Let's Design Equality Together
The Push*Back*Lash Cartoon Series

Nothing About Us Without Us

Disability as Diversity

PUSH*BACK*LASH

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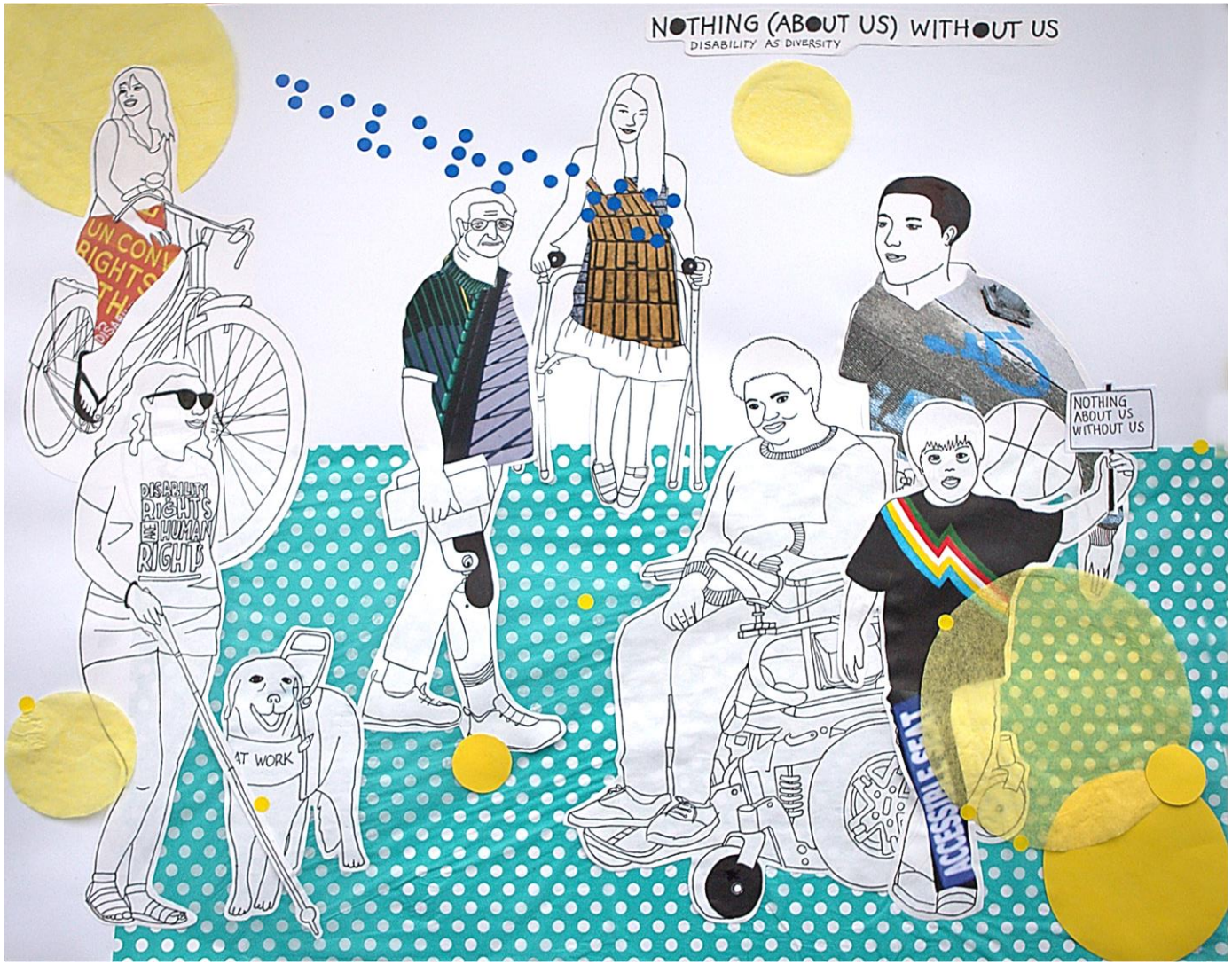

It's really important to understand that disability is a part of what makes our world diverse and inclusive. Just as we value and respect people of different races, cultures, and ethnic backgrounds, we should value and include people with disabilities.

People with disabilities still face barriers in participation and representation. Yet, they are the largest and most diverse minority in the world. The Let's Design Equality Together The Push*Back*Lash Cartoon Series looks at disability in a complete and inclusive way. Our research on women with disabilities shows that their main rule is 'Nothing About Us Without Us'. This means that people without disabilities should not make decisions about disability issues. Our cartoon title highlights the importance of this rule.

When you close your eyes and think about the word 'disability,' what pops into your head? Do you think of certain people or situations, like characters from movies, books, or games? Or maybe someone in your family has a disability? Take a moment to jot down 4-6 keywords that describe what you thought of. Later, we'll come back to those keywords after you've finished checking out the whole cartoon and the exercises. They're all about exploring disability as a part of diversity.

- List your key words here:

Now that you've written down your thoughts about disability, take a good look at the main illustration. Spend some time examining it closely from various angles—up close and from a distance. Think about why looking at things in different ways might be connected to disability as diversity.

- Write your thoughts here:

Now that you've finished, check out more about how to do Alt Text in Further Reading point 1. See if there's anything you'd change in your description, and if not, try to think of three easy rules you could explain to your younger sibling or a friend so they can create image descriptions for illustrations, photographs, memes, and more.

- **Put your altered 'alt text' about the illustration or three easy rules in your own words, demonstrating how it's done right:**

Look at this part of the illustration where the boy is wearing a flag and consider what that flag could mean in the context of disability as diversity. Try to come up with various types of disabilities and think about what colors they could be associated with, as well as a symbol. Now, read about the disability pride flag in Further Reading point 2, and create your flag or banner for Disability Pride Month, which takes place every year in July.

- **Here is the space for your creative work:**

What percentage of the world population do people with disabilities constitute?

1%, 5%, 16%?

Look at different parts of the picture, like the stick for blind people or the guide dog and think what other messages related to disability they might be showing. You can mark them directly on the picture with a colour marker.

- **Find and circle any other references to disability on the picture.**

Read in Further Reading point 3 about the walking cane and how the colors indicate the type of disability.

- **Color the cane to convey various messages about the person with a disability.**

Find out more about important facts concerning individuals with disabilities in Further Reading point 4.

Now look at the most used symbol for people with disabilities. Given that disabled people constitute the largest minority in the world, why do you think this symbol is not representative? How would you change it?

- **Here is the space for your creative work:**

Why does the guide dog have 'at work' written on it? How do you think one should behave around such a dog?

CALL TO ACTION! DISABILITY AS DIVERSITY.

There is no one way that disability functions in the world. This is because people with disabilities constitute not only the largest but also the most diverse minority in the world. Look at the main illustration banner with the slogan Nothing About Us Without Us! How about putting brackets around 'about us' to convey two equally important meanings in this slogan?

1) Nothing about us without us!

2) Nothing without us!

Consider what is meant by each of them, what types of requests are made by people with disabilities through each of them. And in what ways can people with disabilities and people without disabilities contribute if those slogans are a reality. What practical implementations of each of them would mean, for instance, in the context of how your school, student council, etc., functions.

To enhance the original cartoon and depict the two slogans, utilize cut-out pieces. You can use this illustration (with added photos, illustrations that you have/make) to celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, which is celebrated every year on 3 December, for instance, by putting them on your social media with an alt text.

To make a collage, begin by collecting different materials like magazines, photos, and colored paper. Cut out the shapes, pictures, and patterns you like. Arrange them on a blank piece of paper in a fun and creative way and think about how to add elements from the cartoon. When you're satisfied with how it looks, glue the pieces down, letting some overlap to create a cool layered effect.

- Play with the illustration – enhance the collage with your creative ideas.

Finally, return to the first exercise and consider whether you would add or change any of the keywords you initially included.

Further Reading

Point 1

How to create accessible social media content.

Disability:IN, a non-profit resource for disability inclusion, has created a toolkit to make social media content more accessible to all. You can access this toolkit here.

Point 2

The history of the Disability Pride Flag.

The Weinberg Family Cerebral Palsy Center prepared a short overview of the history of the Disability Pride Flag. You can read the post here.

Point 3

What Are The Different Types of White Canes?

Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired offers an explanation in a nutshell of the white canes that are used. The information can be accessed here.

Point 4

Key facts and figures about disability.

World Health Organization up-to-date overview of people with disabilities around the world. You can access the resource here.

The Cartoonist

Gabi Lipska (she/her) weaves visual narratives that bridge the personal and collective. Through her mixed media work she fosters collaborative artmaking, bringing together her extensive background in education, activism and facilitation with love for art. She is part of an international team of creative facilitators at the US based Unity Through Creativity Foundation dedicated to peace building through art.

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