews and individual case studies in this research will provide insight into the role editors and sub-editors play in the news process from the perspective of the journalist.

The research corpus takes in disability representation in two major NSW-based metropolitan papers, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Daily Telegraph*, one national newspaper in wide circulation in NSW, *The Australian*, and two regional newspapers, the Wollongong-based *Illawarra Mercury* and the South Coast regional non-daily newspaper *The South Coast Register*. The study also analysed news reports contained in the major nightly bulletins of all NSW metropolitan commercial television stations (TEN, Nine, Seven, SBS), the major nightly NSW-based ABC bulletin and the nightly news bulletin from the regionally-based WIN News from Wollongong.

These media outlets were selected to provide a broad but manageable cross-section of newspapers and television stations in NSW. NSW has been chosen as it is Australia’s
most populous state, it has a broad selection of news media and the researcher is based in Wollongong, NSW, which is also home to the Illawarra Mercury and WIN Television and, significantly, the media guidelines at the heart of the research are NSW-based.

Analysis of regional media provides a significant element of differentiation for this study from previous studies in the disability media field. Access to regional media content for analysis purposes is more limited than to metropolitan news media, as it is less likely to be incorporated in commercial databases (i.e. Factiva). The issue was addressed through manual data collection carried out by the researcher. The data collection was carried out on The South Coast Register and the television news items.

The data collection period was November 17, 2008 to December 17, 2008. The four-week period is selected to capture the two weeks either side of December 3, 2008. The December 3 date is significant as it is the United Nations International Day of People with Disability and it was anticipated there would be a heightened level of awareness of disability issues and people with disability on and/or near the date.

While the study period is relatively short, the cross-media structure of the research provided significant statistical and anecdotal outcomes. The four-week period captured in excess of 120 television news bulletins and more than 100 newspaper editions. The exploration also included qualitative analysis of journalistic adherence to industry codes of practice and ethics, that included but were not limited to the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) and the Australian Press Council. The MEAA union represents broadcast and print journalists and coordinates Australia’s most prestigious journalism awards - The Walkley Awards.

The MEAA’s 12-point Code of Ethics includes the following advice:

“2. Do not place unnecessary emphasis on personal characteristics, including race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual orientation, family relationships, religious belief, or physical or mental disability.”

(Media Entertainment & Arts Alliance 2009)

Likewise, the Australian Press Council’s Statement of Principles raises the question of representation and the framing of news.
“Publications should not place any gratuitous emphasis on the race, religion, nationality, colour, country of origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, illness, or age of an individual or group.”

(Australian Press Council 2009).

It is significant to explore the degree to which media industry bodies address the issue of disability representation and whether it is reflected in journalistic practice.

While a content analysis provides some insight into the use of (or absence of) disability language by journalists, it should not be viewed in isolation. A greater insight can be gleamed from interviews with journalists who write the stories. This approach tends to answer the ‘why’ questions identified by Yin (1994) as being the crucial elements of case study research (i.e. Why do journalists apply a particular frame?). With this in mind, this research directs significant attention to interviews carried out with journalists identified as being responsible for the production of stories about people with disability and/or the issues they face.

The value of interviews as a research tool is further explored through a collection of interviews with disability advocates and media and disability advocates. As is the case with journalists, much can be ascertained by asking those who act with and on behalf of people with disability and those who have spent time involved in the discourse about disability representation. The interviews with academics and advocates again help answer the ‘why’ questions but are also valuable in assessing the impact of specific media representations.

Hypotheses/Conclusion

It was anticipated the research would produce a mixed outcome and that there would be news items that fall both within and outside what the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines highlight as ‘acceptable’. It was anticipated most of the journalists to be questioned throughout this research process would have little, if any, understanding or awareness of the media guidelines on disability. This result would raise numerous questions, not the least being: how then do journalists explain the use of the acceptable language? One possible answer could be: journalists and the media reflect society at large and through merely being a part of modern society most journalists understand what is and isn’t acceptable language.
There would be future research opportunities, particularly in regard to an attitudinal study of journalists. A study that analyses journalists’ attitudes to people with disability could provide insight into how these attitudes, positive or negative, are formed and how and where they can best be addressed or developed.

As suggested earlier, it is anticipated this research will reveal a low level of awareness of existing guidelines on the representation of people with disability, so future research endeavours could also include an impact analysis of the incorporation of such guidelines in journalism curricula.

The mixed methodology, incorporating elements of qualitative and quantitative research, has been used because it represents the overarching methodologies of the social sciences (Yin 1994). Case study is the primary research methodology and has a substantial track record in the field of media and disability study (Clogston 1989, 1990, 1993; Auslander and Gold 1999; Tanner et al. 2003; Power 2007).

Chapter 4 is a content analysis of the newspapers specified in the preceding chapters (i.e. The Sydney Morning Herald, The Daily Telegraph, The Australian, The Illawarra Mercury and The South Coast Register.)
Chapter 4 - Content Analysis (Newspaper)

Content analysis is a popular approach among media researchers. McQuail, cited in Martin (2008), argues:

The basic assumption is that both changes and regularities in media content reliably reflect or report some feature of the social reality of the moment. The purpose of the cultural indicator analysis is often to test propositions about effects from media on society over time, but it is also a method for the study of social change in its own right and for the comparison of different national societies and cultures (McQuail 1989, p. 161).

For the purposes of this study, a content analysis of five newspapers was carried out. The newspapers included in the research were: The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH), The Australian (Aust), The Daily Telegraph (DT), The Illawarra Mercury (IM) and The South Coast Register (SCR).

The papers were selected to provide a cross-section of NSW metropolitan and regional newspaper coverage. The South Coast Register (a paper printed three-times a week on the South Coast of NSW) was selected as representative of the non-daily newspapers found in many communities across Australia. The South Coast Register and The Illawarra Mercury are also the researcher’s ‘local’ papers. The Illawarra Mercury is a regional newspaper produced in Wollongong. It is published Monday-Saturday and has a circulation of 75,000 Monday-Friday and 104,000 (Saturday) [http://www.adcentre.com.au/the-illawarra-mercury.aspx](http://www.adcentre.com.au/the-illawarra-mercury.aspx). The South Coast Register is a non-daily regional newspaper based in Nowra on the NSW south coast. It is published Monday, Wednesday and Friday and has a circulation of 6932 [http://www.ruralpresssales.com/detail.asp?region=Southern&paper_id=134&state=NSW](http://www.ruralpresssales.com/detail.asp?region=Southern&paper_id=134&state=NSW).

The Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian and The Daily Telegraph were selected because of circulation dominance. The January-March 2008 Audit Bureau of Circulation survey produced the following breakdown:
Table 1: Newspaper circulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mon-Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Circulation: Australian Newspapers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Australian Financial Review</em></td>
<td>88 488</td>
<td>102 114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Australian</em></td>
<td>134 000</td>
<td>305 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Canberra Times</em></td>
<td>35 060</td>
<td>61 963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New South Wales</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sydney Morning Herald</em></td>
<td>212 500</td>
<td>360 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Daily Telegraph</em></td>
<td>366 000</td>
<td>333 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Victoria</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Herald Sun</em></td>
<td>516 500</td>
<td>512 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Age</em></td>
<td>201 500</td>
<td>299 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Queensland</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Courier Mail</em></td>
<td>217 781</td>
<td>314 535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Western Australia</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>West Australian</em></td>
<td>196 490</td>
<td>348 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Australia</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Advertiser</em></td>
<td>189 293</td>
<td>263 482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tasmania</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mercury</em></td>
<td>44 894</td>
<td>62 529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern Territory</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Northern Territory News</em></td>
<td>20 431</td>
<td>30 801</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The circulation figures indicate *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Daily Telegraph* have the largest circulations inside NSW and are third and second respectively to *The Herald Sun* (Victoria) on a national basis.

The content analysis was carried out on all papers published between November 17, 2008 and December 17, 2008. The four-week period encapsulated two weeks either side of, and including, International Day of People with Disability, December 3, 2008. The period was selected because it was considered to be a time when the awareness of disability issues and people with disability would, potentially, be higher (based on public campaigns promoting IDPWD - such as the NSW Government’s ‘Don’t Dis My Ability’ campaign and, potentially, reflected in the representation of people with disability and disability issues in the media (NSW Government 2008).

The analysis included quantitative and qualitative research elements.
The quantitative analysis consisted of the compilation of descriptive information gained through a database (Factiva) search of four of the five newspapers: The Sydney Morning Herald, The Daily Telegraph, The Australian and The Illawarra Mercury and a manual content analysis of The South Coast Register. Factiva is a widely used database for media content analysis but it did not provide information on The South Coast Register. The researcher collected The South Coast Register editions published during the survey period data and read each of the editions.

All the newspapers were searched for the words and phrases identified in the Disability of Council of NSW Media Guidelines as being inappropriate (Hume 1994).

The words and phrases highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines are listed in Table 2.

| Table 2: Words and phrases highlighted by Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Abnormal                              | Subnormal       | Afflicted with | Birth defect   | Congenital defect |
| Deformity                             | Blind (The)     | Visually impaired (The) | Confined to a wheelchair | Wheelchair-bound |
| Cretin                                | Cripple         | Crippled       | Deaf (The)     | Deaf and dumb   |
| Defective                             | Deformed        | Disabled (The) | Disease        | Dwarf           |
| Epileptic                             | Fit             | Attack         | Spell          | Handicapped (The) |
| Insane                                | Lunatic         | Maniac         | Mental patient | Mentally diseased |
| Neurotic                              | Psycho          | Psychotic      | Schizophrenic  | Unsound mind    |
| Crazy                                 | Mad             | Demented       | Deviant        | Invalid         |
| Mentally retarded                     | Defective       | Feeble minded  | Idiot          | Imbecile        |
| Moron                                 | Retarded        | Mongol         | Mongoloid      | Patient         |
| Physically challenged                 | Intellectually challenged | Vertically challenged | Differently abled | Spastic |
| Suffers from                          | Sufferer        | Stricken with  | Vegetative     | Victim          |

A manual search for the words and phrases was carried out on The South Coast Register. This search identified a number of additional words and phrases that were subsequently included in the broader analysis, such as “wheelchair access”. These words and phrases were included in the Factiva search of all the newspapers in this study.

The additional words and phrases searched for in the Factiva database and manually by the researcher are listed in Table 3 (below).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deformity</th>
<th>Disability/Disabilities</th>
<th>Disabled kids</th>
<th>Disabled men</th>
<th>Disabled people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
<td>Limited abilities</td>
<td>Paraplegic</td>
<td>People who are blind</td>
<td>People with disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visually impaired people</td>
<td>Visually impaired (The)</td>
<td>Wheelchair access</td>
<td>International Day of People with Disability (variants)</td>
<td>Handicapped</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The subsequent breakdown of the data therefore focused on words and phrases specifically addressed by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines and, as a supplement, words and phrases identified through the manual search of *The South Coast Register*. These words and phrases will be referred to from here as “searched for words and phrases”. The final combination of all words and phrases searched for in this study is identified below in Table 3b.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Synonym</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Affliction</th>
<th>Birth Defect</th>
<th>Congenial Defect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abnormal</td>
<td>Subnormal</td>
<td>Afflicted</td>
<td>Birth Defect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deformity</td>
<td>Blind (The)</td>
<td>Visually impaired (The)</td>
<td>Confined to a wheelchair</td>
<td>Wheelchair-bound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cretin</td>
<td>Cripple</td>
<td>Crippled</td>
<td>Deaf (The)</td>
<td>Deaf and dumb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defective</td>
<td>Deformed</td>
<td>Disabled (The)</td>
<td>Disease</td>
<td>Dwarf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epileptic</td>
<td>Fit</td>
<td>Attack</td>
<td>Spell</td>
<td>Handicapped (The)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insane</td>
<td>Lunatic</td>
<td>Maniac</td>
<td>Mental patient</td>
<td>Mentally diseased</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neurotic</td>
<td>Psycho</td>
<td>Psychotic</td>
<td>Schizophrenic</td>
<td>Unsound mind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crazy</td>
<td>Mad</td>
<td>Demented</td>
<td>Deviant</td>
<td>Invalid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentally retarded</td>
<td>Defective</td>
<td>Feeble minded</td>
<td>Idiot</td>
<td>Imbecile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moron</td>
<td>Retarded</td>
<td>Mongol</td>
<td>Mongoloid</td>
<td>Patient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically challenged</td>
<td>Intellectually challenged</td>
<td>Vertically challenged</td>
<td>Differently abled</td>
<td>Spastic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffers from</td>
<td>Sufferer</td>
<td>Stricken with</td>
<td>Vegetative</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deformity</td>
<td>Disability/Disabilities</td>
<td>Disabled kids</td>
<td>Disabled men</td>
<td>Disabled people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
<td>Limited abilities</td>
<td>Paraplegic</td>
<td>People who are blind</td>
<td>People with disability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visually impaired</td>
<td>Visually impaired (The)</td>
<td>Wheelchair access</td>
<td>International Day of People with Disability (variants)</td>
<td>Handicapped</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The database and manual search also included a search for specific reference to the phrase ‘International Day of People with Disability’ (IDPWD) and possible variants of the title. It was considered significant in the context of the research to quantify the coverage given to IDPWD as it would be a further indicator of the weight and importance news organisations give the event. A Factiva search for any term beginning with ‘International Day’ within the data collection period produced numerous references to International Day of People with Disability and variations of the title - see Table 4.
According to the statistics, the regional non-daily newspaper *The South Coast Register* produced the most coverage of International Day of People with Disability, with a total of seven (7) stories published during the data collection period. *The South Coast Register* accounted for more than half of the total 15 published stories. *The South Coast Register* was also one of only two newspapers to correctly refer to the day as The International Day of People with Disability but equally it was the main offender when it came to getting it wrong. While to highlight the point may be considered semantic, journalists generally pride themselves on accuracy of detail and, in this instance, there were multiple variants on the actual name of the United Nations-sanctioned event. The researcher also contends it is a discussion that is not out of place in a study focused on the power of words.

Consider the use of the word ‘for’ rather than ‘of’. The word ‘for’ indicates that a day is being put on specifically for a group - so there is a degree of paternalism or even patronisation associated with the word. Whereas, the use of ‘of’ in ‘International Day of People with Disability’ implies a degree of ownership, authority and power - people with disability taking the reins.

The initial quantitative data collection enabled the researcher to identify newspaper articles that included words and phrases typically associated with people with disability and the issues facing them.

The next step was to identify the articles highlighted by the initial data collection that used the searched for words and phrases in a disability context. It was expected many of the words included in the search, such as ‘fit’, would be found through the database search process but would be used in a context other than disability - see Table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>SCR</th>
<th>IM</th>
<th>DT</th>
<th>SMH</th>
<th>Aust</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Day <strong>for</strong> People with Disability</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Day <strong>of</strong> People with a Disability</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Day <strong>of</strong> People with Disability</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word/phrase</td>
<td>Refs</td>
<td>D Context</td>
<td>Word/phrase</td>
<td>Refs</td>
<td>D Context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abnormal</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Invalid</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subnormal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Mentally retarded</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afflicted with</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Defective</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth defect</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feeble minded</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congenital defect</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Idiot</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deformity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Imbecile</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind (The)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Moron</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visually impaired (the)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Retarded</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confined to a wheelchair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mongol</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchair-bound</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mongoloid</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cretin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Patient</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cripple</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Physically challenged</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crippled</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Intellectually challenged</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf (The)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Vertically challenged</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf and dumb</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Differently abled</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defective</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Spastic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deformed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Suffers from</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled (The)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sufferer</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwarf</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Stricken with</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epileptic (The)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Vegetative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fit</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spell</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Disabled kids</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicapped (The)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Disabled man</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insane</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Disabled people</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunatic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maniac</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Limited abilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental patient</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Paraplegic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentally diseased</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>People who are blind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neurotic</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>People with disability</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psycho</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vision impaired people</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychotic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Visually impaired (The)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schizophrenic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Wheelchair access</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unsound mind</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>International Day of</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>102</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>People with Disability</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mad</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Handicapped</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demented</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Factiva database and manual newspaper search found 841 references to searched for words and phrases. As anticipated, words such as ‘victim’ produced a high count (257) but none of these references were found to be in a disability context.

Of the 841 references found in the descriptive data collection, 132 (15.69%) searched for words and/or phrases were used in a disability context. However, many of these references gave fleeting treatment to the disability issue. For example, the majority of the references to ‘wheelchair access’ were found in real estate-based articles that simply listed featured for sale properties and their respective attributes or hotel reviews - wheelchair access being one of the those identified (Thomsen 2008). The reference, however, while fleeting, should not be dismissed without consideration. The acknowledgement of wheelchair access as a significant real estate ‘selling point’ does go some way toward the normalisation of disability in the media - a point which will be discussed later in this thesis.

The data contained in Table 5 showed a significant absence of some of the words and phrases highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines. Numerous words and phrases, including ‘mongoloid’, ‘retarded’, ‘handicapped’ and ‘vegetative’, were either not used at all or not used in a disability context. This is a significant finding. In 1994 it was considered such an issue that these words were included in guidelines to advise journalists on the representation of people with disability. Just 14 years later, there is no sign of these words being used in a disability context or otherwise. This raises the question: why? It could be argued the words were not found in the study but could be found outside its parameters but the researcher contends the words have slipped from everyday public use and, therefore, are not found in news journalism.

Of the 59 words and phrases listed as ‘words to watch’ in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines, 16 were not used in any context, 32 were not used in a disability context and 13 were used only once in a disability context. Significantly, however, other words and phrases highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Guidelines, such as ‘wheelchair-bound’, ‘schizophrenic’ and ‘sufferer’ were regularly used, often, (as in the case of ‘wheelchair-bound’), in a disability context (Lawrence 2008).

Consideration must be given to the impact of the researcher’s decision to expand the searched for words and phrases to examples not included in the Disability Council of NSW Guidelines. The expanded search did impact the findings - see Table 6. If the above analysis process was adopted for a search for words and phrases outside the Disability
Council of NSW Guidelines, 14 words and phrases were searched for and 14 words and phrases were found. The 14 searched for words and phrases were also used in a disability context on all but three (3) of 59 occurrences.

Furthermore, if the researcher were to eliminate the expanded list of searched for words and phrases, the overall number of found words and phrases would fall to 782 (down from 841) and the number used in a disability context would be 76 (down from 132). These results would indicate the researcher was actually searching for words and phrases that were likely to be found because the words and phrases has been selected due to their presence in *The South Coast Register*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word/phrase</th>
<th>Refs</th>
<th>D Context</th>
<th>Word/phrase</th>
<th>Refs</th>
<th>D Context</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>People who are blind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled kids</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>People with disability</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled man</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vision impaired people</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled people</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Visually impaired (The)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Wheelchair access</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited abilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>IDPWD (variants)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraplegic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Handicapped</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher, however, contends this approach is justified on the grounds that language evolves and this was reflected in the data collection process.

Through the above-mentioned process, it was possible to focus attention on the published stories in the catchment period (November 17 - December 17, 2008) that dealt specifically with people with disability and or the issues facing people with disability.

While the process enabled the researcher to identify specific references to searched for words and phrases, it did not specify the exact number of articles the references appeared in. It was quite likely one article could contain one or more of the searched for words and phrases. To gain a clearer picture the number of articles in which the references appeared; a date, paper and, where possible, author comparison was carried out.

In addition to the stereotypes listed in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines, Hume and others, like Snow (2008), have urged journalists to promote the people-first concept. While the concept has been dismissed by some leading academics in the field (see discussion in Chapter 7), the people-first concept is, largely, as it sounds. People with disability are not defined by their disability; people with disability are people before
anything else and should be treated and represented that way. The Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines explain:

People with disabilities are people-first, with feelings, emotions, desires, aspirations, frustration and needs just like anyone else. For many people, having a disability is an unavoidable fact of life, not something necessarily to be dramatised, feared, ridiculed or denigrated. (Hume 1994, p. 4)

Snow, who has written extensively on people-first language, explains the concept:

People-first language puts the person before the disability, and describes what a person has, not who a person is. Are you ‘myopic’ or do you wear glasses? Are you ‘cancerous’ or do you have cancer? Is a person ‘handicapped/disabled’ or does she have a disability? (Snow 2008, p. 2)

This research incorporated analysis based on Factors 1 and 2 and the presence of people-first language. It produced 132 newspaper articles that were found to contain words and phrases used in a disability context. As seen in Table 7a (see p. 71), of the 132 articles, 38 were found to be specifically about people with disability or the issues they faced. Firstly, the analysis focused on Factor 1, the media models of disability (see pp. 23-24) as defined by Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995). Of the 38 articles deemed to be specifically about people with disability and or the issues facing them, 30 (78.9%) were coded as ‘traditional’ and eight (21%) were coded ‘progressive’.

The ‘traditional’ stories were dominated by the ‘medical’ and ‘social pathology’ models. Of the 30 articles coded as ‘traditional’, 16 also coded as ‘medical’ and nine were coded ‘social pathology’. Of the remaining ‘traditional’ articles, two were coded as ‘supercrip’ and three as “other”. A category of “other” was deemed necessary, as some articles were purely event announcements regarding International Day of People with Disability. The articles categorised as “other” were also coded as ‘traditional’. The inclusion of articles based on event announcements is traditional fodder for the print media and serves as a ‘traditional’ means of representing people with disability as different and deserving of, if not reliant on, ‘special’ events to be included as functioning members of society.
Table 7a: Newspaper articles traditional/progressive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/PAPER</th>
<th>JOURNALIST</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TRADITIONAL OR PROGRESSIVE</th>
<th>MODEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Julie Robotham</td>
<td>29.11.09</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Maralyn Parker</td>
<td>10.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Social pathology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Harriet Alexander</td>
<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Julia Stirling</td>
<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Consumer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>William Verity</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>William Verity</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Supercrip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Jan Gothard &amp; Charlie Fox</td>
<td>17.11.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Minority/civil rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>17.11.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Greg Roberts</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Angela Saurine</td>
<td>18.11.08</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Veronica Apap</td>
<td>19.11.08</td>
<td>T</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>19.11.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Louise Hall</td>
<td>22.11.08</td>
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<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
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<td>DT</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>Consumer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Malcolm Brown</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Cultural pluralism</td>
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<td>SMH</td>
<td>Malcolm Brown</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Joel Meares</td>
<td>27.11.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Stephen Lunn</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
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<td>Social pathology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Michelle Hoctor</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Supercrip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>Damian McGill</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Alex Lalak</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Consumer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Yuko Narushima</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Adam Creswell</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Dr Adam Taor</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Steve Lewis</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Steve Lewis</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
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<td>T</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Xanthe Kleinig</td>
<td>9.12.08</td>
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<td>Social pathology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Michelle Hoctor</td>
<td>9.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The research found there was a slight pattern in the journalists who wrote about disability. Of the 38 articles found to be specifically about people with disability and/or the issues they face, five journalists - Michelle Hoctor (The Illawarra Mercury), William Verity (The Illawarra Mercury), Malcolm Brown (The Sydney Morning Herald), Julie Robotham (The Sydney Morning Herald) and Steve Lewis (The Daily Telegraph) - produced two articles each. This equated to 10/38 (26%) of the articles. This is not insubstantial when you consider a further 10/38 (26%) of the articles had no by-line, that is, they were unattributed.
What is noticeable about the articles written by the above-mentioned journalists is that none produced an item that was categorised by the researcher as ‘progressive’. The 10 articles produced by the journalists were all, according to the Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) models, considered to be ‘traditional’ representations of people with disability. Both Hoctor articles were categorised ‘medical’; Verity (medical/supercrip); Brown (social pathology/medical); Lewis (social pathology/medical), and Robotham (medical/medical). These findings tend to indicate the traditional ‘medical’ model of disability is the preferred frame for journalists who find themselves writing about people with disability on regular, if not frequent, occasions.

The eight ‘progressive’ articles were also coded as to Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller’s (1993, 1995) specific media models of disability. As was the case with the articles coded ‘traditional’, the ‘progressive’ articles were dominated by two media models. Of the eight ‘progressive’ articles, four (50%) were coded ‘cultural pluralism’, three (37.5%) were coded ‘consumer’ and one (12.5%) was considered ‘minority/civil rights’.

Attention was also paid to Factor 2, the Disability Council of NSW’s advice to journalists to avoid the use of stereotypes (Hume 1994). The 38 articles that dealt specifically with people with disability or the issues facing them were analysed for the presence of stereotypes listed in the Disability Council of NSW Guidelines as “to be avoided”.

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Of the 38 articles reviewed, nine (23.6%) were found to contain stereotypes listed in the guidelines. As can be seen in Table 7b above, the stereotypes found were:

1. Supercrip (4)
2. Pity & charity (3)
3. Monumental tragedy (1)
4. Heroic (1)
It is significant to note that, based on this study, most journalists do not appear to rely on the use of stereotypical language in the depiction of people with disability. This would, apparently, contradict findings that journalists use traditional models/frames to represent people with disability more than progressive models. However, while the language used by journalists may be more ‘acceptable’ in that it does not include specific traditional stereotypes, the story may still be framed in a way as to see it categorised as ‘traditional’ in approach or visa versa. The Yuko Narushima article in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, December 4, 2008, is an example of a story that uses the supercrip stereotype (e.g. words and images highlighting Paralympian Michael Milton ahead of others) but its overall frame was the progressive social pathology model (e.g. it presents people with disability as diverse and included).

In addition to the search for and analysis of stereotypes, the researcher enquired as to the presence of people-first language (Hume 1994; Snow 2008) in the 38 articles deemed to have dealt specifically with people with disabilities and or the issues they face.

Of the 38 articles reviewed, 15 (39%) contained non-people-first language and nine (23%) contained people-first language. Significantly, 14 articles (36%) could not be identified as using or not using people-first language. The 14 articles, through omission, use people-first language. It would not be unreasonable to suggest that an article that does not specifically highlight a person as having a disability had, through omission, used people-first language. However, the researcher has maintained a strategic approach to the quantitative data analysis and only specifically categorised articles when the category was without question.

An example of the non-people-first language is found in the Steve Lewis article on then-Australian ‘First Lady’ Therese Rein published in *The Daily Telegraph* (6.12.08).

*But Rein has been active behind the scenes, hosting lunches and drawing together disparate groups in an effort to change community attitudes. She is determined to improve conditions for the disabled, the homeless and those who suffer mental-health problems.* (Lewis 2008)

An example of the people-first language is found in the Julie Robotham article on childhood epilepsy published in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (29.11.08).
“Emily Cope, 9, has Dravel Syndrome, one of the most severe forms of childhood epilepsy.” (Robotham 2008)

Robotham’s sentence structure and word choice exemplifies what Snow has asked of journalists:

“People-first language puts the person before the disability, and describes what a person has, not who a person is.” (Snow 2008, p. 2)

It is important to note that people-first language is an example of ‘smart language’ advocated by readability scholars who claim readability is improved by the targeting of language to readership (DuBay 2004, 2007). DuBay (2007) contends golden rules apply to writing and the rules apply regardless of the medium. DuBay’s seven golden rules include: 1) use short, simple, familiar words; 2) avoid jargon and, 3) use culture-and-gender-neutral language. The golden rules fit well within the context of journalism and fair and accurate representation of people with disability in the media. It could be argued that readability and thus readership is increased (the aspiration of all journalists and publishers) if targeted language is used. If clarity of language increases readership, then it is reasonable to contend the use of people-first language (language that is neutral and simple) would benefit journalists and publishers.

To strengthen the review of the coverage given to articles deemed to specifically deal with people with disability and the issues they face a number of additional criteria of analysis were used. Each of the 38 articles were reviewed for article placement, article length and the presence of a supporting image (photograph or graphic). Placement of an article in a newspaper is significant when considering the weight or importance a newspaper gives an article. The weight or importance of an article can be assessed against on two criteria - page number and placement on the page. To clearly identify the placement of articles captured in this study each article was coded as to where it was placed on a page divided into four sections - top left, top right, bottom left, bottom right.
American typographer Edmund Arnold developed the Gutenberg Theory to explain reading habits. He argues that when people are taught to read they are told to do so by reading from the top left hand corner and, going left to right, steadily work down and across the page (Arnold 1981). This concept is illustrated by Wheildon (1986) (above).

Figure 5: Gutenberg/Arnold reading mode

According to Arnold, the eyes are drawn to what Colin Wheildon (1986) labelled the primary optical area (POA) - the top left hand corner.

“The eyes then move across and down the page in left to right sweeps, returning to an axis of orientation at the beginning of each line, before finishing in the bottom right hand corner, which has been termed the terminal anchor (TA).” (Tanner 1990, p. 25)

This work follows Tanner (1990) and uses the Gutenberg/Arnold diagram to assess the weight or importance given an article based on the placement of the article on a page.
… it is suggested that articles positioned in fallow corners may not be as comprehensible or readable as those beginning in the primary optical or terminal anchor areas. It may be that if a newspaper is seeking to influence a particular debate its chance of doing so may be enhanced by beginning articles in quadrant one. (Tanner 1990, p. 26)

This equates to the top left hand quadrant in Figure 4. The second quadrant equates to the top right hand section of the page, while quadrants 3 and 4 equate with the bottom left and bottom right rectors respectively.

According to the Gutenberg/Arnold model, articles found in the top left (TL) and bottom right (BR) quadrants are more likely to gain and maintain reader attention. McCombs and Shaw (cited in Tanner 1990) also consider the placement of an article as indicative of the importance placed on the item.

"Readers learn not only about a given issue, but also about how much importance is attached to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position." (McCombs and Shaw 1972, p. 172)
The data collated in Table 8 revealed:

Top left (TL): 12 (31.5%)
Top right (TR): 8 (21%)
Bottom left (BL): 7 (18.4%)
Bottom right (BR): 8 (21%)
Full page (FP): 3 (7%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/PAPER</th>
<th>JOURNALIST</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>PAGE NO. / SIDE</th>
<th>P/MENT</th>
<th>IMAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>1 (front)</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1.12.08</td>
<td>11 (Ftr) (RHS)</td>
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<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.12.08</td>
<td>11 (Ftr) (RHS)</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10.12.08</td>
<td>30 (LHS)</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
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<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>18 (LHS)</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Julia Stirling</td>
<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>7 (RHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>William Verity</td>
<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>1 (front)</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>William Verity</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>12 (Ftr) (LHS)</td>
<td>FP</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Jan Gothard &amp; Charlie</td>
<td>17.11.08</td>
<td>8 (LHS)</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Stephen Dunne</td>
<td>17.11.08</td>
<td>14 (Ftr) (LHS)</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<td>AUST</td>
<td>Greg Roberts</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
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<td>BR</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
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<td>18.11.08</td>
<td>12 (LHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Veronica Apap</td>
<td>19.11.08</td>
<td>1 (front)</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>19.11.08</td>
<td>30 (LHS)</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Louise Hall</td>
<td>22.11.08</td>
<td>5 (RHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>39 (RHS)</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Malcolm Brown</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>7 (RHS)</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>98 (LHS)</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Malcolm Brown</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>20 (LHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Joel Meares</td>
<td>27.11.08</td>
<td>35 (RHS)</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Stephen Lunn</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>6 (LHS)</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Michelle Hoctor</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>15 (RHS)</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Julie Robotham</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>4 (LHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>7 (RHS)</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>19 (RHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>Damian McGill</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>7 (RHS)</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Alex Lalak</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>11 (RHS)</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Yuko Narushima</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>3 (RHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Adam Creswell</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>11 (Ftr) (RHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Dr Adam Taor</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>12 (LHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Steve Lewis</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>123 (Ftr) (RHS)</td>
<td>FP</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>9 (RHS)</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Steve Lewis</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>9 (RHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>5 (RHS)</td>
<td>BR</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>61 (RHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Xanthe Kleinig</td>
<td>9.12.08</td>
<td>14 (LHS)</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Michelle Hoctor</td>
<td>9.12.08</td>
<td>10 (LHS)</td>
<td>TL</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On inspection of the data, it is revealed that more than half of the articles about disability started in either the top left hand quadrant (31.5%) or top right hand quadrant (21%). This compared to the 18.4 per cent of articles found in the bottom left quadrant and the 21 per cent in the bottom right quadrant. Seven of the articles were full page articles.

Based on the Gutenberg/Arnold model, it can be argued that the articles about people with disability and/or disability issues received positive page placement and would have attracted the reader’s attention. The largest proportion of articles were found to be placed in the top left quadrant of the page or the primary optical area (P.O.A). The remainder of the articles were relatively evenly split, with three items coded as full page articles.

As Table 8 reveals, 45 per cent of the articles (17 of 38) appeared within the first 10 pages of the newspaper, and three articles appeared on the front page of the newspapers. Fourteen articles (37%) appeared beyond page 10, with one article published on page 98 (not the back page) of The South Coast Register. Interestingly, six articles (15%) appeared in feature sections of the newspapers.

The positioning of almost half the articles of articles within the first 10 pages of the newspapers is significant. According to McCombs and Shaw (1972, p. 179), the editorial importance of an issue is reflected in the placement of articles in a newspaper. Therefore, the closer to the front of newspaper, the more importance is placed on a story (except in the case of sports stories, where the reverse applies).

Similarly, newspaper layout design theory (Wheildon 1986, p. 8) places greater significance on articles that appear on a right hand side page. The front and back pages have the greatest importance weighting, followed by right hand side pages - particularly those inside the first 10 pages of the newspaper. Therefore, right hand side pages with greatest weighting are pages 3, 5, 7, 9. These pages usually but not always include the editorial and ‘letters to the editor’ pages.

On inspection of the data collected (see Table 8) - 20 articles (52%) were placed on right-hand (RH) pages; 15 articles (39%) were placed on left-hand (LH) pages, and three articles (1%) were front page news. Significantly, 17 of the 38 articles (44%) captured in the data collection were placed within the first 10 pages of the newspaper (front page - 3; RH - 9; LH - 5). This result would suggest, according to Wheildon (1986), that considerable editorial weighting has been given to the stories written about disability. It
could be argued, for instance, that the Yuko Narushima article, published in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on December 14, 2008, has considerable editorial weighting because it started in the top left hand corner of page 3 - a right-hand page. The editorial weight of the story is increased because it included a large colour photograph.

Conversely, the Stephen Dunne article published in *The Sydney Morning* on November 17, 2008 has been given less editorial weight. The article was printed in the bottom left-hand corner of page 14 (left-hand page) of a feature section and did not include an image. While some might argue that any coverage of disability is valuable, a contrary argument about the quality and the placement of the article also exists. The Dunne article, for example, was considered to have used a ‘progressive’ frame (Table 7a) but the value and impact of the article is diminished by its location in the paper.

Also of interest, 12 of the 38 articles on people with disability or the issues they face included a photograph or graphic. As a purely descriptive piece of data, almost one third (31.5%) of the articles published had an associated image. An image is used to enhance an article and to draw a reader’s attention and it could be argued in this instance that the articles in question received stronger coverage through the inclusion of images. The images covered the spectrum of newspaper size and style. Some, like the Malcolm Brown article (SMH 26.11.08 - see Chapter 6), feature simple head and shoulder photographs. Others, however, like the William Verity feature article (13.12.08 - see Chapter 6) feature numerous photographs. In the Verity case, the article featured a full-page, full colour photograph. While the presence of images does add to the editorial weight of an article (Wheildon 1986), the style and content of an image can impact the representation of people with disability (Hume 1994). The Brown and Verity stories are representative of this point. While the Brown article features one, small, full-colour head and shoulder image and the Verity article features numerous large full colour-images, there is greater representation of disability in the Brown article, as it does not draw unnecessary attention to the disability.

Some of the images in question will be investigated in greater depth in the case study section (Chapter 6) to, among other things, ascertain whether they were ‘traditional’ or ‘progressive’ (Clogston 1989, 1990, 1993; Haller 1993, 1995) and or stereotypical (Hume 1994) in the representation of people with disability and the issues they face.
The subjects of the stories captured in the research are compiled in Table 9a. The 38 articles were placed in nine categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/PAPER</th>
<th>JOURNALIST</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Julie Robotham</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Sick babies denied t/ment in DNA row</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.12.08</td>
<td>IDPWD: International disability day celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.12.08</td>
<td>Profile: Scott treads new ground at Bundanon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Maralyn Parker</td>
<td>10.12.08</td>
<td>Education/employment: Dux - IDPWD performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>Disab. event/awards/charity: Special fete for special kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Harriet Alexander</td>
<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: Teacher felt cornered by student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Julia Stirling</td>
<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>Disability access/equity: Assumptions on disability often disproved at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>William Verity</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity: A reason to Smile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>William Verity</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>Profile: Piano man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Jan Gothard &amp; Charlie Fox</td>
<td>17.11.08</td>
<td>Disability access/equity: Consign disability discrimination to the bin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Stephen Dunne</td>
<td>17.11.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema: Language of the body speaks as loud as words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Greg Roberts</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Sport: (Anger rises from Ashes of blind cricket)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Angela Saurine</td>
<td>18.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Lost in fog of the mind - Alzheimers cure hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Veronica Apap</td>
<td>19.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: $1.4m crash award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>19.11.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity: Vision in their sights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Louise Hall</td>
<td>22.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Depression therapy gets a jolt from the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema: The Wild Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Malcolm Brown</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: Dead child had habit of putting objects into her mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Sport: Achievers’ State success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Malcolm Brown</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: No headline - in brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Joel Meares</td>
<td>27.11.08</td>
<td>IDPWD: Sydney celebrates IDPWD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Stephen Lunn</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>Disability access/equity: New deal at COAG for the disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Michelle Hocter</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>Disability accommodation: Woman dealt a double blow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Julie Robotham</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Precious time could be lost in fight against disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity: A special day for a real go-getter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity: Envelope for Braille bicentenary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>Damian McGill</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>Profile: Disability won’t stop amazing Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Alex Lalak</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema: Priscilla Queen of the deaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Yuko Narushima</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity: Long way to the top when you’ve gotta roll on the rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Adam Creswell</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Disability access/equity: News revolution for the blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Dr Adam Taor</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Strange but true …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Steve Lewis</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Profile: Portrait of a lady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: In brief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Steve Lewis</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Disability access/equity: Rein puts bite on for disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Disability access/equity: Rein lobby for disabled pays off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>IDPWD: IDPWD event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Xanthe Kleinig</td>
<td>9.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity: Waugh’s pad up for disabled kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Michelle Hocter</td>
<td>9.12.08</td>
<td>Disability accommodation: Relieved Kate finds a home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 9b: Story subject categories (newspaper)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STORY CATEGORY</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability accommodation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability events/awards/charity</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability access/equity</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/medical</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre/cinema</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal/court</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/employment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Day of People with Disability</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of the nine categories dominated the collection of reviewed stories. Significantly, however, there were more stories categorised as ‘disability events/awards/charity’ than any other. This aligns with the traditional models of disability mapped out by Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) - where disability is presented as a source of charity and pity. This category of story is best represented by the Xanthe Kleinig article in *The Daily Telegraph* (9.12.08) headed ‘Waughs pad up for disabled kids’. The story and the image associated (see Chapter 6) is framed to elicit sympathy, pity and, in the end, donations from the reader.

Notably, there were only two sport stories in captured articles. Sports stories, according to Clogston (1989) and cited in Wall (2007, p. 34) are considered ‘progressive’. However, the article by Greg Roberts in *The Australian* (17.12.08) was about a controversy surrounding an English cricketer who was being accused of not being ‘blind enough’ to take part in the Blind Ashes (see Chapter 6). It could be argued the Roberts’ article is not a sports story at all but more traditional in its focus on disability as controversy (Wall 2007).
Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the words and phrases highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW as being unacceptable when used in media representations of people with disability.

The analysis revealed that many of the words and phrases highlighted in the guidelines were, unsurprisingly, present in the newspaper articles. In the four-week data collection period, there were 841 references to searched for words and phrases. However, only 132 (15.69%) of the references were used in a disability context. Interestingly, a significant portion of the words highlighted by the guidelines as words to watch did not appear at all. Words such as ‘Mongoloid’, ‘subnormal’, ‘the Epileptic’ and ‘demented’ were not used. Other words, such as ‘retarded’ and ‘deformed’ were found in the analysis but were not used in a disability context. It could, therefore, be argued that newspaper journalists have moved way from using words that in 1994 were deemed so prevalent that guidelines were needed to advise against their use.

However, the analysis also revealed phrases such as ‘wheelchair-bound’ and ‘sufferer’ were present and used in a disability context. The chapter also investigated the frames used by newspaper journalists to represent people with disability. The Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) media models of disability were used as an analytical tool. The analysis found that of the 38 articles deemed to be specifically about people with disability and/or the issues facing them, 30 (78.9%) were ‘traditional’ and eight (21%) were ‘progressive’. This finding clearly indicates newspaper journalists use ‘traditional’ representations of people with disability almost four-times more often than the ‘progressive’ representation. Of the ‘traditional’ frames used, the ‘medical’ and ‘social pathology’ models were dominant, with 16 and nine articles respectively.

Five journalists were found to have written two articles each of the 38 reviewed pieces. Notably, all 10 articles were categorised ‘traditional’ and most favoured the ‘medical’ model of disability.

The chapter also analysed the 38 newspaper articles for the use of stereotypes highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW as “to be avoided”. These results were in stark contrast to findings about the presence of media models. Of the 38 articles, only nine (23.6%) contained listed stereotypes - this is almost a mirror image of the findings about media models. Of the stereotypes used, the ‘supercrip” was most present. The Yuko
Narushima article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (4.12.08) was representative of the supercrip stereotype being present in newspaper journalism. The findings on stereotypes in newspapers are significant, as they represent a debunking of the common myth that journalists rely on cliché and stereotype to tell a story.

The chapter also investigated the use of people-first language (Snow 2008); the concept that people are not defined by their disability, rather that people have disability. The analysis found more articles (15) contained non-people-first language than people-first language (9). This finding is somewhat ambiguous, as 14 articles (36%) could not be categorised because there was not a people-first language reference present. However, purely descriptive data analysis would conclude that more newspaper journalists use non-people-first language than people-first. This finding is in conflict with the recommendations of the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines.

Consideration was also given to the placement of articles within a newspaper (whole) and on a particular page. The likes of Wheildon (1986) and other layout theorists contend placement of articles reflects editorial weighting and, therefore, potential reader influence. The 38 articles were reviewed and, significantly, most articles (31.5%) were found in the top left segment of a page - the primary optical area. This would represent considerable editorial weighting being given to articles about people with disability. This finding is reinforced by the findings on page placement within an entire newspaper. The analysis found almost half (45%) of the reviewed articles appeared within the first 10 pages (the optimal editorial pages) and 20 articles (53%) were placed on the right-hand-side page. More significantly, of the 17 articles placed in the first 10 pages of their respective newspaper, three were front page stories and nine were right-hand-side stories. These findings would indicate that when an article is written about disability it is given significant editorial weighting, according to layout theory.

Chapter 5 provides content analysis of television news bulletins outlined in Chapter 3.
Chapter 5 - Content Analysis (Television)

Television news coverage was included in this investigation of the representation of people with disability in the media. According to Essential Research (2010), 48 per cent of Australians obtain their news and opinions from commercial TV news and current affairs on a daily basis. As seen in Table 10 (below), 26 per cent read newspapers, 24 per cent listen to commercial radio news and current affairs and 23 per cent use news and opinion websites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media usage</th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Several times a week</th>
<th>About once a week</th>
<th>Less often</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial TV news and current affairs</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News and opinion in daily newspapers</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial radio news and current affairs</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News and opinion websites</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC TV news and current affairs</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC radio news and current affairs</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial radio talkback programs</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC radio talkback programs</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet blogs</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Essential Research 2010

The same data collection period used for the five newspapers (November 17 - December 17, 2008) was adopted for the six television stations and their respective main news bulletins. The television stations included in the study are identified in Table 11 (below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Bulletin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC (Sydney)</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS (Sydney)</td>
<td>6:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten (Sydney)</td>
<td>5:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine (Sydney)</td>
<td>6:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven (Sydney)</td>
<td>6:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN (Illawarra)</td>
<td>6:00pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All of the main NSW metropolitan free-to-air television news bulletins and the biggest regional commercial television news provider (WIN) were included in the investigation so as to capture both the greatest number of news items and the widest potential news viewership.

While the use of the Factiva database eliminated any great questions of human error and accuracy in the data collection in the newspaper process, this was not possible with the television stories.

Factiva is not a television news database. Therefore, a manual word and phrases search of every television news item was impractical and potentially error-prone, as it was to be independently carried out by the researcher without a secondary layer of revision or cross-checking. Instead, the number of news items broadcast in the main news bulletins of the six television stations were manually calculated and analysed for the presence of disability content. Each bulletin in the catchment period was watched and analysed by the researcher. The number of total items contained in each bulletin was logged and the number of items deemed to have disability content was also recorded. Disability content for this purpose was defined as material about or including people with disability or the issues that face people with disability. As television is a visual medium, particular attention was paid to the use of images in stories to represent people with disabilities and/or the issues they face. The researcher attempted to eliminate subjectivity from the process, however, it must be noted that subjectivity has a place in research (Ellis and Flaherty 1992).

“Our goal of interpreting the meaning of our own and other people’s lives may require that we continue blurring the distinctions between humanistic and scientific modes of inquiry (Geertz 1980). The study of subjectivity requires sociology to take its place as quasi-science, quasi-humanities (Zald 1988). As such, the goal is to arrive at an understanding of lived experience that is both rigorous – based on systematic observation – and imaginative – based on experience and insight (Bateson 1972).” (Ellis and Flaherty 1992, p. 5)

The analysis allowed the researcher to identify items that had disability content and further investigate those stories for the presence of elements highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Guidelines and Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller’s (1993, 1995) media models of disability.
This process also allowed the researcher to identify journalists and presenters responsible for the presentation of specific items dealing with people with disability and/or issues that affect them. Television and newspaper journalists identified through this process were interviewed. The material gained through the interview process is presented later in this work. The manual analysis of the six television news bulletins is presented in Figure 6.

**Figure 6: Total television stories v disability content stories**

Between November 17 and December 17, 2008, 3898 items appeared in the six free-to-air television news bulletins investigated in this research. Of the 3898 items viewed and analysed for disability content, previously defined as being about or including people with disability and/or the issues they face, 36 (0.92%) of stories were found to have contained disability content. Interestingly, despite the potential for variance between mediums and coverage, the number of items found to be disability specific in the television news bulletins (36) was just two less than the number of disability-specific items found in the newspaper articles (38). Over a four-week data collection period, a total of 74 items were found to be primarily focused on the disability.

The breakdown of items in respect to each of the analysed television news stations is presented in Figure 7.
In terms of the items presented compared with the number of stories with disability content, WIN News (1.44%) was marginally ahead of Ten (1.25%) on a percentage basis. The breakdown per news bulletin in terms of total number of items presented versus the number of items with disability content is presented in Table 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station/bulletin</th>
<th>Items total</th>
<th>Items disability content (actual)</th>
<th>Items disability content %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>857</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between November 17 and December 17, 2008, WIN News ran seven (7/486) stories that contained disability content, TEN (10/800), Nine (5/581), Seven (5/602), SBS (6/857), ABC (3/784).

There are multiple news bulletin variables which need to be considered when looking at the raw descriptive quantitative data. The WIN, Nine, and Seven bulletins run approximately 24 minutes when three commercial breaks (running between two and three minutes) are considered; the TEN and SBS bulletins run approximately 50 minutes when commercial breaks are considered and the ABC bulletin is commercial-free and runs approximately 30 minutes. It is logical to presume a bulletin that runs almost an hour would contain many more items than a bulletin that runs half an hour. It is not logical to
conclude an hour-long bulletin would contain double the amount of items contained in a half-hour bulletin because items within a bulletin can vary in length (time). Phillips and Lindgren have concluded four primary elements combine to create a television news bulletin (2006). Those elements are:

1) Live read/LIV (news-reader speaking straight to camera, no footage) 10-15 secs
2) LVO/RVO/VSV (Live Voice Over/Reader Voice Over/Video Sound Video - newsreader reads straight to camera but footage is included) 25-50 secs
3) Package/SOT (Newsreader intro & pre-recorded journalist item) 1.10-2.20 mins
4) Cross/two-way (Newsreader speaking to journalist either in station or outside location) 30 secs - 1 min approx

A bulletin that contains many ‘reads’ or ‘LVOs’ will have a greater number of total items than a bulletin that contains primarily ‘packages/SOTs’. Interestingly, however, if the McCombs (2002) theory is transplanted from newspaper to television and the editorial importance of an article is partially dictated by its size, then a ‘package/SOT’ is considered of greater importance than a ‘read’ or ‘LVO’. This, of course, is a generalisation and does not take into account the news media drivers.

The researcher, however, contends it is possible to compare newspaper articles with television news items in this way. As discussed in Chapter 4, newspaper articles are considered to have greater editorial weighting if: they are placed within the first 10 pages of the newspaper; they are located on a right-hand-side page; they are placed in the primary optimal area (P.O.A.), and they have pictorial/graphical support. Similarly, it can be argued a television news item has greater editorial weighting if: it is placed in the ‘first break’ of a bulletin; it is substantial in length (primarily a package), and it has pictorial/graphic support. While it is not possible to draw direct comparison between the two because a newspaper has significant capacity to deliver more news than a 24 minute commercial television news bulletin (on any given day, a newspaper could cover in two pages enough stories to fill an entire television news bulletin), it is possible to assess the editorial weight given to a television news item using similar criteria used to assess newspapers coverage.

The data analysis revealed 36 television news items broadcast between November 17 and December 17, 2008. The researcher analysed the news items in consideration of Factors 1 and 2 explained at length in the quantitative newspaper analysis. Factor 1 is the media models of disability developed by Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) and
Factor 2 is the elements highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as elements to be avoided by journalists when writing about people with disability and the issues they face. The elements highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines include, but are not limited to, the avoidance of stereotypes and the use of people-first language (Hume 1994).

Each of the 36 television news items considered to have disability content was assessed against the Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) media models criteria. Firstly the items were categorised as to whether they were ‘traditional’ or ‘progressive’ and secondly they were allocated (where possible) to a specific media model of disability.

Of the 36 news items analysed, 24 (66.6%) were categorised ‘traditional’ and 12 (33.3%) were considered ‘progressive’. See Table 13a.
The 24 ‘traditional’ items were broken down under the following models: ‘medical’ (7), ‘social pathology’ (15), and ‘supercrip’ (2). The researcher encountered some difficulty in the categorisation of certain items. An example of the items categorised ‘other’ was ABC journalist Ned Hall’s item on ‘The Blind Cricket Ashes’ (17.12.08). The item was placed in the bulletin’s sports break and, according to Clogston’s criteria (1989), was subsequently categorised as ‘progressive’ in its focus. The story addressed the accusation that one star English cricketer was not as ‘blind’ as he claimed to be. While the item had

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATION</th>
<th>JOURNALIST</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TRADITIONAL</th>
<th>PROGRESSIVE</th>
<th>MODEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Danielle Post (NR)</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Sarah Cumming</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Andrew Leahy</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Minority/civil rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Juanita Phillips (NR)</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Minority/civil rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Ben Fazoulan (NR)</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>Minority/civil rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Deborah Knight (NR)</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>P</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Josh Murphy</td>
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<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Amber Muir</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>T</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Ian Ross (NR)</td>
<td>2.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
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<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>John Kerrison</td>
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<td>T</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Mark Ferguson (NR)</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Supercrip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Janice Petersen (NR)</td>
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<td>Craig Foster</td>
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<td>Cultural pluralism</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Ray Warren</td>
<td>7.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Marion Ives</td>
<td>7.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Kellie Lazzaro</td>
<td>7.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>8.12.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Michael Usher (NR)</td>
<td>10.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Chris Bath (NR)</td>
<td>11.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Supercrip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Michael Usher (NR)</td>
<td>11.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Bill Woods</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Sam Hall</td>
<td>15.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Nick Dole</td>
<td>16.12.08</td>
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<td>Social pathology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Ron Wilson (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Amber Muir</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Deborah Knight (NR) &amp; Adam Hause (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Glen Lauder</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
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<td>Cultural pluralism</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Tim Bailey</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>John McKenzie</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Ned Hall</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Social pathology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
‘progressive’ elements (i.e. it was a sport story and the script highlighted the World Cricket Council’s concern about the matter detracting from the cricket results), it had a stronger ‘traditional’ approach to disability in that it focused on the disability “dispute” and not the cricket (i.e. it did not include a cricket scoreboard or any substantial results). The story also included stereotypical approaches to disability with the inclusion of terms such as “seeing red” in the script and the associated newsreader over the shoulder graphic.

The 12 ‘progressive’ items were broken down into two subsets: ‘minority/civil rights’ (3), ‘cultural pluralism’ (9). The ‘cultural pluralism’ model, which depicts people with disability as multifaceted and does not unnecessarily focus on disability, dominated the ‘progressive’ items. An example of the cultural pluralism model was the weather item presented by Channel Ten’s Tim Bailey (17.12.08). The item featured the announcement and presentation of an environment award to Wesley E-Recycling. While there was passing reference to some of the staff at Wesley E-Recycling having disabilities, it wasn’t given “undue attention” (Power 2007).

As with the newspaper articles, the television items were explored for the presence of stereotypes (Factor 2) highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines (Hume 1994).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATION</th>
<th>JOURNALIST</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>STEREOTYPE</th>
<th>PEOPLE-FIRST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pity &amp; Charity</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Sarah Cumming</td>
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<td>Pity &amp; Charity</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<td>SEVEN</td>
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<td>Pity &amp; Charity</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Sam Hall</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Nick Dole</td>
<td>16.12.08</td>
<td>Pity &amp; Charity</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Ron Wilson</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Amber Muir</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
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<td>17.12.08</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Glen Lauder</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>SBS</td>
<td>John McKenzie</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Monumental tragedy</td>
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<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Pity &amp; Charity</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the 36 items reviewed, 16 (44.4%) were found to contain stereotypes included in the guidelines (Hume 1994). As represented in Table 12a, the stereotypes found were:

1. Pity/charity - 7 (19.4%)
2. Heroic - 5 (13.8%)
3. Monumental tragedy - 2 (5%)
4. Supercrip - 2 (5%)

When stereotypes were present, the ‘pity/charity’ stereotype dominated 7/16 (43.7%). “People with a disability are objects of pity and charity.” (Hume 1994) (p. 11) Significantly, however, 20 (56%) of the items that had disability content did not use any of the stereotypes listed in the guidelines.

As was the case in the newspaper analysis in Chapter 4, according to this study, journalists do not appear to rely on the use of stereotypical language in the representation of people with disability. However, a greater percentage (44.4%) of television items contained stereotypes than the newspaper items (23.6%). To further compare the television and newspaper findings on stereotypes; the ‘pity & charity’ stereotype dominated the television items, while ‘supercrip’ was the predominant stereotype in the newspapers articles. Interestingly, the ‘supercrip’ stereotype was identified as being used only twice in the television items.

In addition to stereotypes, the researcher explored for the presence of people-first language (Hume 1994; Snow 2008) in the 36 articles that had disability content. Of the 36 articles reviewed, 14 (38.8%) contained non-people-first language and nine (25%) contained people-first language. An example of the ‘non-people-first’ language was found in a Kerryn Johnston RVO, WIN (21.11.08).

“Thousands of the region’s sick and disabled youngsters flocked to WIN Entertainment Centre for the yearly event.”

An example of the people-first language was found in the Andrew Leahy SOT, Ten (26.11.08).

“… the appeal for residency rejected because 13-year-old Lucas has Down Syndrome.”
Leahy’s sentence structure and word choice are in line with what journalists have been asked to do by Snow when she wrote about people-first language putting the person before disability and describing what a person has, rather than who a person is (Snow 2008).

As was the case with the quantitative analysis of the newspaper articles captured in the data collection period, the researcher has analysed the placement of items with disability content within their respective bulletins. In alignment with McCombs and Shaw (1972), the placement and size of an article within a news bulletin is indicative of the editorial importance placed on that item. There are variables within a news bulletin as there are within a newspaper. A television news bulletin is broken into ‘breaks’. The overall length of a bulletin and the presence of ‘commercial breaks’ determine the number of ‘news breaks’. A standard half-hour news bulletin usually consists of four “news breaks” (general news x 2; sport x 1; weather x 1). An hierarchical system of item importance is generally adopted within each break. Therefore, the most important item of the day is the first item in the entire bulletin and, within the bulletin, the most important item of each ‘break’ is the first item of each break.

The researcher analysed the broadcast items that contained disability content for their placement within a bulletin. The analysis is seen in Table 13c.
Table 13c: Television item placement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATION</th>
<th>JOURNALIST</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>BREAK</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>LENGTH SECS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Jeffery Kofman</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Danielle Post (NR)</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td></td>
<td>SPORT</td>
<td>RVO 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Sarah Cumming</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Andrew Leahy</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Juanita Phillips (NR)</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Ben Fazoulan (NR)</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>IST</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Mark Ferguson (NR)</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>1ST</td>
<td>RED</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Deborah Knight (NR)</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Josh Murphy</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Amber Muir</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Ian Ross (NR)</td>
<td>2.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>John Kerrison</td>
<td>2.12.08</td>
<td>1ST</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Mark Ferguson (NR)</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>VSV</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Janice Petersen (NR)</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>VSV</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Craig Foster</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>VSV</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Alicia McMillan</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Ray Warren</td>
<td>7.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Marion Ives</td>
<td>7.12.08</td>
<td>1ST</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Kellie Lazzaro</td>
<td>7.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>8.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Michael Usher (NR)</td>
<td>10.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Chris Bath (NR)</td>
<td>11.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Michael Usher (NR)</td>
<td>11.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Bill Woods</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>3RD</td>
<td>VSV</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Sam Hall</td>
<td>15.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Nick Dole</td>
<td>16.12.08</td>
<td>1ST</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Ron Wilson (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>1ST</td>
<td>RED</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Amber Muir</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Deborah Knight (NR) &amp; Adam Hause (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>2RD</td>
<td>RED</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Glen Lauder</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>SPORT</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Tim Bailey</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>WEATHER</td>
<td>Two-way</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>John McKenzie</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>2ND</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Ned Hall</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>SPORT</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>4TH</td>
<td>RVO</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 36 items broadcast that contained disability content, there were:

- Package/SOT - 16 (44%)
- RVO/VSV 16 - (44%)
- RED/LIV 3 - (8%)
- Two-way 2 - (5%)
Six (6) items ran in the first break of their respective bulletins. Three (3) of the six first break items were ‘package/SOT’ and ran on average for 90 seconds.

Most of the items containing disability content ran in the second break of the bulletins. Twenty-three of the 36 items (63%) ran in the second break and 11 of the second-break items with disability content (47%) were “package/SOT”. These results would indicate television news stories about disability tend to receive less editorial weighting. Only six items on disability were run in the first break of bulletins and half of those items were not ‘package/SOT’, that, as discussed earlier, arguably carry greater editorial weight. Significantly, in support of this finding, the vast majority of television news stories on disability were placed outside the first break in news bulletins and most of those stories were not ‘package/SOT’.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATION</th>
<th>JOURNALIST</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Jeffery Kofman</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical Genetic syndrome/cancer treatment</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Danielle Post (NR)</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Illawarra Disability Trust golf day</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity KidzWish Christmas concert</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Sarah Cumming</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical Surgery/undiagnosed disorder</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Andrew Leahy</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court Down Syndrome visa decision</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Juanita Phillips (NR)</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court Down Syndrome visa decision</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Ben Fazoulan (NR)</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity KidzWish Christmas concert</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Mark Ferguson (NR)</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court Boy jailed for stabbing ‘autistic man’</td>
<td>RED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Deborah Knight (NR)</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court Boy jailed for stabbing ‘autistic man’</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Josh Murphy</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>Disability accommodation Teen ‘langushing’ in aged care</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Amber Muir</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>Medical/health Graduates from kids to adult wards</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Ian Ross (NR)</td>
<td>2.12.08</td>
<td>Disability events/awards/charity Children’s Christmas party</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>John Kerrison</td>
<td>2.12.08</td>
<td>Disability events/awards/charity Children’s Christmas party</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Mark Ferguson (NR)</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>IDPWD Sydney Harbour Bridge walk</td>
<td>VSV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Janice Petersen (NR)</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>IDPWD Sydney event to mark IDPWD</td>
<td>VSV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Craig Foster</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>IDPWD Disability sailors</td>
<td>VSV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>IDPWD Children’s performance Wollongong</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Alicia McMillan</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema Black Balloon premiere</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Ray Warren</td>
<td>7.12.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema Black Balloon premiere</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>Marion Ives</td>
<td>7.12.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema Black Balloon premiere</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Kellie Lazzaro</td>
<td>7.12.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema Black Balloon premiere</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>8.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Surfers with disability</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Michael Usher (NR)</td>
<td>10.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Children’s Christmas party</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Chris Bath (NR)</td>
<td>11.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Prince Harry disability awards</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
<td>Michael Usher (NR)</td>
<td>11.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Prince Harry disability awards</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Bill Woods</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>Medical/health Muscular Dystrophy kids treatment</td>
<td>VSV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Sam Hall</td>
<td>15.12.08</td>
<td>Education/employment Graduates from workskills program</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Nick Dole</td>
<td>16.12.08</td>
<td>Legal/court &quot;Robbed blind&quot; thief sentenced</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Ron Wilson (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Medical/health Revamped Sydney hospital (promo)</td>
<td>RED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Amber Muir</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Medical/health Revamped Sydney hospital</td>
<td>RED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Deborah Knight (NR)&amp; Adam Hause (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Environment awards</td>
<td>RED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Glen Lauder</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Sport: Blind Cricket Ashes</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Tim Bailey</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Environment awards</td>
<td>Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>John McKenzie</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Medical/health Historic face transplant surgery</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Ned Hall</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Sport: Blind Cricket Ashes</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Superheroes visit kids with disability</td>
<td>RVO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The subjects of the stories captured in the research are compiled in Table 13d and are summarised in Table 14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STORY CATEGORY</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability accommodation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability events/awards/charity</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability access/equity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/medical</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre/cinema</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profile</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal/court</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDPWD</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/employment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 13d and 14 reveal most of the television stories about disability were focused on disability events, awards or charities. Almost a third (30%) of the stories reviewed were about ceremonies or celebrations for people with disability. Interestingly, of the 11 stories categorised ‘disability events/awards/charity’, nine were entirely about or featured children. This is significant because it tends to play to the stereotype of people with disability being the ‘eternal child’ (Hume 1994). The predominance of children in stories also aligns with the charity model of disability (i.e. people are more likely to support charities if children are involved).

While stories about disability events, awards and charities were also prominent in the newspaper analysis of story subjects (see Chapter 4, Tables 8a & 8b), television coverage of this category of story almost doubled that found in newspapers. Seven out of the 38 (18.4%) newspaper stories analysed were categorised ‘disability event/awards/charity’; that compares to the 30 per cent of the television stories. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude both newspaper and television journalists cover stories about disability events, awards or charities more than any other disability-based story, but television covers the category much more than newspaper.
Conclusion

This chapter has focused on: 1) the presence of disability content within television news bulletins; 2) the editorial weight given to those stories; 3) the frames of disability used within those news stories; and 4) the presence of stereotypes within those stories. This chapter has provided significant descriptive data (quantitative) that has served to help answer key questions posed by this research, most significantly - what frames are used by journalists in the representation of people with disability.

As was the case in the analysis of newspapers in Chapter 4, the findings of the content analysis on the television news bulletins are multi-fold.

Firstly, and significantly, the research found there was very little coverage given to people with disability during the survey period. This researcher revealed between November 17 and December 17, 2008, less than one per cent (0.92%) of news items run in six major television news bulletins were identifiable as having disability content. According to this research, people with disability receive an extremely small amount of coverage in television news bulletins. Tanner et al (2003) have argued people with disability deserve more media coverage because they represent 20 per cent of the Australian population. This research, however, does nothing to indicate the coverage is in any way linked to minority group representation within the wider community.

The research found the Illawarra’s local news bulletin on WIN provided the most coverage of disability during the four-week survey period. WIN News ran seven stories on disability - this amounted to 1.44 per cent of the total number (486) of stories run in the local bulletin. This, potentially, goes to the core of ‘local’ news. Almost by definition, local news focuses on what might be regarded as ‘smaller’ events and activities. People with disability, as a minority in the community, are always going to receive more, if not better, coverage in local television news than metropolitan bulletins. This could be the focus of future research.

The chapter also investigated the frames used by television journalists to represent people with disability. The Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) media models of disability were again used as an analytical tool. The analysis found of the 36 news items deemed to be about people with disability/and or the issues facing them, 24 (66.6%) used ‘traditional’ frames and 12 (33.3%) were ‘progressive’ (see Table 13a).
As was the case with the newspaper analysis, the ‘progressive’ and ‘traditional’ models were categorised according to the Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) models. The 24 ‘traditional’ frames were divided between three models: ‘social pathology’ (15), ‘medical’ (7), and ‘supercrip’ (2). The 12 ‘progressive’ items were divided between two models: ‘minority/civil rights’ (3) and ‘cultural pluralism’ (8).

According to this research, the findings on the models of disability used by television journalists are clear. Television news journalists use ‘traditional’ frames of disability more than they use ‘progressive’ frames. Furthermore, the ‘traditional’ frames used by the television news journalists are dominated by two of the Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) frames; ‘social pathology’ and ‘medical’.

The chapter also analysed the 36 television news items for the use of stereotypes highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines. Sixteen of the 36 articles (44.4%) contained stereotypes highlighted in the guidelines (Hume 1994). The items were selected because they represented a broad cross-section of the items reviewed and were illustrative of the items published in the study period. This research found the ‘pity/charity’ stereotype was dominant in the television news items, with seven out of the 16 (44%) articles found to contain the stereotype.

It is significant to find the majority (55.6%) of the analysed television news articles did not contain stereotypical representation of people with disability. It can therefore be concluded, on the basis of this research, that recommendations found in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines to avoid the use of stereotype in the representation of people with disability align with what is being produced by television news journalists - the cause of this alignment, however, is not clear.

The chapter also investigated the use of people-first language (Snow 2008). It found 14 of the 36 analysed articles (38.8%) contained people-first language and nine (25%) did not (see Table 13b). As was the case with the newspaper analysis, instances where there was no direct adherence or neglect of people-first language were not categorised. Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that more television news journalists use language that does not define people by their disability - they instead use language that shows disability as something people have rather than something people are (Snow 2008).

Consideration was also given to the placement of items about people with disability and/or the issues they face in television news bulletins. As was the case with the
newspapers in Chapter 4, it was considered important to assess editorial weight given to television news stories about disability and how the shape and placement of items in news bulletin go toward assessing its editorial weight.

The research found most of the 36 items on disability were either package/SOT (44%) or RVO/VSV (44%) in shape. Taken on its own, this finding indicates equal distribution of weight to items about disability. As discussed in the chapter, items considered to have greater editorial significance are usually broadcast as ‘package/SOT’. Chapter 5, however, also included a breakdown of where the items on disability were placed in the news bulletins. The research found 63 per cent (23/36) of the articles were placed in the second break of television news bulletins and only six (16%) of the items appeared in the first break of bulletins. As discussed in the chapter, greater editorial weight is assigned to stories that run in the first break of news bulletins.

Having taken the placement and shape of television news items into account, this research can conclude television news items about people with disability and/or the issues they face have less editorial weight than other items.

Finally, Chapter 5 included analysis of the specific subject matter of the 36 stories found to be about people with disability and/or the issues they face. The stories were placed into 10 categories (as was the case with newspaper stories). As seen in Tables 13d and 14, 11 of the 36 items (30%) of the stories about disability were categorised ‘disability events/awards/charity’. As noted earlier, nine of the 11 stories were entirely about or featured children. This could go some way to explaining the conclusions about stereotypes. The research found the ‘pity/charity’ stereotype dominated the stories about disability and that aligns with the findings on story subject matter.

The next chapter will use case study research methods to explore the qualitative elements of the newspaper articles and television items identified as having disability content.
Chapter 6 – Case studies

This chapter uses qualitative case study research methods to explore the depiction of people with disability in the media. The case study research technique was chosen because of its proven track record in the field of news media enquiry (Clogston 1990; Auslander and Gold 1999; Haller 1999; Tanner et al. 2003; Power 2007) and its ability to answer the fundamental journalistic questions: “how” and “why”?

While the previous chapter focused on the quantitative elements of the research - the purely descriptive data gathered during the collection period November 17, 2008 - December 17, 2008, this chapter takes the research beyond the “what” - what words and terms were used - and further than the “when” - when were words and terms used - and considers ‘how’ certain words, terms and images were used, ‘why’ they were used and ‘what’ impact those words, terms and images may have had on the reader, viewer or listener.

It is important to understand how and why journalists write and talk the way they do because research indicates journalists have the power to influence what the public thinks about, if not what it thinks (Cohen 1963; McCombs and Shaw 1972; Entman 1989, 1991; D'Angelo 2002). This is relevant to the depiction of people with disability as the media has the capacity to, on one hand, raise awareness of people with disability and be a driver of inclusiveness but, on the other hand, it has the power to ignore and or stereotype people with disability.

Textual analysis through case study is a suitable element of the research framework as it allows an exploration of how journalists make sense of their world. The research seeks to explore and explain the primary world in which journalists operate - a world of words.

“If we are interested in how cultures and subcultures make sense of reality differently, we can gather evidence for this by analysing text” (McKee 2003, p. 29).

Yin argues the case study research technique is best suited to the challenge of answering “why” and “how”?
“Establishing the how and why of a complex human situation is a classic example of the use of case studies, whether by journalists or social scientists” (Yin 1994, p. 16).

The researcher selected 18 items for the case study analysis. The articles were selected from the 74 television and newspaper items previously identified in this work as having disability content and, in the case of the newspaper analysis, being specifically about people with disability and or the issues they face.

This chapter casts an analytical eye over the selected items and continues to use the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines and Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller’s (1993, 1995) media models of disability as the primary tools of analysis.

Each article has been individually analysed to determine ‘how’ it was framed. (The question of ‘why’ journalists frame stories in certain ways will be explored later in the work (Chapter 7) through interviews with journalists, media and disability academics and disability advocates.) The researcher also considered the impact of the depiction of people with disability and or the issues they face in the particular item. While the potential impact of an individual item can only be subjectively analysed (there has been no mechanism put in place in this work to strategically analyse the impact of items on the consumer), it is a necessary element of consideration in the broad scope of this work - that being, why do journalists apply particular frames and what impact does that media coverage have on community perceptions of people with disability.

The question of ‘impact’ is explored in greater depth later in this work through the discussion with journalists, media and disability academics and disability advocates.

The items selected for analysis provide a cross-section of the articles captured in the research period. Most of the newspaper articles selected contain an image. Images are considered significant to the research corpus because ‘a picture tells a thousand words’. The decision to include images in the analysis (quantitatively and qualitatively) was made despite the fact that Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines do not, specifically, deal with images. Interestingly, however, the Physical Disability Council of NSW in its *Words Matter - A Guide for Journalists* does address the question of images (Hazelton 2006).
Photographs always send a message. Photographs are meant to support the text of the story or the issue being reported. When a person with a disability is photographed, more often than not, the focus falls on the disability or their equipment. This kind of photograph might inadvertently devalue the person by using inappropriate perspectives or settings.

If the disability is not relevant to the story, the photographer should consider taking their shots in ways which ignore the disabilities of their subject (Hazelton 2006, p. 10).


The articles included in the case study section are listed in Table 15 (below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>N/paper or TV</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Journalist</th>
<th>Page/break</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Model Traditional (T) / Progressive (P)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Supercrip (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>Malcolm Brown</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Medical (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>Stephen Lunn</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Adam Cresswell</td>
<td>11 (Features)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>IM</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>William Verity</td>
<td>1,10,11 (Features)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>9.12.08</td>
<td>Xanthe Kleinig</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>Julia Stirling</td>
<td>1 (Features)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Consumer (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>17.11.08</td>
<td>Jan Gothard, Charlie Fox</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Civil rights (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>Yuko Narushima</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>Damian McGill</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>Danielle Post (Presenter)</td>
<td>SPORT (RVO)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (Presenter)</td>
<td>2nd Break (RVO)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>Sarah Cumming</td>
<td>2nd Break (Pkg)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Medical (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>Josh Murphy</td>
<td>2nd Break (Pkg)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Andrew Leahy</td>
<td>2nd Break (Pkg)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Minority/civil rights (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>17.17.08</td>
<td>Tim Bailey</td>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Ned Hall</td>
<td>Sport (SOT)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>Janice Petersen (Presenter)</td>
<td>2nd Break (VSV)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism (P)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The primary focus of this work is to determine how journalists depict people with disability and why journalists use these ‘frames’ using the media models of disability developed by Clogston (1989). These models are, as cited in Wall (2007):

(a) Progressive: ‘based on a minority or civil rights perspective, they see disability problems as located in society’s failure to accommodate all members of the population. This included articles about discrimination, awareness, integration, mainstreaming, sport, arts, adaptive technology, independent living and non-disability (articles about disabled individuals that do not relate to their disabilities,

(b) Traditional: ‘based on a deviance perspective, they consider the person with a disability as dysfunctional, because he or she is unable to function in an environment designed by or for people without disabilities. This includes articles about special attention paid to a disabled person focusing on the disability, victimisation or disabled people, special employment, special education, charity or government support, medical or disease and rehabilitation.

It is clear from the quantitative data that newspaper and television news items captured in the research period covered an array of topics and fell within the various media models of disability developed by Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and, later, Haller (1993, 1995). The topics varied from the arts and sport to legal battles and charity events. A combined total of 74 items (38 newspapers, 36 television) were identified as being disability specific (newspapers) and having disability content (television). Tables 7a and 13a showed, respectively, 38 newspaper items included in the extended analysis, 30 (79%) were considered ‘traditional’ and eight (21%) ‘progressive’ and of 36 television items analysed 24 (67%) were ‘traditional’ and 12 (33%) were ‘progressive’. Of the combined total 74 articles captured in the extended analysis, 54 (73%) were coded ‘traditional’ and 20 (27%) were coded ‘progressive’ in accordance with news media frames defined in Clogston’s (1989) models of disability.

The 74 items were subsequently associated, where possible, with one of the eight specific media models of disability developed by Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995).
The 54 ‘traditional’ items’ specific models of disability were:

- Medical - 23 (31%)
- Social pathology: 24 (32%)
- Supercrip: 4 (5%)
- Other: 3 (4%)

The 20 ‘progressive’ items’ specific models of disability were:

- Cultural pluralism: 13 (17%)
- Minority/civil rights 4 (5%)
- Consumer: 3 (4%)

The models are directly representative of frames journalists use to represent people with disability and the researcher considered them a logical tool of analysis. Looking at the combined television and newspaper articles, the ‘traditional’, as defined by Clogston and Haller, was dominant.

To date, this discussion has shown the ‘traditional’ representation of disability in the items captured in this research was dominated by the ‘medical’ (23%) and ‘social pathology’ (32%) models of disability. This would indicate television and print journalists favour ‘traditional’ representation of disability. This aspect, among others, will be further considered in the case study section of this work. The following case studies are divided along ‘traditional’ and ‘progressive’ lines.

Case Studies (Newspaper)

This section investigates 10 newspaper articles selected by the researcher as representative of the 38 newspaper articles found to have been about people with disability and/or the issues they face. The collection is ‘representative’ because it includes at least one item from each of the newspapers in this study; including one article without a byline and one contributed article.
### Table 16: Case study items (newspaper)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>N/paper</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Journalist</th>
<th>Page/break</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Supercrip (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>Malcolm Brown</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Medical (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>Stephen Lunn</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Adam Cresswell</td>
<td>11 (Features)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>IM</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>Julia Stirling</td>
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<td>Consumer (P)</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>SMH</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>SCR</td>
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<td>Damian McGill</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism (P)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 10 articles, six have been coded as ‘traditional’ and four ‘progressive’ under the Clogston and Haller models.
The article had no byline and the researcher suspected it could have been a contributed article to the newspaper, rather than an article written by one of the newspaper journalists. However, the article was given considerable editorial weighting by being placed on the page 7 and the inclusion of a photograph. The article was categorised as ‘traditional’ for a variety of reasons, not the least its headline: “A special day for a real go-getter”. The headline had a patronising tone and the use of ‘go-getter’ significantly diminished the importance of the subject. However, in its defence - the ‘go-getter’ is a play on the title of the award. The tone of the headline is childish - a point emphasised through the use of ‘special’ as a euphemism for disability and regular depiction of people with disability, no matter their age, as eternal children.
The subject matter is traditional disability news media fodder. The article was about a local man, Glen Corbett, being named one of 15 finalists in the National Disability Awards - “... He is in line to win the Go Getter Award.” The item used the language of “overcoming” in news media representation of disability in the media.

“Mr Corbett has not let his intellectual disability stop him from being of service to those around him.”

It is also ‘traditional’ in that it is about a government award for people with disability, which serves to highlight people with disability as somehow different from the rest of society and worthy of ‘special’ awards.

The article is also traditional in the sense it focuses on the sporting achievements of Mr Corbett. While sports articles dealing with disability are categorised as ‘progressive’ according to Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995), the researcher considered the depiction in the article as more accurately satisfying the ‘traditional’ ‘supercrip’ model of disability.

A keen tenpin bowler, Mr Corbett has helped develop the sport on a local level. He took up the sport when he was eight years old. In 2007, Mr Corbett became the president of the Pioneer Tenpin Bowling League in Nowra and this year was named the Arwon Tenpin Bowling League’s Sportsman of the Year.

The photograph, while not focusing unnecessary attention on disability, does feature Mr Corbett with a string of medals around his neck - enhancing the ‘supercrip’ media model.
Dead child had habit of putting objects into her mouth

A DISABLED 13-year-old girl who died last year after being found unconscious in her bedroom probably choked on a disposable rubber glove that was found in her mouth, the Glebe Coroner’s Court heard yesterday.

Manel Tamer, who had suffered from regressive autism since the age of three and had epilepsy, had a habit of putting things into her mouth. The problem was so serious the family had stripped her room in their home in Marian Street, Auburn, of all unnecessary items and had her door locked.

A respite worker, Mary Abbouse, had attended the girl at 8am on April 7 last year, changed her nappy and fed her. According to evidence before the State Coroner, Mary Jerram, Ms Abbouse had had a practice of carrying disposable gloves with her and police found a packet of gloves in the boot of her car.

Dr Paul Bottrill, who conducted the autopsy on Manel, said the girl’s brain showed evidence of asphyxiation and he thought it highly likely that she had swallowed the glove. He could not say that had happened beyond doubt because Manel might have had an epileptic seizure.

Sergeant Rebecca Becroft, assisting the coroner, said the important issue to be decided was how the glove got there. Cleaners who had been at the house the day before had denied they had left a glove, as had Ms Abbouse.

Detective Sergeant Joshua Reeks, who handled the investigation, said that according to Manel’s mother, Susan Tamer, Ms Abbouse was “a good lady” and had sometimes used gloves. He said in his opinion Manel had found a rubber glove and put it in her mouth.

There was no evidence, he said, that it had been left in the room “maliciously or purposefully” and there was no evidence from the autopsy results that it had been forced into her mouth.

The white, transparent glove found in Manel’s mouth was not consistent with yellowish rubber gloves in the family home. Ms Abbouse, after an initial interview, had declined to speak further and her employer, Wendy’s Home Services, had so far not given information on their policy and practices regarding gloves.

Detective Reeks said a number of reports had been filed by the Department of Community Services about the child, but there was nothing to merit intervention and the departmental assessment was that she was not at risk.

The inquiry resumes today.
The article is largely considered ‘traditional’ for its focus on the disability and the lack of people-first language.

“A disabled 13-year-old girl who died last year after being found unconscious in her bedroom probably choked on a disposable rubber glove that was found in her mouth, the Glebe Coroner’s Court heard yesterday.”

The girl at the heart of the story is not described as a “child with disability” but instead is called a “disabled child”. This reference, according to Snow and others, puts the disability before the person. (Snow 2008)

“People-first language puts the person before the disability, and describes what a person has, not who a person is.” (Snow 2008, p. 2)

However, the language in the article fluctuates between people-first and non-people-first language. Progressively, the article describes the girl in the article, Manel Tanner, as someone who “… had epilepsy, had a habit of putting things in her mouth.”

As a counterpoint, the article also aligns itself with the ‘traditional’ ‘medical’ model of disability when it states: “Manel Tanner, who had suffered from regressive autism…” “Suffers from” is highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as a term to be avoided (Hume 1994).

The article includes a photograph of the young girl. The photograph can be considered largely progressive in nature as it is a portrait shot or head-shot that does not focus unnecessary attention on the girl’s disability.
Case Study 3

Newspaper: The Australian
Date: 29.11.2008
Page: 6
Journalist: Stephen Lunn
Headline: New deal at COAG for the disabled

New deal at COAG for the disabled

Stephan Lunn
Social affairs writer

A NEW federal-state agreement to improve the lives of the disabled will be announced at COAG today with the Rudd Government pledging an additional $408 million to help the states cut red tape and provide more services and equipment.

The National Disability Agreement will come into force on January 1 next year. It will attempt to redress some of the sector’s most entrenched problems, such as a fractured bureaucracy, low wages and a lack of common standards between the states.

The new funding includes a $70 million “sign-on bonus” for the states to reform their disability systems.

These reforms include reducing the load on disabled people in their dealings with state departments. This means disabled people should be able to sort out their housing, health and welfare needs at a “single access point”.

State and commonwealth disability ministers had previously agreed on a $1.9 billion package to provide 24,000 additional supported accommodation, respite and in-home care places.

That funding is now incorporated in the National Disability Agreement.

The commonwealth’s contribution will be indexed at more than 6 per cent over the life of the five-year agreement, compared with the current indexation arrangement of 1.8 per cent.

Community Services Minister Jenny Macklin said the new deal, which would replace the existing Commonwealth State Territory Disability Agreement, would lead to changes on the ground.

“People with disabilities in my view will see improvements to their lives,” Ms Macklin said.

“We understand how important this is, how much pressure disabled people, their families and their carers face on a daily basis.”

“The National Disability Agreement demonstrates the commonwealth and the states and territories are committed to improving services for the disabled. The $408 million will not only reform the sector — it will also provide additional services.”

The reforms were designed to deliver services to disabled persons over their lifetimes. The needs of disabled people changed as they get older, Ms Macklin said. And they would allow providers of services to the disabled to better develop, train and employ carers.

Parliamentary secretary for disabilities Bill Shorten said the new deal showed “disability was on the map” as an issue.
The language used in the article is largely in line with the ‘social pathology’ ‘traditional’ model of disability.

Power (2007) cited Clogston (1989) when he defined the social pathology model as: “people with disability are presented as disadvantaged and must look to the state or society for economic support. It is considered a gift, not a right.” (Power 2007, p. 113)

The headline and opening paragraph contain language that represents people with disability as dependent on the “state or society for economic support.” (Power 2007, p. 113)

The opening paragraph reads:

A new federal-state agreement to improve the lives of the disabled will be announced today with the Rudd Government pledging an additional $408 million to help the states cut red tape and provide more services and equipment.

The opening paragraph represents a ‘traditional’ portrayal of disability in that it shows people with disability as needing government to “improve their lives” and through its use of non-people-first language - “… lives of the disabled”.

Progressively, the article appears on page 6 and therefore has significant editorial weight but it is a left-hand-side page; the article is placed in the bottom left-hand quadrant of the page and it does not have a photograph (all elements detracting from the article’s readability and prominence (McCombs and Shaw 1972).
Case Study 4
Newspaper: The Australian
Date: 6.12.2008
Page: 11 (Features)
Journalist: Adam Creswell
Headline: News revolution for the blind

Technology is transforming the lives of vision-impaired people, writes Health editor Adam Creswell

Chris Edwards’s night was falling by the time he was 80, and in his early teens he lost functional vision altogether. Now he can’t perceive much more than light and dark. But that doesn’t stop him pensing the day’s papers, sitting on the train to work alongside hundreds of other commuters. He also arrives at his desk with a fair broader understanding of that day’s news than most other people. Whereas most newspaper readers have their preferred masthead, Edwards surfs his way through at least four – The Australian, The Age, Melbourne’s Herald-Sun and The Australian Financial Review.

This amazing feat – which would have been impossible for someone like Edwards just a couple of years ago – is thanks to huge strides in digital technology and text-to-speech software in recent years. The technology allows him to download all the content from the print editions onto his mobile phone-sized device, and then browse through it in spoken form, selecting particular sections such as news or sport, bringing the headlines on each page, and choosing particular stories to listen to in full.

He can alter the speed and pitch of the voice to make it go more slowly or more quickly. And it’s all available for him to access at about the same time as the printed editions thump onto ordinary subscribers’ doorsteps. All told, it must be among the most dramatic transformations in the communication and information landscape for the partially sighted since the invention of Braille in 1829.

Before these latest advances, Edwards was reliant on the much less amount of news available on radio bulletins, as previous text-to-speech systems relied on recording a human voice reading into a microphone – a process that took so long the news was out of date by the time the recorded version could be distributed.

“It’s a lot easier to be able to talk about current events using the device,” Edwards said. “It’s nice when you can sit in bed, at the same time as my wife is getting her paper delivered, and I can have the paper downloaded and talk about particular articles. I can also read my kids – I can download Harry Potter onto my device and listen to it with them.”

The handheld i-access devices are supplied free of charge to eligible people by the charity Vision Australia, the leading provider of services for blind and vision-impaired people in Australia. The Australian and The Weekend Australian recently agreed to be a supporter of the charity.

The charity’s CEO Gerard Mensis explains that although the system has been running for just over two years, only in the past year has growth started to take off. People who may be eligible for the device include not merely the estimated 300,000 Australians who are blind or vision-impaired, but also people with dyslexia severe enough to prevent them reading, and Parkinson’s patients who cannot hold a page steady.

News Ltd, publisher of The Weekend Australian and Vision Australia also has a vast library of books and other material in its library, available either on CD or audio cassette.

Of all of the free of charge, including the i-access units themselves. Nearly half of which have already been handed out at a cost to Vision Australia of between $300 and $400 each. Less-advanced machines are also available that play CDs. The output is funnelled from Vision Australia’s fundraising activities.

Menzis says the charity is now seeking to raise $30 million to fund the digitisation of the library’s entire collection, the roll-out of new services and the computer hardware required for that, and the ability to supply machines to low-vision Australians – whose numbers are expected to double over the coming decade.

New services on the radar include the provision of safety information for pedestrians.
This article is representative of multiple articles analysed throughout the research that proved difficult to categorise according to Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller’s (1993, 1995) media models of disability. The article contains both ‘progressive’ and ‘traditional’ elements of media representation of disability.

The headline does not use people-first language. It refers to a news revolution for “the blind”. People-first language would see the headline reworked to read: “News revolution for people who are blind”.

The sub-heading is open to the same criticism: “Technology is transforming the lives of vision-impaired people, writes Health editor Adam Cresswell”.

The Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines urge journalists to avoid the use of the term ‘visually impaired’ and, while it can be argued ‘vision-impaired’ is not the same, when used as a pre-fix in ‘vision-impaired people’ can be considered non-people-first language.

The article adopts a traditional news feature article approach and uses one person, in this instance Chris Edwards who is blind, as the hook to hang the rest of the story on. The story, at its heart, is about a handheld electronic speech text-to-speech device that reads newspapers, books and magazines to people. This aspect of the story fits clearly into the ‘progressive’ category of media model of disability as defined by Clogston (1989) and cited in Wall (2007)

(a) Progressive foci: ‘based on a minority or civil rights perspective, they see disability problems as located in society’s failure to accommodate all members of the population. This included articles about discrimination, awareness, integration, mainstreaming, sport, arts, adaptive technology, independent living and non-disability (articles about disabled individuals that do not relate to their disabilities. (2007)

However, ‘traditional’ elements are also present. The stereotype of people with disability being ‘extraordinary’ because they can do everyday things like arrive “… at his desk with a far broader understanding of the news than most people” because he has been able to access the daily news is highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as something to be avoided. (Hume 1994)
The article’s reference to an “amazing feat” is ‘traditional’ in its depiction of people.

“Whereas most newspaper readers have their preferred mastheads, Edwards surfs his way through at least four - *The Australian, The Age, Melbourne’s Herald Sun* and *The Australian Financial Review*. This **amazing feat** - which would have been **impossible for the likes of Edwards** just a couple of years ago - is thanks to huge strides in digital technology and text-to-speech software in recent years.”

The article is one of a number of items in this research that are included in a “feature” section of the newspaper. Feature articles are usually found towards the middle and back of a newspaper and, therefore, are not prescribed as much editorial weight.

The item does include a large full colour picture. It does not draw undue attention to disability and the caption does not mention disability at all.
Case Study 5
Newspaper: The Illawarra Mercury
Date: 6.12.2008
Page: 1, 10, 11 (Features)
Journalist: William Verity
Headline: Piano Man: Why David Helfgott’s still a shining star
PIANO MAN

David Helfgott, the pianist made famous by *Shine*, is a man whose courage and charm continues to inspire fans around the world. He talks to WILLIAM VERITY.

So there he is, sitting at the piano with his left hand running up and down the top register with dexterity, his right hand stroking my thigh, talking half to himself, 19 to the dozen: "Whatever you do just keep playing, whatever you do just keep playing that piano, gotta keep happy, gotta stay happy," he mumbles.

To me, to himself, it’s difficult to say, "Just be in the now, that’s important, always in the now. At this moment, at this moment - the past has ceased to be and the future’s yet to come, there’s just the now isn’t there? Now or never."

His face leans so close to mine that he comes into my personal space and right out of the other side, rusting his nose against mine.

The intentions are innocent and - along with almost everybody who meets David Helfgott - I’ve fallen in love with him just a little.

"What have you got to lose? Give it your best shot but don’t be greedy and selfish. Take a risk, take a risk, but be gentle, be gentle, you can do what you want but to a certain extent, to a certain extent."

Then he launched away on a whim and starts playing what I take to be Gershwin (which I’ve pestered him to play) with a virtuosity and an honesty that is simply captivating.

And while he’s playing, he’s still talking and breaks into song - "Jerusalem" - and sitting with hunched back and full concentration as he stares closely at the keys of the grand piano through the thick lenses of his round spectacles.

It occurs to me with a flash of realisation that it would be impossible to prize apart Helfgott from his music, or the music from the man.

He’s like a watch with the back taken off so you can see the workings of the cogs, where other concert pianists might conceal the music playing in their head and learn to present only the final result - the face of the clock and the ticking hands.

When we meet in a perfect Southern Highlands homestead surrounded by hills of lush dairy country, both David and his wife, Gillian, are looking well.

Gillian says that her husband of nearly 25 years swims for two hours a day at their property in Bellingen in a lap pool funded out of the considerable proceeds from the 1996 Oscar-winning movie, *Shine*.

He eats sparingly and mostly fruit, and has long since given up a smoking habit that once reached 120 cigarettes a day.

"I am the lighthouse and he is the orchid," Gillian says, as she relaxes with a cup of tea on an easy chair on the wide verandah.

The rain is gently beating on the roof and the sound of David playing a Chopin ballade floats through the open French doors.

It is mid-morning and there are signs everywhere of a party held for David the night before - empty bottles neatly stacked and dozens of pumpkins slashed into faces - but Gillian is dressed immaculately, with foundation and red lipstick neatly applied.

"He says that I understand everything that’s going on in his head, that’s not true, I don’t," she says.

"But I’m pretty good at anticipating what he thinks, how he feels and his behaviour but he can surprise me."

They are in the Southern Highlands for a wedding today after a hectic year of five international tours and the first concert in Sydney for four years, a great success by all accounts. Next year is already booked out with five international tours and a probable return to the Wollongong Arts Centre in Wollongong after an absence of more than five years.

So it is a rare privilege to be able to see him play in the tiny, 200-seat Mittagong Playhouse on Monday and only possible because he wants to raise funds, and awareness for the Butterflies rehabilitation centre in northern NSW.

"We have a friend who is our landscape gardener, stayed in the house when we went away in 1997 and he developed an alcohol problem and four years ago, it got really serious," Gillian explained.

"I wouldn’t let him use the whisper sniper or get on the mower because he was drunk - he is a beautiful young man whose marriage had broken up and he had two children.

"So I had a fairly straight talk to him and said - Where are you going to end up in a year, Simon, if you continue like this?""

Eventually, he secured a place at The Butterflies and stayed the course for the full eight months, giving him 80 per cent
chance of staying sober on heard of
statistic for alcohol or drug addiction.
“IT saved Simon’s life and if you love
someone and an organisation has saved his
life ... I cry whenever I talk about it just as I
am now, I can’t help it,” Gillian said as she
wiped away the tears.

“The other day he was working in the
garden and I heard him singing. I thought
‘my God, when you think back three-and-a-
half years ago when he was drunk at 10 in
the morning’, just a tragic sight.”

The experience persuaded the Heiligotts
to become patrons and to throw themselves
behind a $16 million appeal to double its
places to 60 for recovering addicts and
reduce its five-month waiting list.

David has also contributed to a fund-
raising CD - Caution: Life Ahead - with
contributions from artists such as Paul Kelly,
John Butler, Midnight Oil, Keith Urban and
Powderfinger.

He performs a number with Silverchair for
the project, the brainchild of Hoodoo Gurus
bassist guitarist and former addict, Rick
Grossman.

It is no accident that either of them are
attracted to such a project, because in their
own way, both Gillian and David have made
the concept of healing central to their lives.

Gillian has worked as an astrologer for
more than 20 years, although less so now that
much of her time is taken up as David’s wife
and manager.

“David has a natural healing quality
within himself,” Gillian said. “I’ve been a
facilitator perhaps, in some ways a healer.

“Being in astrology, you want to help
people gain greater self-knowledge and
when they have that, you can be healed in
yourself.

“Everyone has to eventually heal
themselves.”

David’s story is reasonably well
known after Shine won an Oscar for
Geoffrey Rush, who played him as an adult,
and prompted three biographies about him.

The son of an ambitious Jewish Polish
father and a dominated mother, David
studied piano religiously, eventually ending
up at the Royal College of Music in London
where - as legend has it - he suffered a
nervous breakdown after attempting the
ferociously difficult Third Piano Concerto
by Rachmaninoff.

After returning to Australia in August
1970, aged 23, he was diagnosed with a
schizophrenic disorder - married briefly
then divorced - and spent the next 12 years
in and out of mental institutions.

Then in 1983, he met Gillian Murray,
marrying her a few months later.

According to a biography written by
friend Beverley Eley, a clairvoyant had told
Gillian she saw a man of “almost Christ-like
quality” with “a great simplicity of
selflessness about him”.

Yet just as the acclaimed genius of
David’s playing is not without its detractors,
neither is the relationship formed by this self-
proclaimed “odd couple”.

“All this nonsense about how I
completely dominate and manipulate him - I
was this terrible human being who was
exploiting him,” Gillian said. “That’s a joke,
but never mind.”

On the back of Shine, David toured the
United States, to rapt audiences but mixed-
even downright scathing - reviews by critics.

“A dismal but much-reported tour by a
handicapped pianist,” reported The
Economist.

“Classical music promoters all too often
resort to hyperbole in marketing performers,
as the over-hyped concerts of David Heilgott
illustrate, reported The Boston Globe.
The New York Times critic panned
David’s “weak and thin” style and panned
“Mr Heilogott’s sketchy, monochromatic
performance”.

Yet a decade on, audiences are still
responding enthusiastically, often moved by
piano playing that is often ragged at the
edges, far from note-perfect, sometimes
eratic in timing ... but with something
different.

It was no different in Mitagong on
Monday night, as David enthusiastically
played a set of Chopin, Liszt and
Rachmaninoff dressed in his bright red
Russian jacket.

He bounded onto the stage like an excited
little boy, giving the audience the thumbs up,
at times rising after a peace to hug and to kiss.

After the concert, he mingled with the
adoring crowd, hugging and kissing some
more, asking names, talking non-stop, until
he was shepherded away by the ever-
watchful Gillian.

“When you see the influence that David
has on audiences, the absolute joy and
excitement, the world needs that joy,”
Gillian said.

As David once said: “Away from the
piano I am a little mouse, as soon as I sit at
the piano, I’m a leaping lion.”

Websites: www.lilawarrnmercury.com.au

The Weekender, Saturday December 13, 2008

11+
On first inspection, almost everything in the William Verity article on David Helfgott, the pianist catapulted into international stardom by the movie *Shine*, is ‘progressive’ representation of people with disability. It has a headline that clearly pays no attention to disability and it is not until three-quarters of the way through the article that the reader is exposed to any specific reference to disability:

“After returning to Australia in 1970, aged 23, he was diagnosed with a schizoaffective disorder …”

Primarily, it could satisfy the ‘progressive’ categorisation because it is largely an “arts” article (Clogston 1989).

David Helfgott is strongly represented as a musician:

“Then he lurches away on a whim and starts playing what I take to be Gershwin (which I’ve pestered him to play) with a virtuosity and honesty that is simply captivating.”

The article is 1,574 words and includes a full-page colour photograph on *The Illawarra Mercury’s* ‘Weekender’ cover and three more photographs inside the magazine. The prominence and length of the article, along with the inclusion of photographs, most significantly the cover shot, represents considerable editorial weighting.

However, the researcher has categorised the article as ‘traditional’ in its representation of people with disability. This categorisation is partially justified by the media models of disability, but is more strongly supported by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines. Firstly, the article is representative of the ‘supercrip’ media model of disability.

“The supercrip: the disabled person is portrayed as deviant because of ‘superhuman feats or as “special” because he or she lives a regular life ‘in spite of’ disability.” (Power 2007)

If the reviews of Helfgott’s musical ability quoted in the Verity article are any guide, then the question must be asked: why does Helfgott receive the attention he does, if not for his disability - then at least for his ‘status’ as supercrip?
“Classical music promoters all too often resort to hyperbole in marketing performers, as the over-hyped concerts of David Helfgott illustrate,” reported The Boston Globe. The New York Times’ critic panned David’s “weak and thin” style and panned “Mr Helgott’s sketchy, mono-dynamic performance”.

The article is also traditional in its approach to the interview and the photographic content. At 1,574 words, the article features many observations by the journalist, Verity:

“His face leans so close to mine that he comes into my personal space and right out the other side, resting his nose against mine.”

“So there he is, sitting at the piano with his left hand running up and down the top register with dexterity, his right hand stroking my thigh, talking half to himself, 19 to the dozen.”

Most striking, however, are the number of quotes from Helgott’s wife, Gillian, compared to the number of quotes from the pianist. The article quotes David Helfgott just four times, compared with 13 times from his wife. This is a ‘traditional’ media representation of disability as it depicts the person with a disability as unable to speak for themselves. Helfgott is capable of speaking for himself but the article is dominated by quotes from his wife.

The Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines state:

“Try to interview the person alone, although a second person may be necessary as an attendant or interpreter. Sometimes friends and family may interrupt and presume to speak for the person being interviewed. Ignore these intrusions.” (Hume 1994)
The representation is also in line with the “child”/like stereotype the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines encourage journalists to avoid. The almost omnipresence of David Helfgott’s wife in the article and in the photographs aligns with the ‘eternal child’ stereotype the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines highlight as important to avoid.

“People with disability are asexual, eternal children.” (Hume 1994, p. 11)

Verity reinforces the “child” imagery with his observation:

“He bounded onto the stage like an excited little boy, giving the audience the thumbs up, at times rising after a piece to hug and kiss.”

The question of why Helfgott receives the media attention he does is seemingly answered in Verity’s euphemism for disability:

“Yet a decade on, audiences are still responding enthusiastically, often moved by piano playing that is often ragged at the edges, far from note-note perfect, sometime erratic in timing . . . but with something different.”

*The Illawarra Mercury* article is also an example of people with disability as “feature” rather than hard news.
Waugh's pad up for disabled kids

Xanthe Kleinig

MAKING it through the school gate is a huge feat for Liam Titterton and Elizabeth Jutrisa.

However with the young students now facing a bureaucratic battle to save classes at their special needs school, cricket legend Steve Waugh has stepped in to add his star power to the fight.

Both Liam, 5, and Elisabeth, 6, are among the 200 chronically sick or disabled children who have already been helped by Waugh's charitable foundation.

“They are just as entitled as anyone else to an education,” Waugh said yesterday. “For a kid like Liam, he hasn’t got the freedom to run around and play sport. Without education you take away everything.”

Liam’s school, Jasper Road Public, is facing a cut in the number of disability support classes because of poor enrolments.

Parents said inadequate promotion and excessive red tape were to blame for the lack of demand.

Contact the Jasper Road physical disabilities unit on 96396301 if you know of potential students.
The Xanthe Kleinig article contains both ‘traditional’ and ‘progressive’ elements. The researcher, however, has categorised the article as ‘traditional’ because of the stronger ‘traditional’ elements in the article and the associated photograph. The article is in line with the ‘social pathology’ media model of disability.

“The social pathology: people with disability are presented as disadvantaged and must look to the state or society for economic support. It is considered a gift, not a right.” (Power 2007, p. 113)

The article champions a campaign by former Australian cricket captain Steve Waugh and wife Lynette’s charitable foundation to help “…chronically sick and disabled children”. The article focuses on “a bureaucratic battle” to “save classes” at a “special needs school”.

The article is framed to highlight the need for government and community support even if, as the article states, the classes are to be cut at the school “because of poor enrolments”. The article includes a rallying cry by the paper - “Telegraph cares - can you help?” The broader charity model of disability (Oliver 1990) is present in the framing of the story in that it represents people with disability, particularly children, as needy and deserving. It article also reflects one of the stereotypes the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines recommend journalists avoid (Hume 1994), namely:

“People with a disability are objects of pity and charity.” (Hume 1994, p. 11)

The headline and the body of the article are also ‘traditional’ in that they contain non-people-first language (Snow 2008): “Waugh’s pad up for disabled kids” and “Both Liam, 5, and Elizabeth, 6, are among the 200 chronically sick or disabled children who have already been helped by the Waugh’s charitable foundation.”

The photograph is also ‘traditional’ and stereotypical in its focus on the former sports star and his wife rallying the community to help cute (smiling) “disabled kids”.

The article also contains aspects of the ‘progressive models of disability. The article is an example of the ‘minority/civil rights’ or the ‘legal’ models of disability.

1. The minority/civil rights: people with disability are seen as members of a disability community, which has legitimate civil rights grievances.
2. The legal: people with disability are presented as having legal rights and possibly the need to sue to halt discrimination. (Power 2007)

The article addresses the rights to education argument but, significantly, it is highlighting “special needs” education. Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993), as cited in Wall (2007) highlights “integration” and “mainstreaming” as defining characteristics of the 'progressive’ model of disability.
Assumptions on disability often disproved at work

Julia Stirling

EVERYDAY I experience negative assumptions being made about what I can’t do. And everyday I’ll be getting on a train or a plane or I’ll be walking down the street and people will assume that I won’t be able to do something,” says Graeme Innes, disability discrimination commissioner. “For instance, many people assume that walking up and down stairs is going to be a problem — well, my legs work quite well. And I’m not saying I don’t face issues as a person with a disability, there aren’t many things I can’t do — but there are certain things that I would do differently.”

About one in five Australians experiences a disability and according to Vedior Asia Pacific Employment Trends Survey, 76 per cent of Australian businesses don’t have a strategy in place to employ people with disabilities. This has major ramifications for the workplace and the community, says Innes. Unemployment is higher for people with disabilities and they are generally working below their capacity.

Innes says people need to stop linking limiting assumptions with people with disabilities. Have a more open mind, he says.

Innes says research shows three basic barriers for employers with regard to employing people with disabilities: cost, risk and information. However, these perceived barriers were shown to a large extent to be myths.

“Employers’ first assumption is that employing a person with a disability is going to cost more. In fact in the majority of cases that’s not true. In the cases where it may be true there are government schemes available to assist with that cost.”

Many employers also assume people with a disability will be more of an occupational health and safety risk, but research undertaken by the Australian Safety and Compensation Council demonstrates employees with a disability have lower numbers of OHS incidents and lower worker compensation costs. They also have lower absenteeism and higher retention rates than people without a disability.

This has been the case at Peregrine Corporation, Adelaide’s largest convenience retailer which employs 1200 staff in 49 stores. They have employed about 100 people with disabilities in the last two years including people with epilepsy, schizophrenia, depression and previous workplace injuries such as back, neck and shoulder injuries.

Cheryl Cocks, human resources convenience recruiter, says there are many benefits for companies that employ people with disabilities.

“They are generally more committed, more enthusiastic — they actually want to work and usually have a better work ethic than people who just respond to ads.”

Potential employees are pre-screened by CRS Australia or other organisations that help people who have disabilities back into the workforce. CRS Australia sends out an occupational therapist to do a workplace assessment on each job, and candidates are then required to spend 30 hours in the business over a two-week period before they decide if the job is right for them.

Cocks says 90 per cent of people who participate in the program go into employment. CSR Australia has assisted more than 12,000 people find employment in the last year.

Cocks advises employers to take their blinkers off: “There are some really valuable employees out there registered with these companies like CRS, that given the opportunity will actually surprise you of what they are capable of.”

Mark Healeyman, CEO of Diversity@Work says businesses can benefit from having a more inclusive work environment.

“IT certainly affects positively the culture within an organisation. Importance organisations are realising diverse people and diverse thoughts and ideas stop the organisation just doing the same thing all the time. Too often people have people around them that are similar to themselves, so they’re only going to really ever get similar thoughts and ideas.

“So by bringing people in that will challenge that, it should create a better dynamic for the business.”

www.jobaccess.gov.au
www.diversityatwork.com.au
The Julia Stirling article has been categorised ‘progressive’ because it exemplifies the ‘consumer’ media model of disability. Haller (1993) devised the consumer media model of disability as recognition of news media capacity to acknowledge newsworthiness in stories about the largely untapped disability consumer market.

As cited in Power (2007), Haller defined the progressive consumer media model of disability as:

“The consumer: people with disabilities are presented as an untapped consumer group; therefore making society accessible could be profitable to business and society.” (Power 2007, p. 113)

The article quotes Australian Disability Discrimination Commissioner Graeme Innes and two business executives to underline the positive role people with disability can play in the consumer marketplace and business world.

[The] employers’ first assumption is that employing a person with a disability is going to cost more. In fact in the majority of cases that’s not true. In the cases where it may be true there are government schemes available to assist with that cost.

- Graeme Innes, Disability Discrimination Commissioner

“They are generally more committed, more enthusiastic - they actually want to work and usually have a better work ethic than people who just respond to ads.”

- Cheryl Cocks, Peregrine Corporation human resources recruiter.

“It certainly affects positively the culture within an organization. Importantly organizations are realising diverse people and diverse thoughts and ideas stop the organisation just doing the same thing all the time.”

- Mark Heaysman, CEO of Diversity@Work.

The article is dominated by quotes and they serve to reinforce the ‘progressive’ media model of disability but significantly there is no overt mention of Graeme Innes’ disability. Innes is blind and this is only indicated in the photograph that accompanies the story and a quote from Innes himself:
“Every day I experience negative assumptions being made about what I can’t do. And every day I’ll be getting on a train or a plane or I’ll be walking down the street and people will assume I won’t be able to do something,” says Graeme Innes, Disability Discrimination Commissioner.

The article uses people-first language (Snow 2008) and is framed, by design, to eliminate stereotypes in the workplace and, subsequently, the news media.

Examples of people-first language in the article are:

“Many employers also assume people with a disability will be more of an occupational health and safety risk …”; and

“… 76 per cent of Australian businesses don’t have a strategy in place to employ people with disabilities.”

Examples of how the story is framed to eliminate stereotypes, in line with Disability Council of NSW Media Guideline are:

The headline - “Assumptions on disability often disproved at work”; and

“They have employed about 100 people with disabilities in the last two years including people with epilepsy, schizophrenia, depression and previous workplace injuries such as neck, back and shoulder injuries.”

Like many of the articles captured in the study, the story is in a ‘feature’ section of the newspaper. It can be argued that the feature section does not carry as much editorial weight as the news section of newspaper (McQuail 1989). The article was also placed in the bottom left-hand-side of a right hand page. The right hand page placement strengthens its potential reader impact, according to Wheildon (1986). Consideration, however, should be given to the fact people often specifically turn to feature sections in search of longer human interest stories and it may be that this article was more widely read because of this.

However, according to the Gutenberg/Arnold Theory on article placement and impact, the bottom left-hand-side is less likely to attract the reader’s eye (Arnold 1981) and subsequently detracts from level of editorial importance placed on the article.
Case Study 8
Newspaper: The Australian
Date: 17.11.2008
Page: 8 (Opinion)
Writer/s: Jan Gothard & Charlie Fox
Headline: Consign disability discrimination to the bin

Consign disability discrimination to the bin

LAST week The Australian noted Immigration Minister Chris Evans's comment that Down syndrome was not grounds for failing the health requirement of the Migration Act. He's quite correct, in that there is no mention of Down syndrome, nor indeed of disability, in the act. Like race before it, disability has become the new unmentionable in Australian migration policy.

In 1901, the new Commonwealth of Australia passed the Immigration Restriction Act, one of the main planks of the infamous White Australia policy. As is well known, the original and subsequent immigration acts served to keep out of Australia certain "undesirables", understood to be people of colour, by requiring them to undergo an unpassable dictation test.

Race was never mentioned in the act because to do so was deemed offensive. The dictation clause was quietly dropped from the Migration Act of 1958 and from the 1960s race-based restrictions to migration were gradually relaxed. The passage of the Racial Discrimination Act under the Whitlam government in 1975 made discrimination on the basis of race illegal.

The RDA's provisions had an effect across Australian society, but discrimination in migration was one of the act's chief targets. The situation is different, however, for disability discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of disability was also enshrined in the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901. Based on principles that permitted much social and political thought in the early 20th century, plus the notion that Australia needed to guard itself against "contamination", disability-based discrimination worked hand in hand with the race-based discrimination embedded in the dictation clause to protect the new Commonwealth.

The 1901 act excluded from Australia, alongside criminals and other undesirables, "any idiot or insane person" and "any person likely to become a charge upon the public". The wording changed over the next few decades as terms such as idiot and imbecile became offensive, but the meaning remained consistent.

Despite Evans's side-stepping on semantics, anyone deemed likely to "result in significant cost" to the Australian community will still fail the public-interest criteria of the Migration Act. Those with a disability need not apply.

Such a notion of public interest stems directly from the 1901 view of "charge upon the public" and takes no account of any larger or more contemporary understanding of public interest, framed in terms of social inclusion and diversity, as well as the social and yes, economic contributions made by individuals with disability, as child health expert Fiona Stanley pointed out in The Australian last week (November 13). Nor does it even begin to acknowledge the value to Australia of the family of the person with a disability, the very factor that (disability aside) would have guaranteed a warm welcome.

It is ironic that, given the explicit focus on ending discrimination in the Migration Act that preceded the passage of the RDA in 1975, the passage in 1992 of the Disability Discrimination Act had a rather different outcome. Clause 52 of the DDA explicitly acknowledges the "discriminatory provisions" of the Migration Act of 1958 and states that no section of the DDA shall apply to the Migration Act or to those who administer it.

In the Moeller case that has attracted so much publicity recently, representatives of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship have claimed that their treatment of Bernard Moeller's family was not discriminatory, rather they argue that all applicants for migration are subject to the same treatment. This is palpably untrue. The DDA recognises the discrimination within the Migration Act. Indeed, if the Migration Act were not discriminatory, then it would not need to be exempted from the DDA.

The department has no need to protect itself by claiming it does not discriminate the law says quite clearly that it may do so with impunity.

The perception that people with disability can be nothing more than a cost or a burden has been out of date in Australia for at least the past 30 years and explicitly devalues all people in Australia living with disabilities.

Standing at odds with the values Australia's society and its polity have endorsed nationally and internationally, the anachronistic provisions of the Migration Act are all the more peculiar because at both commonwealth and state levels of government there is a substantial body of legislation promoting inclusion and protecting the rights of people with disability who live in Australia. The federal Government includes in its ranks a Minister for Social Inclusion, Julia Gillard, as well as a parliamentary secretary for disabilities, Bill Shorten. Australia has signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Families with a child with a disability, such as those supported by Stanley and other health experts, should not be put in the position of having to fight their way through the Migration Review Tribunal before being accorded the right to bring their child and qualifications into Australia. The family of Tracey Robinson, who finally received ministerial approval for migration last week, had waited more than six years for a resolution and that period had to endure an appeal to the tribunal as well as to the Federal Court. Immigration Minister Evans should be called on urgently to exercise his discretion and offer closure to the many other families in waiting. But above all, the DDA should be changed and its clause 52, like the White Australia policy before it, should be consigned to the dustbin of history. It's time to throw aside legislation cast in century-old attitudes, and for the Rudd Government to do for disability what the Whitlam government did for race.

Jan Gothard and Charlie Fox are parents, historians and members of Down Syndrome Western Australia.
The Jan Gothard and Charlie Fox article is a contributed piece to *The Australian* and was published on the Opinion page. As the article indicates, Gothard and Fox “… are parents, historians and members of Down Syndrome Western Australia.” The researcher, however, has included the article in the analysis as it represents a significant editorial decision by the Opinion page editor. The decision is significant for numerous reasons - not the least being the length of the article. The contributed piece is 990 words and commands, without an image, approximately 1/6th of the page. According to McQuail (1989) and others, article length is a significant factor in assessing editorial weight.

However, the article is placed in the bottom third of a right-hand-side page in a broadsheet newspaper. A right-hand-side page is considered less likely to catch and maintain a reader’s attention (Wheildon 1986, p. 8) and a broadsheet newspaper is larger in dimension than a tabloid newspaper and, therefore, an article placed in the bottom third of the newspaper has the potential to be lost as the reader quickly scans the paper (Tanner 1990, p. 24).

The article has been classified ‘progressive’ for its content and for the editorial decision to run the contributed article. Primarily, the article is progressive if it satisfies the criteria of the Haller-contributed (1993) ‘minority/civil rights’ media model of disability.

> “The minority/civil rights: people with disability are seen as members of a disability community, which has legitimate civil rights grievances.” (Power 2007, p. 113)


(a) Progressive: ‘based on a minority or civil rights perspective, they see disability problems as located in society’s failure to accommodate all members of the population. This included articles about discrimination, awareness, integration, mainstreaming, sport, arts, adaptive technology, independent living and non-disability (articles about disabled individuals that do not relate to their disabilities (Wall 2007).

The article is framed to draw the reader’s attention to disability and, significantly, to disability discrimination. The headline, first, raises the issue of disability discrimination. Use of language such as “Consign disability discrimination to the bin” and the complementary breakout/sub-head: “The relevant provisions of the Migration Act should
go the way of the White Australia policy, insist Jan Gothard and Charlie Fox” serves to strengthen the frame.

The article, not surprisingly, uses people-first language (Snow 2008) and challenges the stereotypes of disability highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines (Hume 1994). This is reflected in the paragraphs below:

“The perception that people with disability can be nothing more than a cost or burden has been out of date in Australia for at least the past 30 years and explicitly devalues all people in Australia living with disabilities.”

And

“Nor does it even begin to acknowledge the value to Australia of the family of the person with a disability, the very factor that (disability aside) would have guaranteed a warm welcome.”

The fact that disability advocates and members of Down Syndrome Western Australia contributed the article to The Australian is a significant issue when considering whether to include the article in the data collection and analysis. The researcher considers the editorial decision to include such a weighty item as representative of a progressive approach to news media representation of people with disability.
Case Study 9
Newspaper: The Sydney Morning Herald
Date: 4.12.2008
Page: 3
Journalist: Yuko Narushima
Headline: Long way to the top when you’ve gotta roll on the rock
Long way to the top when you’ve gotta roll on the rock

Yuko Narushima

THE call went up shortly after the first rays struck the Snowy Mountains and gusty winds whipped cold noses pink. “Up Kosciuszko!”

Using wheelchairs and ski stocks, crutches and hand cycles, a hardy group of about 35 people and a guide dog set out yesterday to conquer alpine terrain to reach Australia’s highest peak.

The 18-kilometre trek was to mark the International Day for People Living with a Disability, or as the nine-time Paralympic gold medalist Louise Sauvage said, to celebrate ability.

“Westie’s towing me,” joked Colleen Noy, 44, as her golden retriever rushed ahead to sniff some snow on the track. Ms Noy had been visually impaired her whole life and became totally blind 12 years ago. That day came as a shock and adapting to life after it took time, she said.

“I had a few episodes where I burst into tears but just got on with it. For me, it was a huge learning curve because there’s a huge difference between visual impairment and being totally blind – especially when you’re skiing.”

The group was made up of elite athletes, parents, adrenaline junkies and teenagers. Some were born with mental and physical disabilities, others had survived an accident. Able-bodied helpers walked alongside.

The event’s organiser, Paul Gardner, works for Disabled Wintersport Australia. The organisation works with resorts, sports and recreation leaders and ski instructors to help disabled people enjoy the snow and to educate others in accommodating those with disabilities.

Some of the suggestions include using the right language to describe a person; larger writing on menus for the visually impaired; wheelchair access to buildings, toilets and between tables at restaurants; and, of course, better access to outdoor activities.

Ron Finneran, Australia’s first winter paralympian, had his chair strapped to a harness pulled by two men. One was Michael Milton, who only has one leg.

“A lot of people have a limit on what you can do but I think the expectations you have for yourself are what’s important,” he said.

The Paralympic track cyclist is just back from Beijing. He has used crutches to propel himself ever higher, having scaled Cradle Mountain in Tasmania and Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

This trip was about the mountains, he said, and though he did not say it, conquering them. “Every mountain is different in character and every day it’s different. When it snows, it muffles sound and makes everything serene and pristine but then you come on a windy day it’s completely different. You feel wild and alive.”

Sitting 2228 meters above sea level on a monument marking Australia’s highest point; Sauvage giggled. “Come on Ron, you can do it.” Four men were carrying Mr Finneran up seven stone stairs to the peak.
This article by Yuko Narushima contains both ‘traditional’ and ‘progressive’ elements, as determined by the Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller (1993) media models of disability and the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines (1994) and the categorisation could be argued strongly for both sides of the ledger. However, the researcher has categorised the article as ‘progressive’ because of the stronger ‘progressive’ elements in the article, including its primary frame. The ‘traditional’ media models of disability elements are also presented and will be discussed.

Primarily, the article has been classified ‘progressive’ as it satisfies Clogston’s ‘cultural pluralism’ model (1989, 1990, 1993).

Clogston, cited in Power (2007), defined the ‘cultural pluralism’ media model of disability as:

“The cultural pluralism: people with disability are seen as multifaceted and their disabilities do not receive undue attention.” (Power 2007, p. 113)

The Narushima article goes to lengths to highlight the multifaceted elements of the people featured in the article.

“The group was made up of elite athletes, parents, adrenaline junkies and teenagers. Some were born with mental and physical disabilities, others had survived an accident. Able-bodied helpers walked along side.”

It would be incorrect to say the article does not focus attention on disabilities but it is clearly framed as a story about an event to help mark International Day of People with a Disability. (It must be noted, the United Nation’s certified day in Australia is actually named International Day of People with Disability - the ‘a’ having been deleted from the title. This is significant because it recognizes that some people have multiple disabilities or impairments.)

The article largely embraces people-first language (Snow 2008) and is framed, particularly through its selection of quotes, to counter disability stereotypes like those highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines (Hume 1994).

An example of people-first language in the article is:
“Using wheelchairs and ski stocks, crutches and hand cycles, a hardy group of about 35 people and a guide dog set out yesterday to conquer alpine terrain to reach Australia’s highest peak.”

An example of how the story is framed to use quotes to counter media stereotypes of disability is:

“A lot of people have a limit on what you can do but I think the expectations you have for yourself are what are important,” he said.”

Most significantly, the article draws specific attention to the issue of disability representation and the use of language, among others, as areas in need of improved community education.

Some of the suggestions include using the right language to describe a person; larger writing on menus for the visually impaired; wheelchair access to buildings, toilets and between tables at restaurants; and, of course, better access to outdoor activities.

- Narushima, 2008

The final, yet significant, progressive qualities are article placement and photographic support.

According to newspaper layout theory (Wheildon 1986), the article is on the third most read page in the paper (page 3); it has a large (six-column) photograph to capture the reader’s attention and it is almost 500 words in length. When measured against all criteria, the article has significant editorial weight.

The traditional media models of disability elements are also significant. Most prominent is the ‘supercrip’ model of disability.

“The supercrip: the disabled person is portrayed as deviant because of “superhuman” feats or as “special” because he or she lives a regular life “in spite of” disability.” (Power 2007)

In essence, the article is about a group of people who climb to the top of Australia’s highest mountain, Mt Kosciuszko. The feat itself does not hold any great media
newsworthiness value (McKane 2006), as thousands of people climb Mt Kosciuszko every year. However, with the addition of people with disability and, significantly, the inclusion of champion Paralympians Louise Sauvage and Michael Milton, the story not only becomes newsworthy (McKane 2006) but becomes archetypical of the ‘supercrip’ media model of disability (Clogston 1989; 1990; 1993).

The presence of the ‘supercrip’ media model of disability is underlined by the picture that accompanies the article (above). The photograph is of Paralympian Michael Milton. The article says there were 35 participants in the trek but it is the shot of Milton, “… who only has one leg …”, using crutches and almost silhouetted against the mountain that was selected to run with the story.

The article also includes non-people-first language (Snow 2008):

“The organisation works with resorts, sports and recreation leaders and ski instructors to help disabled people enjoy the snow and to educate others in accommodating those with disabilities.”
The Damian McGill article was published in The South Coast Register on December 3, 2008, International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD). The article has been classified ‘progressive’, in accordance with the Clogston and Haller models. The article is largely in line with the ‘cultural pluralism’ media model of disability as it directly and indirectly attempts to represent people with disability as more than their disability.

Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993), as cited in Power (2007), defined the cultural pluralism media model of disability as:
“The cultural pluralism: people with disability are seen as multifaceted and their disabilities do not receive undue attention.” (Power 2007, p. 113)

The McGill article is aggressive in its progressive representation of people with disability. The first five sentences set the boundaries of the frame within which the article is written.

“Grace Kennedy wants people to be aware today - to know that many people in the world have a disability.

International Day of Disability is being celebrated today and Grace is happy she and many others have such an event.

It would be wrong to say the 14-year-old Vincentia High School student suffers from spina bifida. She has and lives with spina bifida but does not suffer from it.

Whilst happy to celebrate International Day of Disability, Grace does not want to be treated differently.”

The article is framed to deliver the message that Grace Kennedy has a disability but that Grace Kennedy is not her disability. The quote selection reinforces the message and the story’s frame.

“We should be treated equally and I don’t want to be separated from everyone else and be on my own.”

The story refers, necessarily, to Grace Kennedy’s spina bifida but it does not dwell on the disability. The article paints a ‘cultural pluralism’ picture through its references to Grace’s family life, her sporting achievements and her career ambitions.

“Grace wants to be a marine biologist when she leaves school.”

The ‘cultural pluralism’ media model of disability is reflected in the photograph that accompanies the article. The photograph of Grace Kennedy, her siblings and their pet dog pays scant regard to her leg splints. The reader is actually challenged to notice the ‘disability’.
The McGill article directly uses framing methods and people-first language as preferred by Hume (1994) and Snow (2008) when portraying people with disability.

“It would be wrong to say the 14-year-old Vincentia High student suffers from spina bifida. She has and lives with disability but she does not suffer from it.”

The article includes elements of the traditional media models of disability. Most notable is the contradictory headline: Disability won’t stop amazing Grace. The headline is in line with the traditional ‘supercrip’ media models of disability. The headline, in stark contrast to the body of the article, describes Grace Kennedy as “amazing”. The headline first draws the reader’s attention to Grace Kennedy’s disability, again in stark contradiction to the body of the article.

"Whilst happy to celebrate International Day of Disability, Grace does not want to be treated differently.”

“Grace’s siblings - Madeline, Annie and Oscar - make sure their sister is neither treated differently nor given any favouritism.”

The article, like others captured in this work, incorrectly refers to International Day of People with Disability. The McGill article refers to “International day of Disability”. This is significant as the use of a lower case ‘d’ in ‘day’ devalues the importance of the day. The lower case ‘d’ implies the day is like any other.
Case Studies (Television)

Eight television news items were selected to represent a cross-section of the 36 news items captured in the data collection period that were about people with disability and/or the issues they face (see Table 17 - below). The items were selected as they were illustrative of the items published in the study period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>TV station</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Journalist</th>
<th>Page/break</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>ModelTraditional (T) / Progressive (P)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>Danielle Post (Presenter)</td>
<td>SPORT (RVO)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (Presenter)</td>
<td>2nd Break (RVO)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>Sarah Cumming</td>
<td>2nd Break (Pkg)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Medical (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>Josh Murphy</td>
<td>2nd Break (Pkg)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Social pathology (T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Andrew Leahy</td>
<td>2nd Break</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Minority/civil rights (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>17.17.08</td>
<td>Tim Bailey</td>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Ned Hall</td>
<td>Sport (SOT)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>SBS</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>Janice Petersen (Presenter)</td>
<td>2nd Break (VSV)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Cultural pluralism (P)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of these items, four television can be coded ‘traditional’ and four ‘progressive’.
If McQuail and others’ newspaper theory of editorial weighting (McQuail 1989, Rosenstiel 2007) is applied in a television context, the item holds little editorial weight. The item runs just over 30 seconds in the sport break. The item does not lead the sport break and only precedes an item on junior sport. Editorial weight is largely dictated by size and placement of the article (McQuail 1989). The WIN News item is late in the bulletin and comparatively short. In a television context, size could be measured in minutes and seconds compared to column centimetres or word length. Placement relates to where the item appears in the bulletin, as opposed to its position on the page.

The WIN News item has been classified ‘traditional’ as it satisfies the criteria of Clogston and Haller’s ‘social pathology’ media model of disability and aligns itself with the stereotypical depiction of disability highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as important to “avoid”.

Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) considered a media item that represented people with disability as reliant on others to participate in the community as a ‘traditional’ depiction of disability because it reinforces the perception of ‘deviance’ or something other than normal. The key elements, as they apply to this television story, are highlighted in bold:

Clogston’s traditional foci (1989), as cited by Wall (2007), are:

(b) Traditional foci: ‘based on a deviance perspective, they consider the person with a disability as dysfunctional, because he or she is unable to function in an environment designed by or for people without disabilities. This includes articles about special attention paid to a disabled person focusing on the disability,
victimisation or disabled people, special employment, special education, charity or government support, medical or disease and rehabilitation.” (Wall 2007)

The WIN News item, while possessing elements of a progressive depiction of disability (i.e. sport content), is more strongly in line with Clogston’s ‘traditional’ foci.

The news item, despite being placed in sport, is largely about the success of a charity fundraiser held by The Disability Trust in the Illawarra. The fundraiser was, in fact, held to raise money to establish a soccer team but it is unlikely to be categorised as a pure sport story, despite its location in the WIN News sports break - a point best highlighted by the closing line:

“The day was all about giving back to the community and, of course, a mix of friendly competition with a whole lot of fun.”

Clogston and Haller’s media models of disability consider items that present people with disability as disadvantaged and reliant on the state to be ‘social pathology’ in nature. The WIN News item frames people with disability as reliant on charity to participate in society - in this instance “… to establish a soccer team”.

The Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines emphasise the importance of journalists avoiding the use of stereotypes.

“People with disability are objects of pity and charity.” (Hume 1994, p. 11)

The WIN News item is more about charity for people with disability than it is about sport. The images in the item serve to underline the emphasis on charity over the more progressive disability representation - sport. The item features images of charity golf players gulping alcoholic drinks in between holes. The tone of the item is more in line with the stereotype of “normal” people doing “what they can” to help people with disability and having “… a whole lot of fun.”

Significantly, there is no overt imagery of people with disability - the stereotype of people using wheelchairs and or guide dogs. It does make the researcher question whether there were any people with disability actually involved in the fundraising event, as the researcher suspects a golf player using a wheelchair would be too “great” an opportunity for a camera operator, journalist and or editor not to feature in the article.
This WIN News item has been categorised ‘traditional’ as it is representative of the ‘social pathology’ media model of disability. The ‘social pathology’ model of disability, as defined by Clogston (1989; 1990; 1993), is framed to represent people with disability as reliant on government and/or the community to be full participants in society. The WIN News item aligns itself with the ‘social pathology’ media model because it showcases a charity-driven event specifically for “… the region’s sick and disabled youngsters …” The news item directly refers to two schools for children with disability:

“Children from schools, including Parameadows and the Aspect School for Children with Autism”,

In so doing, it draws a line between the schools and the need for charities’, such as The KidzWish Foundation, to exist.

Emotive language is used in the news item to underline the deemed importance of such events:

“… youngsters from hospitals right throughout the region were provided with a special Christmas lunch, a gift from Santa and a much needed break from their often difficult daily routines.”

The language creates a frame of sympathy, if not pity, for the “… sick and disabled children” and, in so doing, is contrary to the recommendations of the Disability Council of NSW to avoid the use of stereotypes - in this instance - the stereotype of people with disability being objects of pity and charity (Hume 1994).
There are also elements of the traditional ‘medical’ media model of disability in that the item aligns people with disability with sickness. It must be noted, the charity event is run for children with disability and for children who are sick or injured and are spending time in hospital. It is therefore reasonable for the news item to report that fact. However, the alignment of children with disability and children who are sick serves to frame children with disability as being “sick” through association. Children with disability are not necessarily medically sick, but the media alignment of sickness and disability serves only to reinforce the image of disability as something that needs to be fixed through medical intervention (Clogston 1989, 1990, 1993; Haller 1993).

Significantly, the WIN News item does not include close-up images of the children with disability. The images in the 32-second item are largely of performers in the charity event. There are sweeping shots of the audience but the item does not include the stereotypical media images of children in wheelchairs or guide dogs and, in doing so, the alignment between sickness and disability is lessened.

The WIN News item is placed in the second break of the bulletin and, therefore, it has less editorial weight than an item run in the first break. The item is a newsreader voice-over that runs 32 seconds, a factor that reinforces its lighter editorial weight than if it featured an interview with a person with disability.
Case Study 13

Television station: Seven
Date: 25.11.08
Break: 2nd Break
Journalist: Sarah Cumming
Story: Australian-first surgery
Graphic: “Surgery success”

The Sarah Cumming item on Seven News has been categorised ‘traditional’ as it is an example of the medical media model of disability in which disability is presented as an illness or malfunction (Power 2007).

The item tells the story of a teenage girl who has undergone “Australian-first brain surgery” to treat an undiagnosed movement disorder. The operation involved surgeons placing electrodes in the 15-year-old girl’s head to “…jumpstart functions that had shut down”.

The item is representative of the ‘medical’ media model of disability as it frames disability as a ‘malfunction’ and something that needs to be fixed. Numerous people are quoted in the item and the quote selections serve to reinforce the traditional media model of disability.

“It’s as close to a miracle as someone like me can say.” - Doctor

“It’s just like they’ve given us our daughter back, so it’s amazing.” - Mother

“There are no other children in the world who have had this procedure performed and have responded so well.” - Doctor

The journalist’s script works to maintain the medical representation of disability and depicts the person with disability, in this instance, as being dead before the operation.

“It brought Katie back to life.”

The language is emotive and shaped to elicit admiration for the surgeons and the surgery (e.g. “Learning to walk again after breakthrough brain surgery” ) and pity for the
person with the disability (e.g. “Fifteen-year-old Katie has an undiagnosed movement disorder, she would thrash around uncontrollably - her only treatment was heavy sedation.”)

The images used in the item also align with the medical media model of disability. The opening shots in the 97-second (second-break) story are of the teenager using a walking frame in hospital and being assisted by nurses. The opening images include a close-up shot of the girl’s shaky legs. Medical imagery is continued throughout the package and includes still images of the teenage girl before surgery when: “Katie was so medicated, essentially she was unconscious for nearly 18 months.”

In stark contrast to the picture of gloom painted about the teenager’s pre-operation disability, the post-operation images are positive and culminate in a close-up shot of the teenager smiling at the camera. The story is framed to represent life with the disability before surgery as non-existent, and life post-surgery as miraculous and almost biblical: “It brought Katie back to life.” (See freeze-frames below).

IMAGES
TOP ROW: Katie shown as life-less prior to and during surgery.
BOTTOM ROW: Katie shown as ‘getting her life back’ post-surgery.
Significantly, there is no direct reference to disability in the news item. The teenager’s disability is represented as an undiagnosed condition and helps to strengthen the medical representation of disability as a “malfunction” (Power 2007).

Case Study 14

Television station: Ten
Date: 28.11.08
Break: 2nd Break
Journalist: Josh Murphy
Story: Young people with disability in aged care homes
Graphic: None

The Josh Murphy item in Ten News is representative of numerous items the researcher found difficult to categorise within the media model of disability established by Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller (1993). The item is a traditional representation of disability, as it is the story of a teenage boy with an acquired brain injury who has been “left languishing” in a nursing home.

The Murphy item is framed to highlight the victimisation of the teenager in the story and a lack of government support. It represents the teenager and his mother as victims.

“He acquired a brain injury in a motorcycle accident when he was 16 but treatment like this is rare because instead of being cared for in a rehabilitation centre the 19-year-old is in a nursing home.”

“The North Ryde aged home he’s in is good but just can’t provide the constant treatment Daniel needs to progress.”

Quotes selected to run in the item reinforce the victimisation frame of the story.

“No young person should be in an aged care facility - there should be places”
- Mother

‘I think they’ve been cast aside, forgotten and just left to fend for themselves.”
- Physiotherapist
The researcher gave consideration to categorising the item ‘medical’ under the Clogston and Haller media models. The item includes numerous terms and images that are largely medical-related. For example, the teenager and other people with disability are referred to as patients.

“There are two and a half thousand disabled people in nursing homes that should be in intensive rehabilitation, what’s worse is that the money is there to do it but just four people have been relocated for proper treatment.”

Two years ago an $80 million commonwealth-state program was intended to deliver ways for disabled youth to avoid languishing in nursing homes …

… The government says it’s working to accommodate patients but it’s taking time because different families have different needs - time though is not on everyone’s side.”

People-first language, championed by the likes of Snow (2008) and also highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines (Hume 1994) is not present in the Josh
Murphy item. The opening line of the news item is an example of the people-first language approach not being followed.

“A disabled Sydney teenager has been left languishing in a nursing home for three years because of state government red tape.” Josh Murphy, reporter (script)

The lack of people-first language contributes to the traditional media model of disability presented in Murphy’s item.

Significantly, however, the Ten News item is given consideration (yet not overwhelming) editorial weight because it is placed high in the hour-long bulletin’s second break and the news package runs 105 seconds.
The Andrew Leahy item on Ten News is an example of the progressive representation of people with disability in the news media. The Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller (1993) media models of disability define progressive items as journalism that “… included articles about discrimination, awareness, integration.” (Wall 2007)

The Leahy item is about an Australian federal government decision to overturn a ruling that had seen a German doctor and his family’s application for residency in Australia rejected because his son has Down Syndrome. The news item specifically addressed the question of legislated discrimination. The item, while a good news story, evolved from a bad news story (depending on perspective) - a highly sought after professional and his young family being evicted from Australia because the youngest member of the family, Lukas, has a disability.

“It was a gloomy outlook for the Moeller family, their appeal for residency rejected because 13-year-old Lukas has Down Syndrome.” (Leahy item)

When analysed against the Clogston and Haller media models, the Leahy item, in the researcher’s opinion, best satisfies the progressive minority/civil right model, as the decision to reject the residency application based on disability is an attack on civil rights - not dissimilar to the civil rights battle fought to secure the vote of women and equal opportunity for indigenous people.

“The minority/civil rights: people with disability are seen as members of a disability community, which has legitimate civil rights grievances.” (Haller 1994)
However, it could easily be argued that the item is also representative of other progressive models - primarily the legal and cultural pluralism models.

“The cultural pluralism: people with disability are seen as multifaceted and their disabilities do not receive undue attention;

The legal: people with disability are presented as having legal rights and possibly the need to sue to halt discrimination.” (Haller 1994)

The item is ‘progressive’ not only in terms of subject matter but in its framing. Leahy frames the story with images of a family at play, home and work. The first images in the story are of the doctor, Bernhard Moeller, playing table tennis with Lukas. This image represents a family unit, a family at play, and does not focus unnecessary attention on the boy’s disability. It is an image and frame that aligns well with the Clogston and Haller media models and meets the Disability Council of NSW Guidelines.

He strengthens the frame of an “average” family by avoiding overly emotive language and concise quote selection.

“While it is a special day for the Meoller family, the real winners are the residents of Horsham and the 50,000 people serviced by the Wimmera Base Hospital.

The internal medicine specialist and his family now looking at putting down their roots and becoming Australian citizens.

‘We will be able to stay here permanently and we will be able to set up our lives - so that is really good’.”

The Leahy item is also progressive in its use of people-first language. As Snow (2008) and others highlight, people-first language represents disability as something people have, not something people are.

“A German doctor and his family in Victoria who had their application for residency in Australia rejected because their son has Down Syndrome and was considered a burden on Australia’s finances.” (Leahy script)
As a second break story, the item does not carry as much editorial weight as one that appears in the first break. However, consideration needs to be given to a story’s prominence in an hour-long rather than half-hour long bulletin. It could be argued that a story that appears in the second break of an hour-long bulletin has greater editorial weight than a story that appears in the second break of a half-hour bulletin. An hour long bulletin allows greater editorial flexibility, particularly the capacity to fit in more stories. A story that appears in a second break of an hour-long bulletin could be directly correlated with an item that appears in the first break of a half-hour bulletin. The editorial weighting, therefore, is also aligned.

It must also be noted, the item is a television news package that runs 103 seconds. It can also be argued that a package of such length holds significant editorial weight and therefore has a progressive editorial frame of disability through its sheer volume, in line with the greater editorial weight given to a longer newspaper story (McQuail 1989).
The Tim Bailey item on Ten News has been classified ‘progressive’ when analysed against the criteria of Clogston and Haller’s media models of disability. The item was the live announcement of the winner of a recycling competition coordinated by the television station. The competition winner was an organisation that employed people with disability.

The question of whether the item should have been included in the research data collection was given due consideration. While the item is presented by the “weatherman”, it meets many of the criteria highlighted by McKane (2006) and Tangeman (2007) of newsworthiness, not the least being timeliness, and therefore the reportage or journalism involved is considered to be of a significant level and is justifiably included in the data analysis.

The Bailey item has been classified ‘cultural pluralism’ within the progressive media models of disability. The frame of the story is considered within the bounds of the ‘cultural pluralism’ model of disability because it draws limited attention to the disability aspect of the story and instead focuses attention on the multifaceted organisation and its staff.

The interview carried out by Bailey and the subsequent responses reflected the ‘cultural pluralism’ frame of the story.

"“We’ve just got a wonderful group of people here and the unique thing about these guys is they’ve got disabilities but we don’t focus on that - we focus on their ability.”"

- Wesley E-Recycling spokesman
The item was live to air and ran 160 seconds (weather report not included) and therefore represents considerable editorial weighting. While it could be argued a story in the weather break is almost the last item in the bulletin and low in editorial priority, the researcher considers the weather break to be one of the most anticipated and viewed aspects of any news bulletin and believes it is an exception to the standard approach of putting the most important items at the start of the bulletin. Further editorial weight is added to the story when consideration is given to the expense and logistics of broadcasting an item live from a location outside the news station.

There is greater expense on delivering the weather to our viewers than anything else in the bulletin. The weather has considerable editorial impact and ranks ahead of sport in what our viewers watch. It goes news, weather, sport. Ninety per cent of complaints are from people who have lost their local bulletins, are about the loss of weather details. It is a very important segment in any news bulletin.

- Chris Rickey, WIN Television National News Director

There are aspects of traditional media models of disability also found within the Bailey item and, significantly, elements highlighted by the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as to “be avoided”.

The item features images of three people (Bailey being one) standing in front of a seated group of other people. The presentations of winner’s cheque and plaque and the interviews are carried out between the three men who are standing (with their backs to the group of seated people). All the people seated are employees of the winning company and all have disabilities. The live interview is punctuated numerous times by the reporter spinning around and seemingly ordering the people who are seated to applaud.

“Now, tell us Lance … give him a clap … what you’re up to.” (Bailey script)

The physical structure of the presentation, some standing and some seated, combined with an authoritarian approach by the reporter to the employees is representative of the “eternal child” stereotype of disability highlighted by Hume (1994).

The stereotype is underlined in the live item by Bailey’s references to the employees as “this mob” and “biggest bunch of ratbags”. These terms are used to frame the people with
disability as “children” and would not be used if the winners of the competition did not have disabilities.

It is important to note, if the statement that included reference to the staff as “having disabilities” had not been included in the coverage, the majority of the viewing audience would only have seen a group of employees - not a group of employees with disabilities.
The Ned Hall item in ABC News has been categorised ‘cultural pluralism’ under the progressive models developed by Clogston and built on by Haller. Clogston’s ‘progressive’ foci includes news items that deal with disability and sport (1989). The ‘cultural pluralism’ model captures those news items that are framed to represent people with disability as multi-faceted and not defined by their disability (Clogston 1989).

In this instance, the ABC item covers the Blind Cricket Ashes. However, the item focuses largely on the controversy surrounding one of the better English cricketers - with allegations he can see more than has been declared.

Nathan Foy has scored 346 runs in the three games he has played in Australia - as a B1 classified player he has the most serious level of impaired vision and that means his score is doubled. But some who have seen him play question his disability.

- Hall script

The researcher considers the item progressive in its placement within the sports break. A more traditional media model of disability categorisation would be warranted if the item has been placed within the general news breaks of the bulletin - effectively placing dominant editorial weight on the controversy ahead of the sporting aspect of the story. While the Hall story does focus on the controversy, the progressive nature of the story’s placement within the sports break is considerable.

The weight of the sporting aspects of the story is enhanced by the selection of images used to deliver the sports package. The images are of skilled sportsmen playing their chosen sport at international level, including strong batting, bowling and fielding. The researcher considered the impact of the images and the scenario of someone watching the images without sound. Overwhelmingly, the images used in the story are representative
of top-level international sport and was a significant consideration in the categorisation process.

There are traditional aspects of media representation and framing of disability within the story. These aspects are not minor and therefore require consideration when the item is being classified.

Significantly, while the item appears in the sports break of the bulletin, there is no use of the seemingly mandatory ‘scorecard’ graphic in the cricket story. The Hall story contains only a fleeting reference to the outcome of the series and at no stage includes results from any of the matches played in the series and, most notably, the game played on the day of the report.

“It’s just finished, with **England taking the series 3-nil** but not without complaint by Australian supporters who are seeing red over the impressive performance of England’s star player.”

- Hall script

If the story was to be unequivocally categorised as sport and, therefore, progressive, a complete scorecard of the day’s results should have been included. The potential scenario of the match not being completed before the story was compiled does offer some justification for the absence of a scorecard but it is limited. There are many examples of a sport news item containing a “progress” scorecard in many sports, not just cricket.

Ironically, the Hall item draws direct attention to the priority placed on the controversy over the sporting outcome and, in so doing, shines a spotlight on the lack of sporting statistics within its coverage.

“Today’s game is the last of this Ashes series and the World Blind Cricket Council is upset that the focus is on classifications and not cricket.” (Hall script)

The researcher also considered as significant and ‘traditional’ the use of cliché and pun in the ABC item. The most notable cliché was in the second line of the story:

“It’s just finished, with England taking the series 3-nil but not without complaint by Australian supporters who are **seeing red** over the impressive performance of England’s star player.”
The “seeing red” cliché’ was echoed in the over-the-shoulder graphic used during the newsreader’s introduction to the story. The Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines urge journalists to avoid the use of cliché in the representation of people with disability as it serves to reinforce stereotypes and are a barrier to inclusiveness (Hume 1994).

A question of the significance of people-first language is raised by the title of the cricket series being covered by the ABC. The series is called the “Blind Cricket Ashes” and Hall and any journalist tasked with reporting the cricket would be justified in referring to the players as “blind cricketers”, as opposed to “cricketers who are blind”, the latter option manifest in the people-first language approach championed by the likes of Snow (2008) and highlighted within the media guidelines like those issued by the Disability Council of NSW (Hume 1994).
Case Study 18

Television station: SBS
Date: 3.12.08
Break: 2nd Break
Journalist: Janice Petersen (presenter)
Story: International Day of People with Disability
Graphic: None

The SBS News item has been categorised ‘progressive’ under Clogston (1989, 1991, 1993) and Haller (1993) models. Within the ‘progressive’ category, the researcher considers the item is representative of the ‘cultural pluralism’ model as it represents people with disability as multifaceted and more than their disability.

The Janice Petersen-presented piece is another example of an item that contains both progressive and traditional elements. The SBS item is about an event held to mark International Day of People with Disability and, therefore, clearly focuses attention on disability. The researcher has given due consideration to this point but considers the item to fall with the ‘progressive’ and ‘cultural pluralism’ definitions as it predominantly focuses on the multifaceted aspects of disability.

The item is framed to represent people with disability as more than their disability. Significantly, this approach is in line with the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines which encourages journalists not to use stereotypes to represent people with disability (Hume 1994).

The item’s script and images work together to represent people with disability as more than their disability.

“Here community members gathered around the country to recognise the achievements and the abilities of people with a disability.”
- Petersen script

As noted earlier, the item also contains traditional elements in the context of the media models of disability. Most notably, the item includes an interview with Paralympian Kurt
Fearnley. The inclusion of Fearnley exemplifies the ‘supercrip’ media model of disability and stereotype.

“The supercrip: the disabled person is portrayed as deviant because of ‘superhuman’ feats or as ‘special’ because he or she lives a regular life ‘in spite of’ disability,” (Power 2007, p. 113)

It must be noted, Fearnley was identified as a spokesman for the International Day of People with Disability event and he was the only person allowed to speak on behalf of the event organiser. That said; the item featured many people with disability and showed them in a variety of lights. There were many potential interview options for the journalist but Fearnley, the ‘supercrip’, was selected. There is room to argue Fearnley was also selected to speak because he is an articulate media performer. It is also necessary to note Fearnley’s statement in the item is in line with the progressive cultural pluralism model of disability.

“NSW young Australian of the year and Paralympian Kurt Fearnley says people with disability should be represented in all aspects of daily life.

‘I think that days like this are about trying to rectify that - trying to highlight people with disability - trying to celebrate their contribution to the community and trying to increase that’.”

- Petersen script

The item runs 45 seconds in the second break and therefore it has lesser editorial weight than news packages that run in the first break. While the researcher considers the representation of people with disability as multifaceted individuals (a progressive characteristic) to be the predominant feature of the item, the decision to run it as a short piece in the second break is a more traditional media framing of disability.

Conclusion

The case studies in this chapter have allowed the researcher to focus on ‘how’ newspaper journalists frame stories about people with disability and the issues they face.

The ‘how’ question has been further answered by close inspection of the articles in the case study section. The traditional representation is exemplified in the Xanthie Kleinig...
article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (9.12.08). As this chapter discussed, the article contains strong traditional representation of disability in the media. The article uses the pity/charity frame of disability representation and is supported by the imagery the consumer is frequently exposed to - a sports star (former in this case) pictured with cute little children with disability. The underlying message in this article is ‘support the charity’, the story is framed to elicit the feelings of empathy, sympathy and, indeed, pity, for the children involved. Conversely, it is worth noting, the article reinforces the representation of the sports star, in this case Steve Waugh, as inspirational and almost superhuman.

Similarly, the chapter focused attention on the progressive representation of disability highlighted and discussed in preceding chapters. The newspaper articles captured in the data collection period reflected a capacity of the print news media to work within the progressive frame of disability. The use of the progressive frame is exemplified in the Damian McGill article in *The South Coast Register* (3.12.08) about teenager Grace Kennedy. The article adopts the cultural pluralism progressive frame of disability defined by Clogston and Haller. The article uses clear and concise language to represent Grace as a person who is multifaceted. The article, through its selection of quotes, also allows Grace to argue the case for disability not to receive undue attention - particularly in the case where a person’s disability in no way impacts the angle of the story.

This chapter has built on the findings about television news coverage of disability discussed and analysed in Chapter 5. As was revealed in the earlier chapter, the majority of the television news items interrogated in this research (66.6%) were delivered in traditional frame of disability, according to the Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995) media models. The case study analysis has shone a light on ‘how’ these frames are delivered in televisions news. The traditional frame is exemplified in the Josh Murphy item on Ten (28.11.08). The item walked the line between several traditional models of disability, primarily the medical and social pathology. The researcher considered the majority of the article was dedicated to asking for increased government support people with disability and therefore it was coded ‘social pathology’. The item was traditional in its frame and stereotypical in its language. The Murphy item was framed to elicit empathy, if not outrage in its viewer. The case study provided an avenue to analyse the ‘how’ and the ‘why’ - the item clearly a call to battle for people with disability ‘languishing’ in nursing homes.
The Andrew Leahy item on Ten (26.11.08), however, is representative of the progressive television new stories captured in the data collection period. At its heart, the Leahy story was about discrimination on the grounds of disability - a family seemingly being denied residency in Australia because one son has Down Syndrome. The Leahy story, despite its capacity to be stereotypical - was progressive because it dealt with the issue of discrimination and it did not dwell unnecessarily on the disability.

The case studies highlighted television news stories about disability are predominantly found outside the editorially-significant first break and the majority of newspaper articles on people with disability and/or the issue they face are given significant editorial weight but largely presented in a ‘traditional’ frame.
Chapter 7: Interview Analysis

Building on the information gathered through the case studies in Chapter 6, the qualitative research continues in this chapter through the analysis of a series of interviews carried out by the researcher with people who have, or potentially can, influence the representation of people with disability in the media.

The researcher has interviewed journalists, disability and media academics and disability advocates in an effort to answer the fundamental questions that underpin this work, namely: why do journalists apply particular frames and what impact does that media coverage have on community perceptions of people with disability? Interviews carried out with journalists and others also allow the researcher to further examine how journalists use frames to depict people with disability in the media, including whether the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines inform their decision-making.

The rationale adopted in the selection of people to be interviewed in this section was explained in detail in this work’s methodology section. However, to synopsise the methodology, journalists were identified through the data collection stage. The journalists who were identified as being responsible for an item that specifically dealt with people with disability or the issues they face were compiled into lists, according to medium (see Tables 8 and 13a). These lists were used as the primary reference for formal interview requests. In all, 53, journalists were directly or indirectly approached (through station management or newspaper management) for interview. While numerous journalists indicated an interest in participating in the process, only seven journalists were prepared to follow through with an interview. One of the journalists chose to remain anonymous and has subsequently been referred to as Journalist A. Most of the interviews were carried out on the telephone but two chose to submit their answers to a series of questions in writing.

A less formal strategy was adopted in the selection of media and disability academics to be interviewed for this chapter. Throughout the literature review and general research process for this work the researcher identified and noted a series of academics, primarily Australian, who had written on the representation of people with disability in the media. These academics were discussed with the researcher’s supervisor for suitability. All academics approached for interview agreed to take part in the research and none chose to remain anonymous.
It was also considered important to include the voice of disability advocates in the discourse on the representation of people with disability. The selection of interviewees was informal. The researcher believed it important to secure an interview with the Australian Disability Commissioner, Graeme Innes, and a representative of the Disability Council of NSW. Innes represents people with disability, including presenting their concerns about areas of discrimination to the Australian government. The Disability Council of NSW commissioned Joan Hume to produce its media guidelines - the guidelines underpinning much of this research (Hume 1994). Therefore, it was considered important to interview the chairperson of the Disability Council of NSW, Andrew Buchanan.

The researcher also sought people to provide the voice of non-government organisations. There was no formal identification process but the researcher’s personal experience with Family Advocacy was used to inform the selection. People with Disability (Australia) CEO Michael Bleasdale and Family Advocacy Director Katherine Hogan were approached and agreed to take part in the research interviews.

It is significant to note the researcher did not specifically set out to interview people with disability. While some people interviewed in the process, Graeme Innes for example, have disability, this was not a selection criteria. The opinion of people with disability on the representation of disability in the media is potentially an area of further investigation, one that is beyond this work, as would be an investigation into the perception of disability by journalists.
Disability advocates

Of the people interviewed, the disability advocates were the most uniform and stinging in their criticism of media portrayal of people with disability on the media. While only four disability advocates (Graeme Innes - Disability Discrimination Commissioner; Michael Bleasdale - CEO People With Disability (Australia); Andrew Buchanan - Chairperson Disability Council of NSW; Catherine Hogan - Director Family Advocacy) were interviewed, the number of people they represent, directly and indirectly, is considerable.

The most consistent message delivered by the disability advocates was about the stereotypical frames used by journalists to represent people with disability. The disability advocates highlighted news media reliance on heroic and tragic frames of disability as a point of continued concern. The perspective of the disability advocates is represented in the quotes below:

Generally it’s a tragedy, you know, there are usually lots of words like ‘sufferers’ and ‘suffers from’ and burden of’. And my perspective of it is generally people with disability are portrayed in the media in a very negative way, like burdens on their family, burdens on society, people that are just needy and need something. You know, they need fundraising, they need more money, need, need, need.

- Catherine Hogan, Director Family Advocacy

“I think that’s the kind of hero message which is really damaging because I think it tends to reinforce the fact that there are few heroes and there’s a multitude of no-hopers.”

- Michael Bleasdale, CEO People With Disability (Australia)

People with disabilities are almost inevitably depicted in the media as victims or heroes. We are neither of those. We are just people who want to be agents of our own destiny. What that does is reinforces the negative way in which society put limits on people with disability.

- Graeme Innes - Disability Discrimination Commissioner

Bleasdale, however, contended that the frames journalists choose to put around people with disability and the issues they face are more a reflection of society at large than a deliberate misrepresentation by the news media. Bleasdale considers journalists to be
part of a society at ease with what it knows and more than happy to maintain the status quo until such time as there is a significant paradigmatic shift.

The perception of people (with disability) in the media is not wildly different obviously from people in the community - which is to have a disability is God awful, you know, would rather death and what we should be doing is providing special stuff for these people because of their terrible predicament. I mean, that’s really the way it’s portrayed and the reason it’s portrayed like that is what journalists, as well as the rest of the community, believe.

- Michael Bleasdale, CEO People With Disability (Australia)

Hogan considered the representation of people with disability by journalists to be guided at a subconscious level. The Family Advocacy director believed journalists are as much influenced by their surroundings and their understanding of the world (and subsequently disability) as the rest of society.

It’s the societal views and societal attitudes that influences so much of what journalists write and do, concerns and reinforces, and it’s a rare journalist, I think, that has had that consciousness-raising and deliberately thinks that I’m not going to portray people like that in anything I write. I am going to have a different approach to it. I don’t think I know anybody who does that.

- Catherine Hogan, Director Family Advocacy

The disability advocates’ frustration is best represented by Innes and his professed desire to quench the news media appetite for the heroic and tragic stereotypes of disability. The Australian Disability Discrimination Commissioner is concerned that despite one in five Australians living with some degree of disability (ABS 2004), the news media does not use a frame of inclusion.

There isn’t enough coverage of disability issues as just part of life. I mean, if there was I would be a lot busier in the media than I am as Discrimination Commissioner. I spend a lot of my efforts trying to push stories out there that I think are good stories and relevant stories and find it hard to encourage media interest.

- Graeme Innes, Disability Discrimination Commissioner
Significantly, the disability advocates acknowledged their role, potential or otherwise, in addressing the use of the stereotype by the news media in regard to people with disability. Innes and Bleasdale are particularly strong in their belief that advocacy groups need to do more to lift awareness of disability among journalists and to educate the news media about cultural diversity and inclusive language.

“… we as a disability community need to continue to educate the media to remove those negative images as well.”
- Graeme Innes, Disability Discrimination Commissioner

… it needs to be people with disability devising the strategy both in terms of being clear about terminology, being clear about depictions because along with that comes the authenticity of consultation and representation of people with disability which I think has to lie behind anything like that.
- Michael Bleasdale, CEO People With Disability (Australia)

Innes expressed concern at the charity model of disability fostered by the disability service providers and considered it a contributing factor to the news media use of heroic and tragic stereotypes. The Disability Discrimination Commissioner marked out a clear delineation between disability advocates and disability service providers. He considered that disability service providers contribute to the reliance of the news media on stereotypes as they tended to reinforce the image of people with disability always being in need of handouts - government and community support.

Disability organisations themselves need to be far more aware that the information they put into the community can negatively impact on people with disability and need to show positive images of people with disability. People with disability achieving, people with disability getting on with their life.
- Graeme Innes, Disability Discrimination Commissioner

Hogan too is concerned about the clash between the reliance of disability service providers on charity and how this serves to feed the appetite for stereotypes with the news media - the representation of people with disability as “needy”, for example.

Let’s make people look as pathetic and as needy as possible so that we encourage people to give us money. It’s part of the same cycle … and we’ll only use the
pretty ones as well. We can’t use the ugly ones in the wheelchair because that doesn’t work.

- Catherine Hogan, Director Family Advocacy

Poignantly, the man at the helm of the organisation that created the media guidelines that so much of this research is based on, Andrew Buchanan, believes there has been progress in some sections of the media, but there is still a reliance on the traditional frames of disability. The Disability Council of NSW chairman said the likes of 60 Minutes and A Current Affair perpetuated stereotypes of disability. He suggested the deadline-driven structure of news and current affairs programs precluded the possibility of such stereotypes disappearing from the screen.

“I think it is much safer for them to do so. You know, they have fallen into a category where it’s quick, easy. They can grab it and it’s an emotional heart render/tearer, so they perceive.”

- Andrew Buchanan, Chairman Disability Council of NSW

Interestingly, Buchanan suggested the representation of people with disability in the news and current affairs media did not necessarily align with contemporary community/general public understanding of disability.

I think sometimes commercial media, particularly TV, under-rate or over emphasise the victim mentality to the detriment to the intelligence of their constituency. I think that the viewing and the listening audience have become much more discerning, savvy and demanding for intellectual and intelligent programming rather than for the mass media.

- Andrew Buchanan, Chairman Disability Council of NSW
Academics

Interviews were carried out with five academics who have written in the field of media representation of people with disability, particularly in Australia. Interviews were completed with Associate Professor Helen Meekosha, Professor Gerard Goggin, Professor Andrew Jakubowicz, Emeritus Professor Des Power and Dr Katie Ellis.

Ass. Prof. Helen Meekosha - The University of NSW. Leading Australian academic writer in feminism disability studies; instrumental in the establishment of the Social Relations of Disability Research Network (1996)

Prof. Gerard Goggin - The University of NSW. Has written extensively on disability representation in the media and, largely, in collaboration with the late Christopher Newell. He is interested in disability and research policy, particularly covering technology and media. Goggin and Newell’s second book Disability in Australia: Exposing a Social Apartheid (2005) won the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Arts Non-Fiction prize.

Prof. Andrew Jakubowicz - University of Technology Sydney. Heads the Social and Political Change Academic Group in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Has published widely in the fields of diversity (including disability), social media and new media. Prof. Jakubowicz has also collaborated in his disability writing with Ass. Prof. Helen Meekosha.

Emeritus Prof. Des Power - Griffith University. Has published extensively about people who are deaf and people with disability and the representation of people with disability in the media. He is currently researching the history of signing deaf people in Australia and methods used in Australian schools for people who are deaf.

Dr Katie Ellis - Murdoch University. Received a PhD for work on disability and media; wrote Disabling Diversity: The Social Construction of Disability in 1990s Australian National Cinema, 2008. Her research interests include disability, cinema, and digital and networked media covering issues of representation and social inclusion.
While the interviews covered a wide terrain, the researcher was most interested to garner the academic perspective on why journalists frame stories about people with disability a certain way and what impact those frames had on the audience. These academic interviews also provided an opportunity to gather some qualitative data on the significance of media guidelines on the representation of people with disability and the value of prescriptive techniques, like people-first language (Snow 2008).

One major question of this work is: why do journalists apply particular frames to stories about people with disability and the issues they face? A theme in the responses given by academics when asked this question was “because they have to”. The academics agreed journalists apply frames to stories about people with disability because they need to be able to make sense of their own worlds and, therefore, be able to explain it to their respective audiences. However, it was with interest the researcher noted that the academics did not believe this was the exclusive territory of stories about people with disability. Power and Goggin, for example, considered the use of frames as a staple of the journalist’s craft.

“…they have to frame a story some way or another, otherwise it probably wouldn’t be intelligible.”

- Emeritus Prof. Des Power

“I think in some ways journalists doing that are representative of where society is still at and so I think in that sense that we all apply frames to various situations to make sense of the world.”

- Prof. Gerard Goggin

Is it, therefore, a criticism of journalists to highlight the fact they apply frames to their stories? Journalists are tasked with compiling and disseminating information in a form that is intelligible and palatable to the audience. If Power’s view is representative of a broader perspective, then the application alone of frames to news media stories is not only acceptable but, to a large degree, necessary for a clear message to be delivered, rather than a point of detraction.

The focus, therefore, must turn to what frames journalists put on stories about people with disability and why those frames are adopted. It is at this point the academics are far less forgiving of journalism in practice. As was the observation of disability advocates
interviewed for this work and discussed earlier in this chapter, academics are of the belief that journalists rely too heavily on a small selection of frames (or models) to represent people with disabilities and the issues they face.

To a large degree these frames are represented in Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller’s (1993, 1995) traditional media models of disability.

Like the disability advocates, the disability media academics were, largely, of one mind when asked to discuss the frames journalists use to represent people with disability. The academics observed the frames “hero” and “tragedy” were the dominant feature of news items about people with disability and the issues they face.

Nothing much has changed in the last 20 years. It still tends to be tragedy and superhero and that just carries on. You only have to watch *Australian Story* … I quite like *Australian Story*, I think it’s quite a good piece of journalism but if they do disability, it’s usually superhero or tragedy, it’s not a mixture.

- Ass. Prof. Helen Meekosha

“I suspect that the majority of journalists don’t have any real bias or strong opinions about disability except the, you know, ‘oh poor things’ ones that are pretty prevalent.”

- Emeritus Prof. Des Power

Jakubowicz differed somewhat from his academic colleagues on the question of representation and models. He considered the question of disability framing to be relatively inconsequential and took greater umbrage at the level of disability coverage in the media, aligning with the observations of Tanner et al (2003).

So I think that for the most part I guess I would be one of the people who would say that the expectation of people with disability is so low so that it is hard to make any serious comments about how they are typically represented because typically they are not represented.

- Prof. Andrew Jakubowicz

As observed by Power, the academics largely agreed about the lack of planning involved in the framing of news media stories on people with disabilities and the issues they face. It was observed that journalists may well be charged with reporting on the world in which
they were still a part and their reportage innately and subconsciously reflected that societal inclusion.

“I still think that is very embedded because those are still the kind of dominant frames in our society, really. I don’t think journalists are at all unusual.”
- Prof. Gerard Goggin

“… you could probably count that as another reason why journalists write about disability the way they do in that they perceive that there are accepted views out there in the public and they write to reflect those.”
- Emeritus Prof. Des Power

Power contends that journalists reflect mainstream society as much as they are a part of it and this is represented in the use of disability metaphors in our everyday language (Power interview). He claims society’s use of terms such as “blind as a bat” and “lame duck” only serve to entrench a clichéd and blasé approach to the use of disability language and journalists, therefore, cannot be overly criticised if the words and frames they use to represent disability align with that which is generally accepted in wider mainstream society.

I make a big thing about metaphor … but they are so ingrained in the language generally that it is almost impossible to avoid it and although it can be denigratory at times, I don’t think they [journalists] are really intending it, but they are just ingrained in it that the phrases keep coming out.
- Emeritus Prof. Des Power

If, as the academics interviewed for this work contend, journalists use particular frames to depict people with disability because the journalists are reflecting their own experience and understanding of disability in the context of society, what is the impact of this representation on the reading, listening and viewing audience? It would appear, in a clear ‘what came first?’ scenario, that journalists use particular frames of disability because they are reflecting mainstream society and society’s understanding of disability is influenced by its representation in the news media. It could be, therefore, argued that there is little impact on society by the use of a small set of media frames of disability (Power interview).
I have moments where I suspect none at all [impact on society] because, again, the metaphor is so ingrained in the community that they just accept it and take it for granted without realising that in fact if they accept terms like ‘suffering from paraplegia’ or whatever that they are in a sense exacerbating the problem … I don’t think articles have that much effect.

- Emeritus Prof. Des Power

I think it is another instance where you’ve just got the sort of dominant view of disability being reinforced, so I don’t know that my view if the journalists themselves just seem to be just part of a cultural framing of disability of which, if you read literature, you watch movies, read the newspapers, you are getting a picture of disability presented.

- Prof. Gerard Goggin

Meekosha contends the mainstream news media does reinforce stereotypes through the use and, at times, reliance on the limited frames and/or ‘traditional’ models of disability defined by Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller (1993, 1995).

The media constantly reinforces these sort of common assumptions about the way we want to live and what we believe in and so on … The ones that you are looking at do fall into that category of reinforcing stereotypes and sort of hysterical depiction and so on. And people buy that, we know people buy it.

- Ass. Prof. Helen Meekosha

The academics, however, do not speak with one voice on all the issues addressed through the interview process. Significantly, there was disagreement on the subject of people-first language. Snow and others consider people-first language to be of paramount importance if people with disability are to be considered more than their disability (Snow 2008). However, the academics interviewed in this research had varied opinions on the importance or priority that should be given to people-first language.

Power agreed with the principle of people-first language “in general” but highlighted the position of ‘Deaf people’ as a divergence from the rule. Power used the term “deaf people” throughout his interview and was at pains to explain why - referring to and drawing a line between upper case ‘Deaf people’ and lower case ‘deaf people’.
Essentially, capital D deaf people are signing deaf people. Deafness is normal, it is not a disability and we do not wish to be logged in with the lower case deaf people or hard of hearing deaf … the capital D deaf community [says] ‘no, I am a Deaf person’ … ‘I wish to be known as a Deaf person’.

- Emeritus Prof. Des Power

Lower case deaf, people who have got a mild hearing loss or who get hard of hearing or even very deaf because of advancing conditions, they are in an entirely different category in the view of capital D signing deaf people.

- Emeritus Prof. Des Power

While Power could see some value in using people-first language when suitable, Meekosha was dismissive of the practice.

People-first, maybe I should be an academic first, maybe I should be a sister first. I find it very strange language ‘people with disability’ and I would just rather be completely out there and say ‘yes, I’m disabled’.

- Ass. Prof. Helen Meekosha

Meekosha is dismissive of people-first language apparently for the same reason the British disabled community was when it decided against adopting the practice (Bleasdale interview).

I’m certainly disabled when I go along Oxford Street for example and I can’t get in a building. I feel very disabled when I get to Virgin Blue, for example, and they won’t take me because I’m not travelling with a nurse. I feel very disabled when people in the local Woolworths say I shouldn’t be there because I’m blocking the aisles with my wheelchair. I feel very disabled, so I am disabled and that’s fine.

- Ass. Prof. Helen Meekosha

Meekosha, to a large degree, aligns herself with the social model of disability when she dismisses people-first language. The social model of disability, as discussed earlier in this work, contends that society disables people with impairment. Meekosha’s preference for ‘disabled people’ ahead of ‘people with disability’ highlights the impact of a disabbling society. Disability advocate Michael Bleasdale points to the United Kingdom as the birthplace of the social model of disability and its determination to use language that reflected
the model (Bleasdale interview). Meekosha’s dismissal of the people-first language is echoed in Bleasdale’s explanation of the United Kingdom’s approach.

They use the term “disabled people” and it’s a very strongly political term [in] that people who are disabled by the conditions of society, and they use that term “disabled people” with a deal of identity pride as well as making a political statement.”

- Michael Bleasdale, CEO People With Disability (Australia

As there are differences among academics on the importance or priority that should be placed on the use of people-first language, there is also an academic schism about the value of media guidelines on disability. This work has sought to assess whether journalists adhere to existing guidelines on the representation of people with disability. In particular, this work has focused on the guidelines developed by Hume for the Disability Council of NSW (Hume 1994). However, Jakubowicz, Meekosha and Goggin question the need for, and impact of, such guidelines. Meekosha is particularly strong in her questioning of guidelines in the area of disability representation.

Guidelines are minimal; they barely impact at all I would say. I think it is much deeper than the failure of the education system, I think it’s a fundamental problem with society which does not incorporate the abnormal.

- Ass. Prof. Helen Meekosha

Meekosha contends there is no place for media guidelines that attempt to dictate to journalists how they should use the tools of their trade - words.

What I dislike about guidelines is it tells you to say people-first. I actually don’t care on one level about language; I care more about action and lived experiences and so on. So what I don’t like about guidelines is that there is almost this insistence that you say this and you don’t say that. Who says, where is the authority, has there been a poll where so many people want this said or that said? I think this will just push journalists further away because I turn up and call myself a ‘disabled person’ and they all look in their guidelines and say I’m wrong.

- Ass. Prof. Helen Meekosha
Disability advocate Michael Bleasdale, it must be noted, would contend there was a ‘poll’ taken in Australia on People-first language. He claims a national conference in 1988 debated the use of ‘people with disability’ versus ‘disabled people’ and the decision was made to use people-first language.

… I did this myself when I used to run a network of disability issues across Australia and we had an international conference, and that was one of the themes … We had that discussion, we had that debate and it was very strongly asserted here, and this was in 1988, that we want the People-first terminology. It’s now moved from “people with disabilities” to “people with disability”, which helps confer that idea that disability is a socially configured problem.

- Michael Bleasdale, CEO People With Disability (Australia)

Goggin also challenges the importance of guidelines on the spectrum of disability representation discourse. He contends media guidelines on disability have value as potential awareness-raising devices but little else.

It can be useful in getting people to stop and think about why they are reporting, say, ‘wheelchair bound’ or various other things or using language that emphasises how heroic they are or something in that context, where it wouldn’t be applied to someone else who didn’t have a disability.

- Prof. Gerard Goggin

Goggin, however, also suggests guidelines may do more harm than good and proponents of such guidelines risk quashing discussion about disability in the media through journalistic fear of using the wrong word or phrase.

I think the language is important but I think it is a bit overdone and if that’s the only contribution to guidelines then I think it’s problematic. My sense is that we need more creativity around the language and that it’s probably better for people to engage in the conversation around disability than feel overly reverential or nervous about saying the wrong thing.

- Prof. Gerard Goggin

Goggin’s sentiment is supported by Jakubowicz, who contends the discussion about stereotype, word choice and representation as prescribed by guidelines could potentially draw an unjustified level of attention.
The guidelines seem to have had enough of an impact so that you don’t stand up and scream as much now as one might have done some years ago and the issues now have much more to do with exclusion than they do with stereotyping and characterisation.

- Prof. Andrew Jakubowicz

Jakubowicz, like Goggin, sees media guidelines as a starting point.

“They have a, I guess you would call it, threshold function in that where they are systematically or consistently breached, it gives people who are advocates of better representation a bit of a lever.”

- Prof. Andrew Jakubowicz

Ellis, however, argues media guidelines on the representation of people with disability have a role to play and, as Goggin also acknowledges, awareness-raising is a significant element of that role.

Media guidelines are an important way to highlight the need to think these ideas through and question identities, including disability … Although media guidelines are not enforceable, if read they can positively influence the way journalists frame stories by suggesting an alternative angle.

- Dr Katie Ellis

It must be noted, Ellis concedes that media guidelines on the representation of people with disability are just one of many elements journalists and news editors have to consider. She contends, as do McQuail (1989) and McKane (2006), that a number of other considerations may outweigh good intentions when journalists and news editors are framing a news item.

… while television producers may have good intentions regarding representing marginalized groups, commercial pressures can prevent them from presenting stories that don’t adopt certain formula.

- Dr Katie Ellis

This point is reflected in Meekosha’s criticism of disability representation in the ABC’s Australian Story (Meekosha interview). While the ABC is not a ‘commercial’ entity, in
the sense that it is government-owned, it can be argued it is still subject to the commercial pressures Ellis refers too - particularly in regard to television ratings. Meekosha believes *Australian Story* has a formula when it represents disability and it could be argued, as *Australian Story* is one of the ABC’s award-winning and popular programs ([http://www.abc.net.au/austory/austory_awards.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/austory/austory_awards.htm)), it is a ‘winning’ formula. This success, however, is despite, according to Meeksoha, the program’s reliance on the use of stereotypes of disability - heroic and tragic frames - that are in clear conflict with the recommendations of media guidelines such as those issued by the Disability Council of NSW.
Journalists

Interviews were carried out with seven journalists who represented a cross-section of the newspapers and television stations included in the research. All but one of the journalists were prepared to have their names included in the research. Interviews were completed with:

- Steve Lewis - The Sydney Morning Herald
- Michelle Hoctor - The Illawarra Mercury
- William Verity - The Illawarra Mercury
- Damian McGill - The South Coast Register
- Ned Hall - ABC Television
- Malcolm Brown - The Sydney Morning Herald
- Journalist A - Television journalist (anonymous)

For all the textual analysis carried out by academics on the way news journalists represent people with disability, the reasons for it and the impact of it, it is reasonable to argue the greatest insight into the working journalists is found through discussion with working journalists. Qualitative case study research opens the window to discourse because it allows researchers the flexibility to follow particular lines of enquiry that may, up until such time as an interview question was asked and answered, have been unforeseen by the interview participants. The researcher found this to be the case in the interviews carried out with journalists for this work. While there was a backbone of structured questions posed to all participants, there was flexibility by design in the interview process.

Of the questions asked, one would appear eminently best answered by the working journalist - why do journalists use particular frames to represent people with disability and the issues they face? The question assumes a level of acknowledgement by journalists that they use ‘frames’. It would be presumptuous to ask journalists why they use certain frames of disability without first eliciting an acknowledgement from the journalists that they use frames at all and if, indeed, they concur with academic Des Power’s observation:

“… they have to frame a story some way or another, otherwise it probably wouldn’t be intelligible.

- Emeritus Prof. Des Power
The question of whether journalists use frames in their stories produced a schism in opinion. While some journalists, like *The Illawarra Mercury*’s Michelle Hoctor, acknowledge they construct their stories within frames:

“The frame would be dictated by the aim of the story.”
- Michelle Hoctor, *The Illawarra Mercury*

Others indicated there was a time and place for the use of frames within a news story:

“Journalists do sometimes apply “frames” to stories, but not always, just as non-journalists do in conversation or other interactions.”
- Journalist A

While there were differences in opinion about the use of frames by news journalists, there was considerable agreement of the approach taken by journalists to stories about people with disability. Newspaper journalist Damian McGill was unequivocal and considered the capacity to identify a frame and construct a news story frame an essential item in a journalist’s toolbox (McGill interview). When asked “why do journalists apply particular frames to stories about disability?” McGill said:

Because they think people will read the piece if it’s a sob story. Maybe they will, maybe they won’t. People do like to read about positive things.
- Damian McGill, *The South Coast Register*

McGill reflected the argument put by many in this work, namely that journalists use limited frames to represent people with disability - primarily the heroic and tragic frames. Verity, too, believed the frames used by journalists to represent disability were limited and reliant on the use of cliché and stereotype.

Disability in the news is largely represented through cliché … the cliché that we are all happy with in regard to disabled people [is that they] are brave, they are courageous, they are good people. They are good, courageous and or victims.
- William Verity, *The Illawarra Mercury*

“… normally it’s someone triumphing over a disability or as a sad event.”
- Malcolm Brown, *The Sydney Morning Herald*
The Verity and Brown reflections on the limited frames used in stories on disability align with the observations of academics, including Meekosha, Power and Goggin, and disability advocates, including Bleasdale and Innes. The journalists’ observations are also an endorsement of Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller’s (1993, 1995) media models of disability. Significantly, however, Verity considered the use of cliché and stereotype not the sole domain of stories about people with disability (Verity interview).

Verity offered an insight into why journalists use certain frames to represent people with disability. His observations again align with those of academics featured in this chapter, most notably the contributions of Power and Goggin. Verity contends the media “has to be a mirror of a perceived mainstream set of values”.

“A perceived mainstream set of values is that disabled people are heroic and basically good, inspirational people, so that’s what is dished out.”

- William Verity, The Illawarra Mercury

Verity is similar in his observation to the views proffered by Goggin and Power.

“I still think that is very embedded because those are still the kind of dominant frames in our society, really. I don’t think journalists are at all unusual.”

- Prof. Gerard Goggin

… you could probably count that as another reason why journalists write about disability the way they do in that they perceive that there are accepted views out there in the public and they write to reflect those.

- Emeritus Prof. Des Power

It could, however, be argued a divergence in opinion exists between Verity and the academics about what journalists have to do and what they choose to do. While Verity contends the media “has to be a mirror of a perceived mainstream set of values”, Goggin and Power would argue the media has the capacity to impact community perception by accurately presenting the reality and choosing to expand the conversation on disability.

… open oneself up to relationships with people with disability as well and then as a media professional and journalist you are really contributing to our understanding of disability.

- Prof. Gerard Goggin
The interview process revealed a mixed level of awareness about media guidelines on the representation of people with disability among the journalists and, significantly, varied opinions on the importance, if not relevance, of such guidelines. This work has focused on the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines (Hume 1994) and, to that end, the journalist were all asked if they had read or were aware of those specific guidelines. Only two of the journalists (Malcolm Brown and Journalist A) indicated they had read the guidelines, one (William Verity) thought he had seen the guidelines “pass over my desk but a long time ago” and four (Michelle Hoctor, Damian McGill, Steve Lewis and Ned Hall) said they had either never heard of, seen, or read the guidelines produced by the Disability Council of NSW.

Those who had read the guidelines placed a degree of importance on them but no journalists considered the media guidelines on the representation of disability to be particularly influential or important in their daily newsroom activities. The Illawarra Mercury’s William Verity considered the media guidelines had a role to play in helping raise awareness about language and the representation of people with disability. He, however, was representative of his colleagues (even those who had not read the guidelines), in expressing a reticence at being told how to use their words, particularly by government.

I would be a bit loathe to simply accept a form of language that a government department deems acceptable for me. One of the great things about journalism is that it is free and slightly anarchic, so I would have to take that into consideration.

- William Verity, The Illawarra Mercury

The Sydney Morning Herald’s Malcolm Brown considered the guidelines one of many tools journalists could call on in the completion of their work but, like Verity, placed limited weight on their importance and influence.

In terms of portrayal, it just goes for any people who have been subjected to discrimination in the past, that you don’t refer to them as crippled, or handicapped. You do everything possible to represent them as normal people.

- Malcolm Brown, The Sydney Morning Herald

While four of the journalists indicated they had not heard of, seen, or read the Disability Council’s media guidelines, several responses reflected an understanding of the
representation of disability that must have been developed or acquired through other means. *The Illawarra Mercury*'s Michelle Hoctor, for example, reflected one of the guidelines recommendation with her analysis of a story she wrote about a woman with disability.

In the case of Ms Southern, I would have normally asked to speak to her personally so that she might have the benefit of speaking for herself. However, her situation dictated that the interview be conducted with her primary caregiver.

- Michelle Hoctor, *The Illawarra Mercury*

The Hoctor reflection aligned with the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines section on how to carry out an interview with a person with disability. While Hoctor acknowledged she had not read the guidelines, her interview answer was almost word-perfect to sections of the guidelines.

“Try to interview the person alone, although a second person may be necessary as an attendant or interpreter.” (Hume 1994, p. 13)

Similarly, *South Coast Register* journalist Damian McGill indicated an approach to news writing that is indicative of a person who has read media guidelines on the representation of people with disability, yet nothing could have been further from the truth.

“I had no idea such guidelines existed.”

- Damian McGill, *The South Coast Register*

On his story about Grace Kennedy, a NSW South Coast teenager with disability, McGill explained an approach to the story that was strongly aligned with the approach to disability representation encouraged by the Disability Council of NSW.

“The message I wanted to get across was that we all have disabilities and abilities … Another thing I wanted to put in was that Grace has a disability - she does not suffer from it.”

- Damian McGill, *The South Coast Register*

In the above statement, McGill reflected an approach not only outlined in the Disability Council guidelines but also an appreciation of people-first language. Snow (2008) and
others urge journalists to represent disability as something someone “has” not “is” - as McGill wrote on International Day of People with Disability 2008:

“Grace Kennedy wants people to be aware today - to know that many people in the world have a disability.” (McGill 2008, p. 7)

News Limited senior journalist Steve Lewis also indicated he had not read the guidelines but, as was the case with McGill and Hoctor, he, apparently unwittingly, produced work that strongly aligned with the practices encouraged and the philosophy espoused therein. On December 6, 2008, Lewis wrote a feature article on Therese Rein and her father, John, who had used a wheelchair for many years. The article was largely about a campaign by Ms Rein to improve disability access to public spaces. The article included the following:

John Rein had been a paraplegic for 25 years. The victim of a World War II flying accident, he had overcome a raft of obstacles to gain his university degree… It explains her passionate commitment to stamp out discrimination and why she is using the power of the prime ministerial seal to drive change (2008).

Despite Lewis’s statement: “ … no, I have not read specifically the guidelines about people with disability”, his published work would indicate an approach to journalism that would, presumably, be encouraged by the Disability Council of NSW. There are, however, instances of conflict between the journalist’s words and phrases urged by the Disability Council of NSW media Guidelines to “be avoided”. Lewis is not alone in his use of terms such as “wheelchair bound” and “suffers from” but he is also not the only journalist to not consider the use of such phrases as a priority issue. While Lewis acknowledged he had not thought about the use of such terms in the context of negative or stereotypical representation of people with disability and people-first language, he highlighted the frame within the story:

The context of the story was that I had been at a private function where I had sat close to her (Therese Rein) when she had been talking about her father and she actually recited that particular anecdote about the trip to Melbourne, and she used the fact that her father is wheelchair bound. I don’t know if she used that exact phrase, but she has used it on a repeated basis for many years, not just since she became First Lady, so to speak.

- Steve Lewis, The Sydney Morning Herald
Lewis considered the context of a story to be a paramount consideration in determining the frame of a story and the words and phrases used to build that frame. Verity too believed context to be significant in the use of prescribed words and phrases, like those found within the Disability Council Guidelines. Verity believed a journalist was obliged to consider audience impact.

I hope I always use language with intention and part of that intention is about treating everybody properly and with respect but also part of that intention has to be not putting off the reader … If there is certain language that I use which may be kind to people with disability which may evoke irritation in the readers, then I’m going to have to think twice before I use that.

- William Verity, The Illawarra Mercury

The journalists were also asked about their exposure to people with disability. The line of enquiry was considered significant as some scholars contend that direct personal contact with people with disability is equally as important as exposure in the media when seeking to create positive attitudes toward people with disabilities (Saito and Ishiyama 2005). The journalists were asked whether they had been exposed to disability outside their work. While five out of the seven journalists indicated they had been exposed to people with disability outside their workplace, the five said the exposure was limited. ABC television journalist Ned Hall was representative of the group’s level of exposure.

I wouldn’t say an enormous amount. I don’t know of anybody with a disability in my family that I have had dealings with, but I know obviously people I used to know and drink with at a pub in England; there was a guy there we used to deal with quite a lot.

- Ned Hall, ABC Television

Interestingly, Hall questioned the impact that direct exposure to people with disability had on his work as a journalist. He said:

I also think that as a journalist or reporter you should be having an open mind and be focusing on everybody in the same way anyway when you are sitting down to write a story or cover a story. You shouldn’t have any preconceptions built up about who or what you are dealing with for that particular story.

- Ned Hall, ABC Television
Hall’s answers would indicate journalists are aware of a responsibility to deal with everyone on an equal basis and this could represent a challenge to those who contend increased exposure could lead to balanced, if not positive, representation of people with disability. Hall’s statements would indicate the journalists who do adopt an a-political or a disability-negative approach to all people could provide coverage that depends solely on what they see and hear at the time.

Conclusion

The qualitative data gathered through the interview process for this research and spelled out in this chapter underlined many of the complexities involved in the analysis of the representation of people with disability in the media. The researcher interviewed journalists, academics and advocates in an effort to understand if and why journalists use particular frames to represent people with disability and to develop an understanding of the impact these frames may have on the general public. Not surprisingly, the perspectives and opinions on the representation of people with disability was as diverse as the groups and individuals interviewed.

That said, the interviews provided significant contributions to answering the questions posed by this research.

Academics and journalists largely agreed on the role media guidelines play in the representation of people with disability. While academics Goggin and Jakubowicz placed some weight on the existence of guidelines, Meekosha was largely dismissive of the role they can and do play. This academic feedback somewhat aligned with that gathered through the interviews with journalists. Most of the journalists interviewed had little to no knowledge of guidelines on the representation of people with disability. Some journalists knew of the guidelines but paid them little attention and others felt there was a role for such guidelines but they were wary of being told how to ply their trade by government doctrine (Verity 2008).

There was somewhat of a schism within the academic ranks when the question of what frames journalists use to represent people with disability was put. While some (Power, Meekosha and Goggin) believed the traditional frames of tragedy and hero were overly present in the news media; Jakobowicz was more concerned about what he saw as a general lack of representation of disability in the news media at all.
The disability advocates, largely, adopted a united voice of criticism about the news media’s representation of people with disability. They, like the academics, believed the news media used traditional frames of disability representation. Disability Discrimination Commissioner Graeme Innes is representative of the advocates’ tone when highlighting the struggle he has in gaining broad coverage of disability issues.

There isn’t enough coverage of disability issues as just part of life. I mean, if there was I would be a lot busier in the media than I am as Discrimination Commissioner. I spend a lot of my efforts trying to push stories out there that I think are good stories and relevant stories and find it hard to encourage media interest.

- Graeme Innes, Disability Discrimination Commissioner

The advocates were united in their call for more work to be done to educate journalists and student journalists about diversity and the need look outside the traditional frames and stereotypical representations of disability.

The journalists interviewed in this research considered the role disability frames play in their work and whether those frames were ‘traditional’ or ‘progressive’. Most, like Verity and McGill, believe that journalists rely heavily on the cliché and stereotype in the depiction of people with disability. Verity, however, noted this was not a practice simply limited to the representation of people with disability.
Chapter 8: Conclusions/discussions

This chapter brings together the findings of this thesis. The chapter focuses attention on areas of potential improvement in the news media when it comes to the representation of people with disability. The chapter also considers the limitations of the research and potential areas of research that could build on the current work.

There are several conclusions to be drawn from this research, but one resonates across the work. Journalists are inextricably a part of the society of which they are tasked to observe and report. Journalists, as acknowledged by the likes of Verity (interview 2009) and Goggin (interview 2009) in Chapter 7, cannot omnipotently separate themselves from the society and are, therefore, impacted by the society in which they live. This work has focused on the representation of people with disability in the media, more specifically a select group of news media over a defined period of time. For the most part, the journalists and the news articles they produced reflect their inclusion in a society that, as Meekosha contends (interview 2009) in Chapter 7, still has a long way to go in presenting a realistic picture of people with disability. As Power (2009 interview) observed, there is a ‘chicken and egg’ situation faced by journalists and the society they observe and report on. If the news media reports society as it sees society, but its ‘vision’ is significantly influenced by society’s expectation of what is seen and, subsequently, reported - there is little room for deviation from the ‘norm’. This ‘chicken and egg’ situation produces the repetitious characteristics of news media - a repetitious characteristic that, as this work has shown, is notable in the news media’s representation of people with disability.

As there are deviations from the so-called ‘norm’ in society, so are there deviations in news media representation of people with disability. As there are some people in society who are prepared to challenge the way things have ‘always been done’, so too there are journalists prepared to reflect that societal challenge in their work. But, one reflects the other. If there were no people prepared to challenge in society, it could reasonably be presumed there would be no journalists ready to challenge either.

This conclusion could be interpreted as either a challenge to, or reinforcement of, agenda-setting theorists, like McCombs (2002), who assert the media may not be able to tell people what to think but can tell people what to think about (see Chapters 3 & 5). If, as this work concludes, journalists produce work that reflects society’s expectations of the news media and, indeed, individual journalist’s interpretations of their place in society, then the agenda-setting capacity of the news media is brought into question.
The development of the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines (Hume 1994) exemplifies a challenge to the norm. The guidelines were created to assist, rather than instruct, journalists in the representation of people with disability in the media. The guidelines, along with Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller’s (1993, 1995) media models of disability, were the major tools of analysis (qualitative and quantitative) used in this work. As discussed at length in the methodology section of this work (Chapter 3), the guidelines provided a reference point on which the work’s textual analysis was based and a foundation for qualitative aspects of the research, including case studies and interviews with working journalists.

The textual analysis produced, as anticipated, mixed results. The guidelines highlight a collection of words and phrases that journalists were encouraged to ‘avoid’ when producing items about people with disability. Chapter 4 revealed words highlighted in the guidelines, including but not limited to ‘Mongoloid’ and ‘handicapped’, were not used by journalists and many, including but not limited to ‘retarded’, were not used in a disability context.

However, the quantitative textual analysis (Chapter 4) found the use of phrases highlighted in the guidelines, including ‘wheelchair-bound’ and ‘suffers from”, were used by journalists in a disability context. Notably, interviews carried out with journalists (Lewis interview 2009) as part of this research (Chapter 7) revealed they were prepared to debate the use of such phrases and to consider the impact they have when used in stories portraying people with disability.

As discussed in Chapter 7, the fact journalists are prepared to debate the use of words and phrases in the representation of people with disability is a significant finding of this work. While it set out to explore the adherence of journalists to established guidelines on the depiction of people with disability, the frames journalists use and the impact of those frames on the general public, it is significant that this work has also opened doors for potential future exploration in the field. This will be discussed in greater depth later in this chapter.

It is difficult to come to any clear conclusion about the impact on, or adherence of, journalists to media guidelines, like those produced by the Disability Council of NSW, based on the descriptive data collected in this work. While journalists are avoiding the use of words such as ‘Mongoloid’ and ‘spastic’, as reflected in the data collection in
Chapter 4, it cannot be argued that this is a direct result of any advice issued via media guidelines on the representation of people with disability. Likewise, the use of phrases like wheelchair-bound’ and ‘suffers from’ in a disability context cannot be conclusively attributed to a lack of adherence to media guidelines on disability. In Chapter 7, Goggin highlighted this lack of conclusiveness as a pitfall of quantitative textual analysis. He said: “… the problem is you are finding words and saying ‘well, that’s a problem’ and then you find a stereotype. Actually, that’s often not what is going on in a situation.” (Goggin interview 2009)

However, qualitative analysis of data collected in this work does allow conclusions to be drawn on the impact of, and adherence to, media guidelines on the representation of people with disability in the media. As was highlighted in Chapter 7, interviews carried out with working journalists who were responsible for the newspaper or television news stories about people with disability revealed limited, if any, knowledge of such guidelines (McGill interview 2009; Hoctor interview 2009). While some journalists indicated they had read the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines (Brown interview 2009), some were dismissive of their relevance and impact (Verity interview 2009). Verity, for example, contended journalists, as professionals, were hesitant to be told how to do their jobs by a third party, particularly a government department (Verity interview 2009).

Media and disability academics interviewed as part of the work were also largely skeptical about the impact of media guidelines on the representation of people with disability by the media (Meekosha interview 2009, Jakubowicz interview 2009; Goggin interview 2009). Goggin said there was limited value in media guidelines as traditional media (newspaper, television, radio) was just a portion of the many ways people receive their news in the 21st Century. As was revealed in Chapter 7, Meekosha was even more dismissive of the impact of media guidelines on the representation of people with disability. She contended any continued misrepresentation of people with disability in the media was courtesy of a deeper social failure to “incorporate the abnormal” (Meekosha interview 2009).

While the Disability Council Media Guidelines were used as a primary tool of inquiry in this work (textual analysis), the researcher concluded they would be of limited value in developing a clear understanding of any framing process journalists might undertake in the production of articles about people with disability.
It must be noted, however, the media guidelines do make specific reference to the use of stereotypes and, again, encourage journalists to avoid cliché and stereotyped representations of people with disability. The Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines encourage journalists to avoid the use of stereotypes that include, but are not limited to, disability as a ‘punishment for sin’ and disability as a ‘monumental tragedy’ (Hume 1994). This work found stereotypes to be present in articles captured in the data collection period. Of the stereotypes found within the analysed newspaper and television articles, the stereotypes of ‘supercrip’, ‘monumental tragedy’ and ‘pity/charity’ were dominant. As was revealed in Chapter 4, stereotypes were not widely used in the reviewed newspaper articles in this research. Only nine (23.6%) of the 38 articles contained stereotypes listed in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines. The ‘supercrip’ stereotype was found in four of the nine identified articles.

There was greater use of stereotypes in the 36 television news items reviewed as part of this research. Sixteen (14.4%) of the 36 items were found to contain stereotypes highlighted in the guidelines. The ‘pity/charity’ stereotype was present in seven (19.4%) of the 36 items.

While stereotypes were present, this work concluded stereotypes were not a major feature of the news items captured in the study period. Again, it is difficult to draw any connecting line between the use of media guidelines on the representation of people with disability and the findings of this work on the use of stereotypes. While the guidelines advise against the use of the stereotypes - there is no causal link in this instance. As seen in Chapter 7, journalists interviewed for this work indicated they had either not read or paid little attention to media guidelines on disability and, therefore, it is reasonable to conclude the guidelines had scant impact on the use of stereotypes in the representation of people with disability.

Beyond the quantitative data collection and its capacity to present raw data on the use of particular words and phrases, qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were adopted in Chapters 4-7 to answer questions on the use of framing by journalists in articles about people with disability and the issues they face. The research used Clogston (1990, 1993) and Haller’s (1993, 1995) media models of disability as the primary framing analysis tool. The media models provided the researcher with the tool with which to assess, firstly, the presence of frames in items captured in the data analysis period and, secondly, what frames were used by journalists in the depiction of people with disability.
As was anticipated, Chapters 4-5 revealed that the eight media models of disability enunciated by Clogston and Haller were found to be present in the articles captured in this work. It was, therefore, reasonable to conclude journalists use frames in the presentation of their items. This was largely unsurprising as journalists are trained to identify stories through the use of standardised news criteria - or the elements of newsworthiness (McKane 2006). If it is accepted practice for journalists to use a list of items to help them decide if a story is worth covering (and students journalists are instructed to do the same) then it is not difficult to understand why journalists might, consciously or not, stick to a relatively short list of media models (or frames) when producing stories about people with disability. If journalists are encouraged to follow a simplistic method in deciding what is or isn’t news, why should it be surprising that they adopt a simplistic approach in deciding how to cover that story. In Chapter 7, Goggin (interview 2009) and Power (interview 2009) contended journalists use frames because they need to make sense of the world; this work contends journalists also use frames because, like other elements of their work, this approach is simplistic and convenient.

Clogston (1989, 1990, 1993) and Haller’s (1993, 1995) media models provide a tool by which to assess news media items about people with disability as being ‘traditional’ or ‘progressive’. By adopting Clogston and Haller’s definitions of traditional and progressive foci, this work was able to identify the specific frames journalists applied to their individual stories and categorised those stories accordingly. As revealed and discussed in Chapter 6, of the combined total 74 articles captured in the extended analysis in this research, 54 (73%) were coded ‘traditional’ and 20 (27%) were coded ‘progressive’. This work found the majority of news media items captured in the study period were traditionally framed. While there were examples of journalists using progressive language, phrases and framing in news items about people with disability and the issues they face, there was a strong leaning toward the familiar, primarily medical, frames of disability. As seen in Chapter 6, of the 54 television and newspaper articles coded ‘traditional’, 23 (31%) adopted the ‘medical’ model of disability. This finding is significant as it underlines Meekosha’s (Meekosha interview 2009) observation that there is still a long way to go when it comes to the media’s representation of people with disability. This work concludes that journalists continue to use traditional frames of disability and, therefore, impact on society’s capacity to see disability as anything other than different. This work concludes that news journalists continue to use words, phrases and images that, despite the presence of guidelines on the representation of disability, continue to portray people with disability as the “Other” (Sontag 1979).
This work has produced somewhat conflicted findings about the editorial weight given to news stories about people with disability and/or the issues they face. The review of 38 television newspaper items revealed, in accordance with Wheildon (1986), a significant editorial weight was given to stories written about disability. Of the 38 articles reviewed, 31.5 per cent were found in the top left of a page - the primary optical area. Furthermore, 45 per cent of the reviewed newspaper articles appeared in the first 10 pages and 53 per cent were on right-hand pages.

However, this work also found the editorial importance placed on articles about people with disability in newspapers was not reflected in the television bulletins. While there were examples of news articles about people with disability being placed in the first break of television news bulletins (Chapters 5), the majority of items about people with disability were placed in less editorially significant television newsbreaks. The research found 23 of the 36 television items reviewed were placed in the second break of bulletins and only six items (16%) appeared in first breaks.

It is also significant to note, newspaper articles on disability were found in the “feature” sections (Chapter 4) and the television news placement was weighted toward the latter half of bulletins (Chapter 5).

While the findings of this work on editorial weighting are apparently inconclusive, the editorial weight given to news stories about people with disability is as influential on society as the frames journalists use to represent people with disability and, therefore, ongoing and expanded analysis along the lines seen in this work could provide material for future research.

Consideration was also given to the subject matter of the stories captured in the data collection period and regarded as being about people with disability and/or the issues they face. The researcher found the 74 television news and newspaper articles analysed at length in this study fell into 10 broad categories: disability accommodation; disability events/awards/charity; disability access/equity; health/medical; theatre/cinema; profile; sport; legal/court; education/employment and International Day of People with Disability. As revealed and discussed in Chapters 4-5, the categories were largely suitable across the two mediums but the results were considerably different. The television items were dominated by the “disability events/awards/charity” subject category - 11 (30%) of the 36 items. The next most common television subject category was “health/medical” (19%). Interestingly, the newspaper stories were not dominated by one subject matter. The
“disability events/awards/charity” was present in seven (18.4%) of the 38 articles, while “disability access/equity” and “health/medical” accounted for six stories each (15.8%). It can, therefore, be reasonably concluded, based on this study, that television news journalists are more inclined to report on disability events, awards and charities ahead of any other story-type; whereas newspaper journalists appear less likely to favour one disability subject matter over the other.

This leads to the conclusions that can be drawn from this work about the impact media representations of disability have on community perceptions of people with disability. International studies have concluded the traditional or negative representations of people with disability contribute to people with disability being excluded from everyday society (Wahl 2003).

This study analysed numerous print and television news articles that were identified through textual analysis as containing words and phrases about people with disability. Again, the qualitative aspects of the case studies and, in particular, the interviews carried out with journalists responsible for individual items and disability advocates and academics provided the greatest insight into the potential impact of using traditional or progressive frames of disability on community perceptions of people with disability. Journalists were asked whether they considered the impact of their work on the community. As seen in Chapter 7, most indicated they did consider the long-term impact of their work but that was tempered by the day-to-day machinations of a newsroom and the individual requirements of a publication or broadcast (Verity interview; Journalists A interview). Journalist A was representative of the journalists interviewed when he said: “I think journalists consider the long-term effect of their work all the time, but sometimes the pressures of daily or even hourly coverage mean that there isn’t always time for considered reflection.” (Journalist A interview). Illawarra Mercury journalist William Verity said the specifics of word-counts and space limitations played a part in the way journalists chose their words. He indicated the capacity to use people-first language was impacted by the simple case that ‘people with disability’ is longer than ‘disabled people’ (Verity interview). He said he considered the use of people-first language but it sometimes had to take less priority than the logistics of a newsroom and a news publication. Verity also voiced concern about journalists being told how to do their jobs and was particularly adamant that governments should not dictate proceedings (Verity interview).
However, Verity’s Illawarra Mercury colleague Michelle Hoctor observed that the significance and consideration of potential community impact stretched beyond the representation of people with disability. She said: “Today, there is much higher regard/respect for the dignity of people in general, not just the disabled. Stricter defamation laws would play a strong role in the parameters of writing style, however respect would be the over-riding factor.” (Hoctor interview 2009)

The strongest conclusions that can be made about the impact of news media representation on community perceptions of people with disability, however, have been drawn from the qualitative data gained through interviews carried with disability advocates and academics. The academics and advocates, almost universally, considered the largely traditional and stereotypical representation of people with disability in the media as a reinforcement of negativity. While the likes of Goggin and Jakubowicz were reticent to lay blame for the narrowly framed representation purely at the feet of the news media and, instead, suggested more deeply seeded social and cultural issues were at play, the overwhelming response from academics and advocates was the news media’s continued use of traditional frames, such as ‘heroic’ and ‘tragedy’, served only to reinforce unrealistic and damaging community perceptions of people with disability. These findings align with much of what has been written on the subject of media representation of disability and its capacity to reinforce traditional and negative imagery of people with disability (Byrd and Elliott 1988; Clogston 1989; Entman 1989; Clogston 1990; Haller 1993; Auslander and Gold 1999; Abraham and Appiah 2006). The finding is probably best captured in an observation by Meekosha: “… the ones you are looking at do fall into that category of reinforcing stereotypes and sort of hysterical depictions and so on. And people buy that, we know people buy it.”

This work has also shone a light on the relevance of the particular debate in which it has engaged. The researcher, at times throughout the process, had cause to question whether the research was important, and or relevant. The work has focused on the use of particular words and phrases highlighted by a specific set of guidelines on the representation of disability in the media. The work has also focused on the use of frames by journalists to represent people with disability and the issues they face. The researcher, at times, felt it necessary to ask whether the investigation into the representation of people with disability in the media was worthy of greater enquiry beyond that which has already been carried out and if, indeed, people with disability thought it worthwhile. Were there not bigger issues that needed to be addressed? The question was posed to academics and advocates who have written widely on the subject. The response was
overwhelmingly in favour of the exploration and the discourse continuing. This work, and others like it, have the capacity to broaden the discussion on disability representation; as Ellis observed:

“The academic discussion is very important, not only in relation to the way journalists frame stories but in a broader sense too because disability is so often positioned by other disciplines as the real limitation to escape.” - Ellis interview

This work also revealed strong agreement among disability advocates and academics to continue and strengthen the education and exposure of journalists (students and working) to disability. While the proposition of sustained and improved education about disability, its prevalence and its representation is not new (Tanner et al. 2003; Haller et al. 2006; Power 2007) , this work has provided qualitative data that indicates working journalists are prepared to take an active part in the discussion and education process (Lewis interview 2009).

As indicated, consideration has been given to the limitations of the current work. The scale of the project could be considered a limitation. The researcher specifically chose a four-week period, divided evenly either side of International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD), because it was assumed their would a heightened level of awareness about disability and the representation of disability in the lead-up to, on and immediately after IDPWD. As far as this research can decipher, the assumption was not correct. While the study period captured a substantial number of stories about people with disabilities and provided a significant sample of journalism to allow textual analysis of words, phrases and frames - there was no mechanism put in place to assess whether coverage of disability increased in the lead up to, on and immediately after IDPWD. While this was not a stated goal of the research, it would be a valuable future research consideration.

The research did, however, aim to analyse the representation of disability over a set period of time and, to that degree, it was successful. It is more important to consider the type of coverage disability receives in the news media rather than the amount of coverage disability receives. This is obviously a point of debate that goes beyond this research. However, this work has revealed, even if over a reasonably short period of time, disability does not receive the amount of coverage it might be expected to - considering its prevalence in society (one in five Australians have a disability of some kind) - and the type of coverage disability receives is largely grounded in stereotype and the familiar
news frames of heroics and tragedy. The type of coverage of disability was explored with the models developed by Clogston and Haller and the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as the major analysis tools. It must, however, be noted the textual analysis in this work did reveal a significant number of words highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines as inappropriate when used to represent people with disability (including but not limited to Mongoloid, spastic and moron) were absent from the data collection.

Interviews carried out with journalists, academics and disability advocates provided significant data and insight. The researcher considers this the most valuable element of the entire work. While the textual analysis provided a foundation for the research and a tool by which potential interview talent, particularly journalists, could be sourced, its results were not as insightful as the qualitative data gathered through the interview process. The interviews provided insight into the coverage of disability from a variety of perspectives and, significantly, shone a spotlight on disability/media research. The likes of senior political journalist Steve Lewis indicated he had not given conscious thought to the selection of words and phrases in articles, such as “wheelchair-bound” and “suffers from”, before taking part in the interview process of this research.

The interview process also provided near consensus within the academic and advocate ranks on the question of improved and increased education of journalists about the representation of people with disability. It is significant that despite the variety of opinions expressed by the advocates and academics on the coverage given to people with disability and the importance of such things as media guidelines, there was a united voice that urged greater scholastic inquiry into the representation of people with disability in the media and greater understanding and use of inclusive language by journalists. Consideration has also been given to future research endeavours to flow from the current work. There is considerable space to investigate the understanding of disability within journalist ranks. While the current work has largely analysed how journalists represent people with disability; it is clear there is future opportunity to explore further ‘why’ journalists do what they do and what are their opinions on, and attitudes to, people with disability.

While this work considered the use of disability images in the news media - it was, by no means, the greatest focus of the work. As this work was grounded in a textual analysis based on words and phrases highlighted in the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines, limited attention was paid to the use of images. Images are significant in the
consideration of the representation of people with disability and future research could explore this aspect in greater depth.

If the challenge of a thesis is to answer the questions it has posed, then this research has succeeded. It set out, through mixed research methodology, to answer three questions:

1) How do journalists use frames to depict people with disability in the media?
2) Why do journalists apply particular frames?
3) What impact does that media coverage have on community perceptions of people with disability?

In summary - journalists use frames to help make sense of the world they live and work in. These frames allow journalists to filter and to focus subject matter so they can effectively and, in most cases, efficiently tell others what they see and hear.

The research found journalists are more likely to use traditional frames of disability than frames that might be considered progressive. This study has revealed journalists tend to use the traditional frames of disability representation because they are most familiar with them. Journalists are a part of the society they are tasked to report and comment on and, therefore, it is understandable, if not acceptable, that their representations of disability are in line with the place disability occupies in general society.

Finally, consideration was given to the impact such representation has on community perceptions of people with disability. There was some disagreement among academics interviewed as part of this research about the impact of particular frames of disability in the news media on the wider community. The schism arose from the concern by some, like Meekosha and Goggin, who seemed to consider representation of disability in the news media had only partial impact on the community because the social structure of disability is so concrete there is little traditional news mechanisms can do to influence perception, while others like Power considered the news media’s representation of disability as a significant contributor to society’s perceptions of disability.

Power’s position on disability representation in the news media was echoed by disability advocates, including Disability Commissioner Graeme Innes and Family Advocacy’s Catherine Hogan, who saw the frames used by the news media to represent people with disability as pivotal in the community’s perception of people with disability.

Significantly, the journalists interviewed for this research combined to produce a mixed message about the thought they give to the long-term impact of their representation of
While some like Verity indicated they were cognisant of their potential to impact community perceptions of disability and other minority groups, the majority opinion by the journalists interviewed was there was too little time and too much news-cycle pressure to consider the long-term impact of any of their articles - let alone the few stories they produce about people with disability and/or the issues they face.
References


Appendix A: Australia ratifies UN Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities

<table>
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<tr>
<th>This article was removed due to copyright it can be found through the following link: <a href="http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2008/fa-s080718.html">http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/releases/2008/fa-s080718.html</a></th>
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### Appendix B:

**Words and phrases highlighted Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words and phrases highlighted by Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines</th>
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<tr>
<td>Abnormal</td>
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<td>Deformity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cretin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epileptic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neurotic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crazy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentally retarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically challenged</td>
</tr>
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<td>Suffers from</td>
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### Appendix C:

**Additional words and phrases included in the newspaper textual analysis**

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<tr>
<th>Deformity</th>
<th>Disability/Disabilities</th>
<th>Disabled kids</th>
<th>Disabled men</th>
<th>Disabled people</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Epilepsy</td>
<td>Limited abilities</td>
<td>Paraplegic</td>
<td>People who are blind</td>
<td>People with disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visually impaired people</td>
<td>Visually impaired (The)</td>
<td>Wheelchair access</td>
<td>International Day of People with Disability (variants)</td>
<td>Handicapped</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Data Collection Form

Source
PRINT MEDIA
- The Australian
- Daily Telegraph
- Illawarra Mercury
- Sydney Morning Herald
- South Coast Register

ELECTRONIC
- ABC
- Nine
- SBS
- Seven
- Ten
- WIN

Date:
Page/Break:
Length:
Journalist:

Words
- Abnormal/subnormal
- Blind (The)
- Cretin
- Cripple
- Crippled
- Deaf (The)
- Defective
- Deformed
- Disabled (The)
- Dwarf
- Epileptic (The)
- Fit (attack/spell)
- Handicapped (The)
- Insane
- Lunatic
- Maniac
- Neurotic
- Psycho
- Psychotic
- Schizophrenic
- Crazy
- Mad
- Demented
- Deviant
- Invalid
- Idiot
- Imbecile

Phrases
- Wheelchair bound
- Physically challenged
- Intellectually challenged
- Vertically challenged
- Mentally patient
- Mentally depressed
- Differently abled
- Unsound mind
- Suffers from
- Stricken with
- Deaf and dumb
- Visually impaired

Stereotypes
- Disability as a monumental tragedy
- Disability as a punishment for sin
- People with a disability are inherently evil
- People with a disability are objects of pity and charity
- People with a disability do things like get married and have children are extraordinary
- People with a disability lead boring, uneventful lives
- Families, particularly spouses of people with disability, are exceptionally heroic for living with a fate worse than death
- People with disability are asexual, eternal children

Media Models
- Medical (traditional)
- Social pathology (traditional)
- Supercrop (traditional)
- Minority/civil rights (progressive)
- Cultural pluralism (progressive)
- Business (traditional)
- Legal (progressive)
- Consumer (progressive)

NOTES:
## Appendix E: Disability context stories (newspaper)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N/PAPER</th>
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<th>SUBJECT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Julie Robotham</td>
<td>29.11.09</td>
<td>Health/medical: Sick babies denied t/ment in DNA row</td>
</tr>
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<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.12.08</td>
<td>IDPWD: International disability day celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.12.08</td>
<td>Profile: Scott treads new ground at Bundanon</td>
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<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Maralyn Parker</td>
<td>10.12.08</td>
<td>Education/employment: Dux - IDPWD performance</td>
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<td>SCR</td>
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<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>Dis. event/awards/charity: Special fete for special kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Harriet Alexander</td>
<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: Teacher felt cornered by student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Julia Stirling</td>
<td>12.12.08</td>
<td>Disability access/equity: Assumptions on disability often disproved at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>William Verity</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity: A reason to Smile</td>
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<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>William Verity</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>Profile: Piano man</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Jan Gothard &amp; Charlie Fox</td>
<td>17.11.08</td>
<td>Disability access/equity: Consign disability discrimination to the bin</td>
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<td>SMH</td>
<td>Stephen Dunne</td>
<td>17.11.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema: Language of the body speaks as loud as words</td>
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<td>AUST</td>
<td>Greg Roberts</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Sport: (Anger rises from Ashes of blind cricket)</td>
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<td>DT</td>
<td>Angela Saurine</td>
<td>18.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Lost in fog of the mind - Alzheimers cure hope</td>
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<td>IM</td>
<td>Veronica Apap</td>
<td>19.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: $1.4m crash award</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Disability event/awards/charity: Vision in their sights</td>
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<td>SMH</td>
<td>Louise Hall</td>
<td>22.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Depression therapy gets a jolt from the past</td>
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<td>DT</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema: The Wild Boys</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Malcolm Brown</td>
<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: Dead child had habit of putting objects into her mouth</td>
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<td>SCR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Sport: Achievers’ State success</td>
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<td>SMH</td>
<td>Malcolm Brown</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: No headline - in brief</td>
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<td>SMH</td>
<td>Joel Meares</td>
<td>27.11.08</td>
<td>IDPWD: Sydney celebrates IDPWD</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Stephen Lunn</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>Disability access/equity: New deal at COAG for the disabled</td>
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<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Michelle Hoctor</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>Disability accommodation: Woman dealt a double blow</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMH</td>
<td>Julie Robotham</td>
<td>29.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Precious time could be lost in fight against disease</td>
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<td>Disability event/awards/charity: A special day for a real go-getter</td>
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<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity: Envelope for Braille bicentenary</td>
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<td>SCR</td>
<td>Damian McGill</td>
<td>3.12.08</td>
<td>Profile: Disability won’t stop amazing Grace</td>
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<td>DT</td>
<td>Alex Lalak</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema: Priscilla Queen of the deaf</td>
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<td>SMH</td>
<td>Yuko Narushima</td>
<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity: Long way to the top when you’ve gotta roll on the rock</td>
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<td>AUST</td>
<td>Adam Creswell</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Disability access/equity: News revolution for the blind</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUST</td>
<td>Dr Adam Taor</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Strange but true …</td>
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<td>DT</td>
<td>Steve Lewis</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Profile: Portrait of a lady</td>
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<td>Disability access/equity: Rein puts bite on for disabled</td>
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<td>Disability access/equity: Rein lobby for disabled pays off</td>
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<td>IDPWD: IDWPD event</td>
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<td>DT</td>
<td>Xanthe Kleinig</td>
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<td>Disability event/awards/charity: Waugh's pad up</td>
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<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>Michelle Hoctor</td>
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<td>Disability accommodation: Relieved Kate finds a home</td>
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### Disability context stories (television)

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<th>ST/N</th>
<th>JOURNALIST</th>
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<th>SUBJECT</th>
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<td>SBS</td>
<td>Jeffery Kofman</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Genetic syndrome/cancer treatment</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
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<td>WIN</td>
<td>Danielle Post (NR)</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Illawarra Disability Trust golf day</td>
<td>RVO</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>21.11.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Kid/WH Christmas concert</td>
<td>RVO</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEVEN</td>
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<td>25.11.08</td>
<td>Health/medical: Surgery/undiagnosed disorder</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
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<td>TEN</td>
<td>Andrew Leahy</td>
<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: Down Syndrome visa decision</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
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<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: Down Syndrome visa decision</td>
<td>RVO</td>
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<td>26.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: Down Syndrome visa decision</td>
<td>RVO</td>
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<tr>
<td>NINE</td>
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<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: Boy jailed for stabbing 'autistic man'</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Deborah Knight (NR)</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>Legal/court: Boy jailed for stabbing 'autistic man'</td>
<td>RVO</td>
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<td>TEN</td>
<td>Josh Murphy</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>Disability accommodation Teen &quot;langishing&quot; in aged care</td>
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<td>TEN</td>
<td>Amber Muir</td>
<td>28.11.08</td>
<td>Medical/health: Graduates from kids to adult wards</td>
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<td>Disability events/awards/charity Children’s Christmas party</td>
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<td>NINE</td>
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<td>IDPWD Sydney Harbour Bridge walk</td>
<td>VSV</td>
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<td>SBS</td>
<td>Janice Petersen (NR)</td>
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<td>IDPWD Sydney event to mark IDPWD</td>
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<td>SBS</td>
<td>Craig Foster</td>
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<td>WIN</td>
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<td>4.12.08</td>
<td>IDPWD Children’s performance Wollongong</td>
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<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Alicia McMillan</td>
<td>6.12.08</td>
<td>Theatre/cinema Black Balloon premiere</td>
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<td>Theatre/cinema Black Balloon premiere</td>
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<td>Disability event/awards/charity Surfers with disability</td>
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<td>Michael Usher (NR)</td>
<td>10.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Children’s Christmas party</td>
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<td>SEVEN</td>
<td>Chris Bath (NR)</td>
<td>11.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Prince Harry disability awards</td>
<td>RVO</td>
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<td>TEN</td>
<td>Bill Woods</td>
<td>13.12.08</td>
<td>Medical/health: Muscle Dysplasia kids treatment</td>
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<td>WIN</td>
<td>Sam Hall</td>
<td>15.12.08</td>
<td>Education/employment Graduates from workskills program</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
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<td>WIN</td>
<td>Nick Dole</td>
<td>16.12.08</td>
<td>Legal/court &quot;Robbed blind&quot; thief sentenced</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
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<td>TEN</td>
<td>Ron Wilson (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Medical/health: Revamped Sydney hospital (promo)</td>
<td>RED</td>
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<td>TEN</td>
<td>Amber Muir</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Medical/health: Revamped Sydney hospital</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEN</td>
<td>Deborah Knight (NR) &amp; dam Hause (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Environment awards</td>
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<td>TEN</td>
<td>Glen Lauder</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Sport: Blind Cricket Ashes</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
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<td>TEN</td>
<td>Tim Bailey</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Environment awards</td>
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<td>SBS</td>
<td>John McKenzie</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Medical/health: Historic face transplant surgery</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
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<td>Ned Hall</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Sport: Blind Cricket Ashes</td>
<td>Pkg/SOT</td>
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<td>WIN</td>
<td>Kerryn Johnston (NR)</td>
<td>17.12.08</td>
<td>Disability event/awards/charity Superheroes visit kids with disability</td>
<td>RVO</td>
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Appendix G:
Questions asked journalists in data collection (included but not limited to)

- Have you read the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines?
- Have you read any guidelines on the depiction of people with disability?
- Why was the story written the way it was?
- Have you been exposed to people with disability outside the work environment?
- Do you consider the media has the capacity to influence public opinion and or public perceptions?
- What do the terms ‘Words Matter’ and ‘People-first’ mean to you?
- Are there limitations or conventions that dictate the way journalists use words or phrases that impact the way they represent people with disability?
- Was your story largely published as you presented it?
- What does disability mean to you?
- What do you think of when you consider disability?
- Do journalists consider the long term effect of their work? The impact beyond the bulletin or the newspaper?
- Why do journalists apply particular frames to stories about disability?
- What impact does that coverage have on community perceptions – particularly in regard to people with disability?
Appendix H:
Questions asked academics in data collection (included but not limited to)

- Have you read the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines?
- What are your thoughts on the capacity of media guidelines to impact how journalists frame stories about people with disability?
- Do you believe the academic discussion of disability representation is important?
- Is it relevant?
- Have the fights over the representation of people with disability in the media already been fought and do people with disability care? Is it the ‘big’ issue?
- How do journalists use frames to depict people with disability in the media?
- Why do journalists apply particular frames to disability?
- What impact does it have on the community?
- Does the mechanism of news need an overall?
- Does the disability advocacy movement have a role to play in helping shape the language and frames used by journalists?
- The Special Olympics for instance?
- What are your thoughts about ‘special’?
- Are you aware of the media models of disability devised by John Clogston and built on Beth Haller?
- Is there a room for expansion – the special model, for example?
- What role does education need to play?
- What about IDPWD?
Appendix I:
Questions asked advocates in data collection (included but not limited to)

- Are you aware of the Disability Council of NSW Media Guidelines?
- Is media representation of people with disability an issue for disability advocates and people with disability? Why/why not?
- Why do you believe people with disability are framed/represented in certain ways in the media?
- Is this a fair and accurate representation?
- Do disability advocates represent people with disability realistically? The charity image/model of disability?
- Is there a clash between the need to promote the rights and needs of people with disability and the need to attract media attention through traditional models & mechanism?