

Growing Up Disabled in Australia

By Carly Findlay

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**SECONDARY BOOK
OF THE MONTH**

Blurb:

'My body and its place in the world seemed normal to me. Why wouldn't it?'

'I didn't grow up disabled; I grew up with a problem. A problem that those around me wanted to fix.'

'We have all felt that uncanny sensation that someone is watching us.'

'The diagnosis helped but it didn't fix everything.'

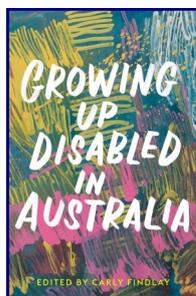
'Don't fear the labels.'

'That identity, which I feared for so long, is now one of my greatest qualities.'

'I had become disabled - not just by my disease, but by the way the world treated me. When I found that out, everything changed.'

One in five Australians has a disability. And disability presents itself in many ways. Yet disabled people are still underrepresented in the media and in literature. In *Growing Up Disabled in Australia* - compiled by writer and appearance activist Carly Findlay OAM - more than forty writers with a disability or chronic illness share their stories, in their own words. The result is illuminating.

Contributors include senator Jordon Steele-John, paralympian Isis Holt, Dion Beasley, Sam Drummond, Astrid Edwards, Sarah Firth, El Gibbs, Eliza Hull, Gayle Kennedy, Carly-Jay Metcalfe, Fiona Murphy, Jessica Walton and many more.



Lamont Review:

Growing Up Disabled in Australia is a wonderful and eye-opening collection of stories from a broad group of Australian writers with a disability or chronic illness.

The real highlight and strength of the *Growing Up Disabled in Australia* collection of stories, like the other titles in this series, is that it shows just how diverse the individual experiences of the writers are. The stories featured in this collection span a wide variety of experiences, from those who grew up with a disability from their childhood, to those who became disabled later in life, or who came to identify as disabled as adults. The stories also encompass a wide range of disabilities - both physical and mental, and from the invisible to the obvious.

There are many wonderful stories, but one of the highlights for me was the story from Kit, who has cerebral palsy, and her message that she does not have to wear the hopes of other people, she has her own.

Although the stories are individual there are many themes in this collection that appear across the stories. One example that appears in a number of the stories is a frustration at how other people feel the need to 'heal' the writer or 'make them better', and how this perspective can impact on their lives.

This collection grabbed me from the first story, and in all my years of reading and selecting books for Standing Order, this is the best anthology that I have read. A brilliant book that will stay with me for a long time, and I highly recommend it. It does contain some stronger language, so will be best suited to readers aged 15 and up.

Reviewed by Rob