

STREET LIBRARIAN

An update from the Utne stacks by librarian Chris Dodge



More Than Enabled, Empowered

Feisty magazines about disabled people

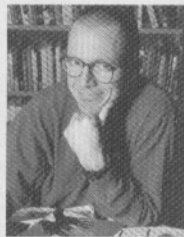
A former co-worker of mine saved someone's life. After hearing a splash from the pond outside his house one day, Paul realized that a neighbor had plunged into deep water. Clambering down a bank, he swam out and hauled the man to safety. According to common parlance, this was impossible. After all, Paul is "wheelchair-bound."

That term is patently absurd. For Paul, whose legs were crippled by polio, a wheelchair enables mobility. It's not a torture device, nor something he can't get into—and out of—by himself. Whether or not you've pondered this sort of stereotyping before, considered the need for ramps at curbs, or thought being disabled means getting really good parking spots, here are some publications worth reading.

The feisty **Ragged Edge** magazine, formerly *Disability Rag & Resource*, has been raising a ruckus about disabled people's rights for more than 20 years. Cogent, outspoken, and joyfully resistant to stereotyping, its pages feature scathing satire and clearheaded thinking about everything from design and access issues (lifts on public buses, for example), to enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act. *Ragged Edge* also dares touch upon bleaker aspects of disabilities such as depression, suicide, and medical testing without informed consent. *Subscriptions:*

\$17.50 (6 issues) from Box 145, Louisville, KY 40201; www.raggededgemagazine.com

Mouth, self-proclaimed "Voice of the Disability Nation," has confronted discrimination fearlessly since 1990.



Unafraid of ruffling feathers (they'd rather be effective than polite) they lambaste Jerry Lewis and "serial killer" Jack Kevorkian alike, and suggest political organizing tactics that are sometimes over the top. *Subscriptions: \$32, \$16 for disabled people and their families* (6 issues) from 4201 SW 30th St., Topeka, KS 66614; www.mouthmag.com

Unlike *Ragged Edge* and *Mouth*, **New Mobility** is a glossy monthly full of ads for high-tech catheters, power wheelchairs, and cars modified for use by physically disabled people. While its articles are generally upbeat, sometimes relentlessly so ("What's sexy about your disability?"), the magazine doesn't ignore advocacy and politics. Its stories about people who deal with adjustment and pain exclude no one, really. *Subscriptions: \$27.95 (12 issues) from Box 220, Horsham, PA 19044; www.newmobility.com*

Similarly, **WeMedia** is full of stories in which disabled people dress beautifully and do cool things. Problematically, its bright profiles of Paralympics athletes and cane-using skateboarder performance artists make being disabled seem fun. At its best, though, *WeMedia* informs and inspires, with

articles about accessible travel and assistive technology, impish cartoons by John Callahan, and reviews of books, films, and plays. *Subscriptions: \$12.95 (6 issues) from 130 William St., New York, NY 10038; www.wemedia.com*

Also notable: **CDR Reports**, the monthly newsletter of the Council for Disability Rights. *Subscriptions: \$15 from 205 W. Randolph, Suite 1650, Chicago, IL 60606; www.disabilityrights.org*

This Just In

What If? Journal of Radical

Possibilities is a substantial new magazine blending history with hopeful futurism. The 114-page first issue contains articles on grassroots English movements of the 17th century (Levellers, Diggers, Ranters) and contemporary activist puppet theater, while the next edition will focus on visionary activists of the past in the Americas. *Subscriptions: \$8 each from Christy Rodgers, from 125 Buena Vista Terrace, San Francisco, CA 94117*

The New Formulation: An Anti-Authoritarian Review of Books

is a new semiannual publication devoted to comparative book reviews enlightened by anarchist theory and politics. The initial edition (Nov. 2001) contains essays on anthologies of prisoners' writings, books on the anti-globalization movement, and Black Panther histories. *Subscriptions: \$7 (2 issues) 2620 Second Ave., #4B, San Diego, CA 92103*

Entering its eighth year of publication, **Paj Ntaub Voice** recently came to my attention. The semiannual bilingual journal features interesting writing and artwork by Hmoob (Hmong) Americans, including poetry and essays on topics ranging from cultural identity to marriage customs. *Subscriptions: \$5 each from 995 University Ave. W., Suite 220, St. Paul, MN 55104*

Good Girl is a new zine that reminds me of the early editions of *Bitch*. The second issue (Winter 2002) focuses on "all things sexual," with articles on slash fiction, body image, bisexuality, natural birth control, and polyamory. *Subscriptions: \$8.95 (2 issues) Box 202, 2738 Dundas St. W., Toronto, ON M6P 1Y3; www.goodgirl.ca*