File Name: 0115190601_the-accessible-stall--015--the_accessible_stall_and_robyn_lambird--orig--rec-10-28

[START OF TRANSCRIPT]

Emily: Hi. I’m Emily Ladau.

Kyle: I’m Kyle Khachadurian.

E: You’re listening to another episode of The Accessible Stall.

K: What are we going to talk about today, Emily?

E: Actually, we’re not going to talk about something so much as we’re going to have someone talk about stuff with us.

K: Really?

E: Yeah. We have a guest today and I’m pretty excited about it. If our lovely guest wouldn’t mind introducing herself, that would be awesome.

Robyn: Hi. I’m Robyn. I’m an athlete and a YouTuber who has cerebral palsy.

E: Awesome. We’re glad to have you on our show, Robyn.

R: No worries. Thanks for having me.

E: Yes, and true confession to you guys: This is our second time doing this because we had some issues with the first one and we like to keep it real with the audience, so we’re doing it again, that’s how awesome we think Robyn is.

K: Those were dark times. Hopefully, this will be less dark times.

E: Yes. We’re giving it a shot. We make no promises that this will be any better, but we here at The Accessible Stall try our best. Anyway, Robyn, you mentioned a couple of things that you do, but I think the first thing that we really wanted to talk about is the media work that you do. You mentioned you’re a YouTuber and can you talk a little bit more about that because that’s sort of self-made disability media and that’s kind of also what we’re doing here, and I think it’s important to finally put ourselves out there like that?

R: Well, for me, I kind of decided my YouTube channel out of a way to answer people’s questions. I started a Tumbler page like most teenagers and I post a few selfies on there, me in my wheelchair, and I got a few questions about my disability and stuff like that.

I started making YouTube videos basically just to answer those questions and from there, I got people connecting with me who had disabilities and things like that, asking me about different things. I would make videos on their discussion topics.

Then, there's sort of like a community formed on YouTube now. We kind of just bounce around ideas, and do collabs and all different kinds of stuff. For me, it was basically it started off as a way to answer people's questions, but now, it's a lot more about me sort of starting discussions or joining in discussions that people are creating on media created by people with disabilities.

K: That's actually pretty neat. I didn't realize that there was sort of a disability YouTube community, that's sort of really interesting to me.

R: Yes, I think it's relatively new. When I started off, there was just me and a couple of other people; but since then, it's really grown and now, I think even some of the big YouTube conventions, they actually have disability panels and things like that. There's quite a few of us on there now talking about different things.

E: I think this is interesting because there's not, even remotely, a disability podcasting community. There's like a couple of us.

K: Yes, there's us and like one other guy.

E: I know it. I think in all fairness, there's a couple other people; but there's not like a strong community. Do you connect with the other people on YouTube, like is it a community in the sense that you're all on there or is it a community in the sense that's like you help each other out?

R: No, we definitely help each other out. I mean, it's sort of across the social media platforms who will follow each other on Instagram and Twitter.

Twitter's great. We have quite a few good discussions on Twitter, but especially, yes, with the videos, I've done a few collabs with different people on different things like sexuality, and gender, and accessible spaces and stuff like that.

Yes, we're all trying, sort of interacting, create discussions on YouTube where we're sort of going backwards and forwards, sharing our opinions and things like that.

E: I guess this comes with our collab then, right, Kyle?

K: Yeah, I would assume so. No, but that's really cool. I used to do YouTube a couple years ago, totally unrelated to disability. I sort of miss it and so when I hear you say that you're a YouTuber, I'm just like, "Ah, that's so cool," and it just makes me nostalgic for like a couple years ago.

R: Yes, it's cool.

E: I think YouTube is different because you have to, at least, put some effort into a presentation regarding like how you look, whereas Kyle and I record our podcast--

K: In our pajamas.

R: From your bed. It's great.

K: We might.

E: I mean, I'm a little envious that you put that much effort into it and plus, they watch the **[0:04:45 inaudible]** videos. Speaking of watching your videos, I just watched one recently that you did on the Say the Word campaign--

K: Yes.

E: --started by Lawrence Carter-Long, and like talking about how disability is not a dirty word, and how you call yourselves a disabled person now and it's not like a source of shame; but in that, you mentioned this evolution of your thinking as someone who has a disability and I think Kyle and I have done that with this podcast, too. Our thinking sort of evolves on certain issues a little bit. I'd love to hear more about how YouTube has, and not to be all melodramatic and savvy, but has it been a journey for you?

R: Definitely. I mean, I've been making videos for quite a long time. I mean, I've sort of started taking my channel seriously within the last year, but I've been making videos on-and-off for definitely a couple of years like all throughout high school.

In that time, I've learned a lot about myself through my experiences and things like that, but I've also read a lot and connected with a lot of other disabled people who have learned about the disabled experience and different perspectives from them.

You can definitely see if you watch my videos from the early days, through **[0:06:02 Janelle]**, how my perspectives have changed and even there, things we're identifying like how I identify change, so yes. I think it's interesting to have that all as a record.

E: I mean, I have gone through some of your videos, but I think the disability and identity one, although it's one of your newer ones, that also stood out to me the most because it's something that I relate to personally because I also went through a similar journey; but is there some other video that really sticks out in your mind is the one that people who are listening should go watch right now?

R: It's putting me on the spot.

K: Yes, I **[0:06:44 inaudible]** that.

R: I’ve done a few. I did a spoken word poem about disabilities, and perceptions, and how often we’re more disabled by what people think we should be like as a disabled person. Then, obviously, our physical limitations themselves and that sort of travelled around a bit and got quite a bit of a feedback, and I think that’s probably the one that I sort of put the most effort into in terms of actually writing something out because usually when I make my videos, I just turn on the camera and start rumbling.

K: That sounds familiar.

E: Yes, we just turn on the microphone and start rumbling.

R: That’s the way to go.

E: No, but that actually sounds like a really cool one and we’ll make sure that we link to it in the show notes too because part of our goal with this is to amplify messages of people that we think are really cool.

R: Cool. That’s awesome. Thanks.

E: Other than YouTube, I mean, you’re kind of or not kind of, you are a really multifaceted person and--

R: I like to have my fingers in all the pies that’s for sure.

K: Yes.

E: Well, Kyle and I aspire to this.

K: It’s true. You’re a good role model I guess for us in a weird way.

E: I know, that’s totally a good way to put it. You do a lot of other cool things other than YouTube which is… Kyle, is that how you found Robyn?

K: Well, sort of. I found her through a former employer via **[0:08:13 The Mighty]** which linked to one of her YouTube videos. I don’t remember which one, but you had silver hair and--

R: Yes, it changes so frequently, I can’t even remember.

E: If nothing else, like watching the videos for your hair and your outfits, it’s worth it.

K: No, that’s actually really true. The fact that you also say really cool stuff is just like--

R: It’s just secondary to the hair.

K: --it's icing on the cake. Yes, I don't remember unfortunately. I'm going to find it though and put it in the show notes, but it was just so cool and immediately subscribed to you.

I don't think I said anything to you ever until your episode about disability in media and you brought up… you didn't bring up Speechless, but it just had premiered and I left you a comment asking if you'd seen it, that's how I know you, yes.

R: Yes, so good. I'm in love. Every episode just gets better and better.

K: I don't know about you, but do you find yourself… I care much more about JJ and Kenneth than the entire rest of the guest.

R: Everyone else, I forget they even exist.

K: Okay. I'm glad I'm not alone in that.

R: Yes, yes.

K: Watched the entire show could just be them.

E: Yes, I know. I have to second or third that I guess because Kyle and I talked about Speechless a lot just in general because we watch the show to kind of like keep our finger on the pulse of this big moment for disability in the media, and the other characters aren't doing it for me; but JJ, I would say his plotline is my favorite.

R: I mean, I do relate to the mom quite a bit, that whole idea of--

E: **[0:09:48 inaudible].**

K: Yes.

R: --like trying to do the best for them, sometimes overstepping that line, but… yes. Just being that really fierce advocate, that's something that I can like definitely see my mom in. She does entertain me.

E: Yeah. I think the thing that really got me with her was the first episode, and she's like in front of the ramp and she's playing the game Human Re-Garbage.

R: **[0:10:13 inaudible].**

E: Yes.

K: Yes.

E: Because I literally have that happen to me. I was going to a restaurant with my cousin and the ramp was in the back of the building because there were steps in the front and it was completely full of all their trash. Then, we had to move all the trash out of the way and I was just like, "Wow. This is real-life Human Re-Garbage right now."

K: Art imitates life.

R: I love that. I love it when like the disabled toilet, also like goes for the supply closet as well. There's like a cardboard box in there and all **[0:10:44 inaudible]** things.

E: Yes. It's a good show, but I mean, it started from the disability, but it's now being shown on television. You are a disability media maker on your own and so I'd love to talk more about that because we already hit on YouTube, but there's also the minor detail of the modeling which is another really cool thing. Can you tell us more about that?

R: Well, basically, I work with a non-for-profit group called Starting With Julius, and the founder of the non-for-profit has a son who has Down Syndrome, and he's really into fashion and dressing up, and so she wanted him to be able to get into modeling, but she found there's a lot of resistance from modeling agencies and brands to sort of take him on as an ambassador or a model.

She kind of set this up to create some dialogue with some of the big companies over here and retail chain in order to get more people with disabilities into advertising because advertising is so widespread, but it's also kind of mundane. It's really a great way to sort of get people in the media, but also to normalize disability.

Through them, I was lucky enough to get a modeling gig with Target in the active wear section, so that was heaps of fun probably. Yes, probably one of the funniest days I've had in a while.

K: That's pretty cool. That non-profit sounds like legit. That mission statement is something I could really get behind as a person with disability.

R: No, it's cool I mean because there's a few around that I've seen, sort of have a similar aim, but it's all pretty much just about getting the kids into modeling or the adults into modeling where it's a bit broader than that. It's really about trying to normalize disability through media and it's getting people to see media people with disabilities just everywhere so that it's not like shocking when someone appears in a magazine or on TV.

K: Right. Forgive me, but are you new to modeling? Was this your first big foray into it?

R: Yes, yes. This is my first sort of big campaign, yes.

K: If you don’t mind, I’d like to hear you sort of describe it. It’s just interesting was it like a big deal like did you find it to be easy for you? Did you find any of that resistance that you had heard like you were describing?

R: I think because Catia, the founder of Starting With Julius, had already started the dialogue with Target and sort of explained why it was important to get people with disabilities into advertising.

Once I got there, to do the gig, they were very, very open to it and very helpful. I was lucky that I didn’t experience that kind of resistance there; but coming away from that and then trying to sort of find a modeling agency for myself, has not been easy.

E: I’ve actually heard of Starting With Julius because they have a pretty strong social media presence and so I’ve connected with Catia before and I respect the work that she does. I really love the work that she does. Does she create these connections for other people as well? Are there other people who are doing the same thing as you now blazing the trails in the modeling industry?

R: Yes, we have a few ambassadors who started working with Starting With Julius. At the moment, we seem pretty local, so people in Perth or in Australia.

Emily Prior, she was a Telethon Kids. I don’t know if you have Telethons in America; but they raise money for kids in hospitals, and raise money for hospitals and things like that. She got quite a lot of exposure through that.

I actually knew Emily before I started working with Starting With Julius because I do sort of a bit of mentoring. She was one of the girls that I was mentoring, but she’s all over now. She’s doing modeling for all different kinds of brands, small boutiques and also big retail chains as well, so it’s really cool.

E: You’ve done Target which is like my favorite store ever, so A+, 100%; but then, what else have you done? Have you done other shoots in more mainstream things?

R: Target’s sort of being the shoot the so far. I haven’t gotten back in to too much of the modeling, but I’ve been doing a few different articles for different magazines and stuff on the Target shoot, just trying to sort of spread the message of why it’s important for people with disabilities to be in the media. I’ll be looking for some more modeling soon I think.

E: I think that’s a big thing. We’d love to get to the point where it’s like, “Oh, someone has a disability and they are in a Target advertisement, cool,” but right now, I think it still requires that sort of extra media attention to get it out there.

R: I mean, well, for me, it was crazy like because on one hand, I was like so pumped to be sort of the first adult with a disability in Australia to be in a nationwide advertising campaign for a major realtor. I was like, "Man, that's so cool that I get to do that," but on the other hand, I'm like, "Man, it's 2016, and I'm the first person to do this and it's making worldwide news literally, that's crazy."

K: I mean, when you put it like that, but--

R: No.

K: No, but you're right. I guess it shouldn't be worldwide news, but I mean, I don't know about you, but if it were me, I would feel kind of cool that I was the first person to do that.

R: No, like it's super cool, but I'm just a bit **[0:16:16 inaudible].**

K: Sort of double it **[0:16:16 inaudible]** I don't know. I see--

R: Yes.

E: I mean, it's good for you like it's super good for you, but then, it's one of those things where when you think about the larger context. I mean, this had been, to me, everytime I write something and get commended on it or something like that, or everytime Kyle and I get commended on doing the podcast, I'm just like on the one hand, we really appreciate it. On the other hand, we shouldn't even have to be having these conversations.

R: Yes, that's it. That's my exact feeling on it, yes.

E: I mean, nevertheless, it's still cool and also, I can't think of a cooler person to do it.

R: Well, I'm flattered.

E: I mean, I think it's great. Then, we talked about media and stuff like that too, but I don't think that a disabled person's only job is to make themselves visible in that way. Do you ever feel tokenized at all or do you ever feel like as much as you're voicing a trail or paving a path that at the same time, you're also still the disabled person?

R: I think Australia, it's coming a long way in including people especially after the Paralympics, people were sort of realizing the importance of really seeing disability, in diversity and the fact that you can't really call yourself diverse unless you're including disability in the mix.

There's more and more people getting into things like advertising, and we're seeing more people with disabilities on TV and things like that, but there's definitely certain times when I'm approached by someone with foreign opinion and I'm kind of like, "Wow," like, "Is there no one else, like you could have gone to on this," so yes.

I mean, even with the Target thing, I was super proud of them for taking that step forward and it was a big step for them to take, but the way that they did it, it was kind of like, "Ah, a discussion with Robyn," like, "The disabled athlete on fashion," where I would have actually appreciated it if they just included me just as a model just next to everyone else, but just being in a wheelchair rather than making it like a special segment in the catalogue, so yes.

E: See, that, I don't think I realized. I mean, I think there were pictures of the advertisement going around when it was really being heavily covered by the news, right?

R: Yes.

K: I remember seeing them, yes.

E: Yes, but I don't think I realized quite how noticeable it was to the point where it was like, "Look, we have a person in a wheelchair," in our advertisement. It's like we're getting there. It's progress. It's slow, but steady progress I guess is the way to put it.

R: I mean, I guess in the beginning, you got to have that overreach to some level to get people to notice, to get people to understand, and you want companies that are taking that step to be praised so that they can see the value in it as well.

I mean, I don't mind, but I definitely can't wait until we get to the point where it's just, okay, so you're going to have people of different shapes and sizes, and different ethnicities in your catalogue that means you're also going to have people with disabilities in your catalogues, so yes.

K: As well as yearning for the day where having people of different shapes, sizes, ethnicities and disability doesn't automatically make you some bastion of progressiveness either.

R: Yes, definitely.

K: Yes.

E: Yes, that's so true. I mean, right now, we have to celebrate this stuff, but it's the same thing with Speechless, right? Everyone's making this huge big deal out of it, but I'm pretty excited for the day, should it come in our lifetime, where we don't have to be like, "Oh, my God, a person in a wheelchair on mainstream television, wow."

R: Yes, definitely. I think even sort of the producers of the show have even noted that like they didn't set out to make a story that was necessarily like a disability story. They kind of just wanted a character in a wheelchair, but now, it's become so much more than that because people are like, "Wow. It's finally happening," like, "Look how relatable this is," so yes. I'm excited to see how things progress and how much more we can sort of expect form the media in the future.

E: Do you feel the need to be relatable? I don't know if that question makes sense, but I know when I do things, I try to do them in such a way that I'm not alienating people and I'm always sort of bringing disability to a level where it's understandable and accessible for everyone.

R: Yes. I mean, I'm totally about positive advocacy in trying to educate people, and trying to make people laugh and sort of attacking it on a relatable level because I think when you get too serious with things or when you start attacking people because they've discriminated you against you or whatever, they have a different opinion or they have a certain perception disability, I don't actually think that does much to sort of push your agenda or get people to realize what you're searching for.

I'm very much about trying to keep things on my channel very light, and positive and relatable just because I found that really great way to connect with audiences, both disabled and able-bodied, in a great way to sort of change perceptions because it's not making people defensive because of opinions that they may have held or perceptions that they may have held.

E: Have you ever had someone come back at you if they disagree with your opinion? I mean, sometimes no matter how positive you might be, and Kyle and I encountered this with the podcast, no matter how chill you try to be with something, you still get someone who's like, "No, I don't agree with what you're saying"?

R: Yes, I mean, I have. I've had people sort of say, "Oh, that wasn't my experience. You can't just sort of put it that way," or I even had one person on Tumbler saying, "You shouldn't use the word cripple," like, "Don't call yourself a cripple," and I'm like, "Oh, okay. Sorry."

K: I just--

R: Yes, so--

K: That's so funny to me because it's like it's so like individualistic. I don't understand how… especially with disability, telling someone what they can and can't do or say for themselves it's like… I don't know.

R: I mean, I guess because--

K: What's your end goal when you do that?

R: I mean, I guess because the disabled community is so broad and there's so many ways you can be disabled. You can have an acquired disability. You can have a genetic disability. You can be disabled through chronic illness. They're all very different experiences, so I guess we're not all going to agree on everything; but I think sort of the more that we can come together as a community and sort of fight for common things, the better because obviously the more voices, the better. I can totally understand--

K: It's like music to my ears.

R: --not everyone agreeing on everything.

E: I mean, it's tough because I don't agree with the way that certain people refer to themselves when it comes to disability. I specially don't like the term "special needs" or "physically challenged" I don't need to dance around it. It is what it is, but I think at the end of the day, as long as you're not trying to impose that choice on me, although I guess maybe I'm guilty of trying to impose what I think is more correct on other people, at the end of the day, I'd rather you just respect whatever I say about myself and not try to change me.

R: That's it, yes.

K: Absolutely, and--

R: I mean, anyone can call themselves whatever they want. For me, it's just about sort of sharing my opinion, and my perspective, and why that's the case, and if that can educate someone or if that could change the way someone thinks and that's awesome, but if not, yes, as long as they're not sort of telling me what to do, I don't really care.

E: If you weren't doing all of this media stuff, what would you do? What would be your dream?

R: Well, I'm an athlete.

E: Because I know you're something else you do.

R: Well, I'm an athlete. My primary focus is athletics. I'm a wheelchair racer. My goal is to represent my country, to go to the Paralympics one day and to reach the highest level of sport, so that's pretty much what I spend the majority of my time doing when I'm not filming videos, and modeling and doing all that other stuff.

E: Is this going to be one of those things where we can say, "We knew her when and then she ended up in the Paralympics?" Is that it?

R: That's the goal. That's the dream.

K: That would be so amazing actually. I'm really **[0:25:00 inaudible].** That's like really noble though because I mean, I think Emily I don't know if we made an episode about this or if we just talked about making an episode about this, but when it comes to athletics in particular, you and I would talk about what constitutes inspiration porn and I would say like there has to be like a line where if a person with a disability can do something that is seen as inspiring without being inspo porn, and I think a Paralympian might be the line because like if you tell me that you want to be a Paralympian, I can go, "Oh, wow.

That's really inspiring," because I can't do that even as a disabled person and like I'm not physically able to do that not because I'm disabled, just because my body isn't for sport and so it's like really cool.

R: It was a big discussion around the last Paralympics because I know Channel 4 sort of had the super human advert out and that caused a lot of discussion about inspo porn and stuff. Those people saying, "Oh, a Paralympian shouldn't be called inspiring," and I'm like, "But wait a minute, you call Olympians inspiring because they're reaching the pinnacle of sports," so I think a Paralympian is doing the exact same thing, but just they have a disability.

If you consider an Olympian to be inspiring, then you should consider a Paralympian to be inspiring and especially for me, those people they are my heroes, they are the people that I look up to and they are the people that I strive to be. For me, they're inspiring.

I don't think it's just clear cut as know that a disabled person's not inspiring just because they're disabled. It's just if they're doing something that would challenge people or if they're doing something that's out of the ordinary, then yes, it's fine to call them inspirational I think.

K: I agree with you 100%. It's refreshing to hear that echoed by somebody else.

E: Yes, I feel pretty similar. I think the only thing though is the framing of like the whole super human thing. I mean, they didn't do that for the regular Olympics so quote--

R: I understand, yes.

E: --"regular." The Olympics and the Paralympics, I mean actually, that's a question for you. Do you feel like that division is necessary between the Olympics and the Paralympics or do you sort of aspire to, one day, see them altogether competing?

R: I think technically or practically, it's not possible because in the Paralympics, you've got 32 classifications of people competing or I think it's around 32 or 20; above 20-anyway classifications of people competing. In 100 meters, you've got 20 different races for male and female. Then, combine that with the Olympics and all the other sports that are in the Paralympics, it just wouldn't fit into the two-week time constraint and it would just be mayhem.

I do understand why they've split into two different things across a month, rather than just packing it all into the two-week period that is the Olympics, but I want to get it to a level where the Olympics and the Paralympics are truly regarded as being equal, and where the competition is just fierce in both, and it's seen that way, so yes.

Practically, I don't think they need to be merged together, but I want them to be perceived the same way, for sure.

E: I think that's the ideal goal here. Now, that you're pointing that out, I see why mixing them together wouldn't make sense and also, there's wheelchair racing and a non-disabled athlete is not going to do wheelchair racing, so it makes sense.

Even the actual sports and the categories are different, but I think the one thing that I noticed was the Paralympics didn't get quite the amount of celebration or even sell the same amount of tickets as the Olympics, and so I understand what you mean about wanting people to hold it in higher regard because these athletes are just as awesome. They're just doing different sports.

R: That's it, yes. The London Olympics was the first time that they actually sold all of the tickets and didn't give any away.

Obviously, Rio, there was some problems around it being in Rio, and selling tickets and things like that, but there were problems with the Olympics as well, so I don't think that was too much of a big deal.

I think, generally, they are getting bigger and better every year. It's getting more TV coverage and people are starting to take the athletes more seriously.

The athletes, themselves, are definitely the competitions' becoming more fierce as we get more people involved in Paralympic sport, and the technology and things like that are getting better. I think it's getting there, but we just need more coverage and we just need more people to see Paralympic sport and not just in the Paralympics, so we can actually get people supporting teams in Paralympic sports before we get to Paralympics as well.

E: Do you ever feel like you're treated as a super human, but not in the empowering Paralympic sense of the word? Do you feel like people because of all you do, hold you in higher regard, but maybe not quite in the way that you're going for?

R: I mean, even just with the sport. I remember when I first started athletics and I was just pushing around the track like I didn't know what I was doing. I was going like super slow, and people would come up to me and say, "Oh, my God," like, "You're so inspiring. You're amazing. Are you going to the Paralympics," and it's like, "Dude, I'm literally failing so hard right now, that's like so insulting," so yes.

I think what people see, people with disabilities doing sport or just being out there and being visible, it still does shock them and they still have that knee jerk reaction of just wanting to call them inspirational and praise them for no apparent reason, so yes. I think it's getting better.

I think people are actually starting to take more notice of what I'm saying and what I am actually trying to achieve, rather than just taking it on face value, and then calling me inspirational and all those kinds of things.

K: Well, that's good. I mean--

E: You should have a legitimate reason for calling someone inspirational. I mean, Kyle and I are obviously inspired, but not quite for the same reasons that random people coming up to you are.

R: Yes, that's it. I think another thing is, as well, like sometimes, we forget that you can't control how someone's inspired like you can't say, "No." You can't **[0:31:26 inaudible].**

K: That's true.

R: You can educate them on why perhaps it would be better for them to find someone else inspiring or to find you inspiring for a different reason, but you can't control someone's emotions in where they draw inspiration from.

K: That is very true and a very good point. It's something that actually… we've never touched on, on this show, so it's a very good point.

E: Yes, but we can sure try. We can sure try to, at least, stir them in a slightly different direction.

R: Yes, definitely.

E: Do you educate people when you encounter them? Kyle and I have slightly different opinions on **[0:31:59 inaudible]** moments where I feel like I don't always want to be a giant teachable moment, but I somehow end up being one. Kyle doesn't mind.

K: No, I never mind. I think they're great. I mean, I understand why you wouldn't want to be it all the time, but it happens to me so rarely because my disability is very visible that when it happens, I'm always like, "Oh, yes. This is **[0:32:19 inaudible]**."

R: I mean, it depends on the date. It depends how I'm feeling.

K: Yes.

R: If I'm feeling good, then--

K: I can respect that.

R: I have no clue educating people or teach them about myself, and the way that I see disability and all that kind of stuff, but if I'm on a bad mood, I just tend to put my headphones and roll away.

E: I feel you on that. I mean, sometimes I'm willing to take the time; but other times, I'm just like, "Not today. Sorry."

R: I mean, I think it's kind of expected of us as well like… yeah.

E: I guess this points a little bit towards cultural similarities and differences. How would you say that the responses to disability are different in Australia as compared to the United States? I mean, I think you've been here before, right?

R: I was like super young and it was amazing. I was in Disneyland and I was in a wheelchair, so I just **[0:33:13 inaudible].**

K: You had the golden ticket?

R: Yes.

K: That's right.

E: Okay. You're a little bias--

R: Definitely.

E: --but in all seriousness, I mean, wheelchair perks are super awesome, but like would you say that at least from what you've read, or from what you've heard or experienced that there are cultural differences in the way that disability is perceived?

R: I think here in Australia, whether you're disabled or not, there's very much sort of an attitude of everyone should be able to have a go or like mateship and they really love a story of like an underdog or someone who's had to fight for something and they really want to see everyone just being given opportunity and everyone being able to give a go. When I sort of came to Australia from England, I definitely noticed that difference.

I remember coming home from school saying, “Oh, mom, mom, the kids at school when I was playing sport like they passed me the ball and they didn’t care that I couldn’t kick it properly,” and all that kind of stuff, so that was the difference. I know from England where to here, people they want to see everyone have a go and they want to see people included on most levels whereas England, it’s very much like if you’re different, they don’t really bother with you and, “Oh, you’re disabled, so just don’t try at sport,” or, “Just don’t do this, just don’t do that.” I’m not sure how it is in America, but that’s definitely what I noticed coming from England.

K: From what you described, it sounds like America is like a little bit in between with leaning toward how you’re describing how England was. Would you agree with that, Emily?

E: Yes, I was literally just thinking the same thing here, but probably in Australia and England, too. It’s very person-dependent. I mean, obviously, you have people who just see disability as another part of a person, but unfortunately, I think most people still see it as a major differentiator and then they kind of treat you like you’re a little bit alien to them.

R: I mean, I think that’s still the same here. Like I said, the amount of strangers that will come up to me, and try and strike conversations to stuff which I don’t get when I’m walking, that’s quite interesting for me because I’m a parttime wheelchair user and I walk parttime. I’m sort of able to analyze the differences in how I’m perceived and how people talk to me when I’m in a wheelchair and when I’m walking.

I mean like here, we still have extremely high unemployment rates with people with disability. We still have a lot of people with disabilities living in poverty. It’s definitely not perfect, but I think for me, it seemed better than England in terms of attitudes, but possibly worse in terms of like social mobility, and benefits and that kind of thing, so yes.

E: It sounds like you’re right in the middle of me and Kyle because you’re a part-time walker, a part-time wheelchair user. You’re like the middleman of us.

K: Which actually it makes your perspective really easy. In fact, I think we can probably do a whole episode on just the way people treat you differently or when you’re rolling around versus when you’re walking around. I find that very interesting.

R: It’s really fascinating like even to the point like where people will come up and give me compliments when I’m in my wheelchair, but they won’t when

I'm walking and it's just kind of like it almost makes the compliments like backhanded. It's like **[0:36:34 inaudible]**--

K: **[0:36:33 inaudible]** in person.

R: --that because I'm in a wheelchair.

K: Yes.

R: Yes.

E: I question that all the time.

K: That is so interesting to me like my God, we really should do like a followup episode.

E: No, for real because sometimes I'm like, "Are you just being nice because I'm in a wheelchair and you feel like you need to boost my ego or do you actually mean that?" It's a constant trouble. It's really real.

R: I swear if everyone was in a wheelchair, the world would be--

E: Yes, but it's like what is the great equalizer. Is that all in our heads or are we all going to have to have the same physical experiences in order for that to happen? It's like I wish that we didn't need to find ways to sort of see other people's experiences or try to have other people's experiences before we can show them any respect.

K: Well, I mean, I agree with you; but if everyone looked the same and was the same mobility wise, like if we were all just rolling gray blobs, then any compliment would necessarily have to be about you instead of how you look. I guess in that case, it would be a more genuine place; but it would be strange and almost every other.

E: I think we have a movie here, the Rolling Gray Blobs and some sort of social experiment **[0:37:51 inaudible]** be.

K: Someone call the Weinstein Company. Let's do it.

E: No. I'm kind of excited about this movie prospect now. If a movie producer is listening to our little show, yes, hit us up.

Okay, no, but for real, so we've been talking for quite a while and I think you're particularly fun to talk to Robyn like we said before, multifaceted. There's more than just one thing to talk about with you, so that's pretty cool. But on the whole, is there anything that we didn't touch on or something that you would want to leave listeners with that we didn't even think of because there was just so much to talk about?

R: You kind of put me in the spot there. I'm not sure **[0:38:38 inaudible].**

E: Sorry.

K: That’s like the third time we did that. I’m so sorry.

E: You know what, this is how we keep the conversation real.

R: **[0:38:47 inaudible].**

E: You can tell this is not scripted.

R: Yes. No. I mean, for me, I’m about sharing my story and it’s not because I’m like super vain, I love talking about myself, which I do. I must admit. I think it’s just like you said, the more we can learn from other people’s experiences, the more empathetic we can be, the more things become relatable, and I think that’s the thing with disability. It’s hard for a lot of people to relate to it. It’s also because they have to sort of accept the fact that they could become disabled one day as well or how that would change things and people don’t want to think about that.

I think if we can try and talk about it in terms of like how we can relate it to other things and it’s a lot easier for people to deal with it, it’s a lot easier for people to understand, so that’s why I’m about sharing my story, and sort of sharing my opinions and listening to other people’s opinions as well, so yes.

E: See, that wasn’t so bad considering I put you on the spot. I think that--

K: Yes, that was pretty good.

E: --that wraps it up pretty nicely. I mean, when Kyle and I tried to do our takeaways, we just like scramble over ourselves.

K: It adds like a whole five extra minutes to a show, so stupid.

E: But we’re going to do it anyway. We’re going to give our takeaways right now. Ready, go Kyle.

K: Yes, Robyn’s really cool and she says things that we agree with, that’s my **[0:40:11 inaudible].**

E: That was practically cheating.

K: I don’t know. What did I say last time we had I guest? I probably talked about her.

E: Yes, you probably said, “Oh, Ashley’s really cool.”

K: Yes, I’m bad at this part. This part is not my strong suit. Ending it, no way, man I can’t do it.

E: We’re really terrible at this. You know why? Because it’s like we could totally keep going, but we try to keep our podcast to a certain length so that we don’t drag people away from listening.

R: **[0:40:39 crosstalk]** 24-hour podcast marathon.

E: Okay. My takeaway is also that Robyn’s pretty cool and awesome; but more importantly, I would say a person can have a lot to their identity and have that really rich identity, but also just be a person **[0:41:03 inaudible]** person and I think that’s what I would want people to take away from this is that you’re an awesome person, but you’re a person.

K: People are people **[0:41:13 inaudible].**

R: I’m so glad that we finally confirm--

E: That was terrible.

R: --that I’m the **[0:41:16 inaudible].**

K: That’s your **[0:41:17 inaudible]**

E: Yeah. I mean, this whole time, we weren’t really sure **[0:41:22 inaudible]**

R: I was considering that I’m **[0:41:22 inaudible]**

K: It was an ongoing rumor, but now, we know.

E: Wow, okay. Those were officially the worst takeaways we’ve ever done.

R: There’s only up from here.

K: But that’s okay. We’ll top ourselves in the future, no doubt.

E: Or down, seriously. If you know us, it’s only down probably but--

K: Come on. She was giving us hope. You took it away.

E: Sorry.

K: It was free hope.

E: Sorry. Okay. Glass half full optimism, we appreciate it. Thanks for the encouragement, but yes, for real, okay. Those were the worst takeaways of all time, but we really appreciate you being here, Robyn. This was a lot of fun.

R: No, thanks so much for having me. I love this show. We just keep talking forever, but let’s cut it off.

E: Well, we could always have you back in the future.

K: Absolutely.

E: There'll probably be other reasons that we'll want to talk; but in the meantime, if anyone else wants **[0:42:15 inaudible]**, where can they find you?

R: You could find me @robynlambird on Instagram and from there, you can find me on all the many social medias.

E: See, I got to start doing that. My name's aren't the same across everything so--

R: Yes, **[0:42:24 inaudible]** different. I just sort of **[0:42:26 inaudible]** Instagram and then, from there, you can do the hard work and find me elsewhere.

E: Exactly. You got to work for it, people. Robyn's important. Okay. I think that officially wraps this up and thank you so much to everyone for listening even as we, once again, as always, evolved into complete ridiculousness by the end of the show.

R: Thanks for having me. Thanks.

E: Yes, we're glad you were here, Robyn. Thank you so much.

K: Thank you.

E: That's a wrap on this episode of The Accessible Stall. Bye.

K: See you.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]