DARLENE MCLENNAN: Move to our next presenter, Ben Whitburn, from Deakin University. Deb Rooskov is going to share his presentation. Dr Ben is a senior lecturer in Inclusive Education and the Director of Masters of Special Inclusive Education at Deakin University. Dr Whitburn seeks to heighten equity across the educational sector by building the capacity of educators to address breaches between theory and practice. I often tell Ben that I sleep with him each night. It's terrifying. I do have his book by my bed, which I'm working my way through, his latest book, Disability and the University; a Disabled Students’ Manifesto, which I recommend to all of you. I'll hand over to you, Ben. Welcome, I'm looking forward to this presentation.

DR BEN WHITBURN: Thank you, Darlene. That's quite the introduction. Hi, everyone. I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation from where I am presenting. They are the traditional owners of what is now known as the Melbourne region and in recognition that, of course, we are dispersed across the many countries that comprise what is Australia today. I pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging from across these varied lands. Now, I will let you all know that I am unavoidably vision impaired. I'm using a screen reader and a Focus 40 Braille display connected to an iPhone to do the presentation. Luckily, there's Deb and Darlene running the PowerPoint and the buttons and moderating any comments, challenges or questions that appear in the chat. To that end, and actually importantly to my presentation today, the support I am drawing on is indispensable to it going ahead, both technologically and personally. Hopefully, my meaning will come out as I present further. I'll do my best also to describe what appears on the screen, which is largely text-based but I integrated it into my presentation, as I go along. Today, what I want to draw your attention to is what we might call points of departure or the ways that we orientate our thinking towards inclusion in higher education and, in addition, disability. How good is everybody's Latin here? Nehil de nobis sine nobis. Nothing about us without us. Now, this is a phrase we've heard quite a lot of across the three days of the conference so far and it's one I wish to consider a little further. In particular, it came from 16th century Poland where people were trying to – where they were handing over from a monarchy to a republic. It's made its way into disability scholarship by way of a fellow named James Charlton who wrote a book in 1988 where he interviewed a lot of advocates of disability from across the world. What he found in his research, which raise conscious for people with disabilities was the objective of these advocates, both politically and personally with everyday facets of their lives. What Charlton’s research really found was, what raising consciousness really meant was to – well, the concept revolved around group organisation. Without conscious interest in everyday life, he writes, social change is subject to whimsy and chance. Now, raising consciousness for them shifted disability from a medical deficiency to a social one. If we might understand this as two ends of a spectrum, to some extent, we have swapped medical for social. This resonates with lots of the things that go on today. Now, there's an inevitable lament that comes to educators, practitioners, students and their families as to how inclusive education policy consistently fails to make its mark on practice and leaves those so desperate for its fulfilment in its wake. My contention today is that some of the ideas and the tools that we have been using may have been misappropriated and outdated and new theories that build on these in the discipline of what we call disability studies in education can help us to maintain relevancy. That is to say, inclusion in education is really little more than a theory, that is, until it is enacted in a situated practice. At this stage, I think many might agree that inclusive education tends to be understood in terms that are remedial compensatory and perhaps even mitigative of barriers and difference. They're the sorts of things I want to discuss today. There'll be two interconnected provocations that I want to make in this presentation. Firstly, I'm borrowing from the writing of Dan Goodley. "Our discussions may well start with disability, but it will not end with it as we consider broader transformative possibilities." Also, some work that I've been doing with some colleagues at Deakin about inclusion in higher education, inclusion in education more generally, are conceptually and temporally mediated. That is to say, the concepts that we use lead us to a point and perhaps they’ve reached their utility. We'll draw together provocations and expand on their relevance for educators and practitioners by emphasising conceptual relationality in engaging in teaching and learning. Let's start with a bit of history. What you can see on the screen here, hopefully, is a picture of Ed Roberts and he was the first man with a disability who used a wheelchair to attend the University of California, Berkeley, in the 1960s in the United States. He had contracted polio at a young age, and he slept in an iron lung. Forgive me for using these words but it's a quote that Ed Roberts has actually recalled himself, the university telling him when he tried to enrol. "We tried cripples and they don't work." We might question what was meant by the term "cripple" and we might question what was meant by the term "work", but he successfully litigated against the university and he managed to get entrance to study the course of his choosing. Now, there are points here that resonate with today. The support that he received was, at the time, ad hoc, funding precarious and staff often did not understand their roles and responsibilities to provide Roberts access to learning. While this was going on, Roberts was joined by other students. Given that he slept in an iron lung, he was accommodated in what was the on‑campus hospital. However, in that way, he lobbied for others to join him for that to become a dormitory and he was joined by six or seven other people with disabilities. They claim, of course, that they were segregated by living in a hospital on campus, but amongst them, they were included socially, intellectually and it led them to some interesting outcomes. That is to say, the group would go on to start an activist collective called the Rolling Quads and this was a coalition of disabled students determined to increase accessibility across campus, build a residence outside of the hospital grounds and secure financial assistance for personal care attendants. They successfully did that and the group evolved into an effective political force, a disability rights group that lobbied more broadly for the creation of student support model and the student disability program, which actually is the precursor for the likes of many of the disability resource centres that we have in universities today, which is an interesting bit of history. Now, of course, across the Atlantic Ocean, at the time, similar political actions were taking place. The Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation was an organisation formed exclusively of people with disabilities and they published themselves a manifesto in 1976 entitled the “Fundamental Principles of Disability”. Big words. Similarly, to the Rolling Quads, the principle cause of exclusion for people with disabilities according to them was not their impairments as such but the barriers that prevented them from participating in everyday life on par with their able-bodied peers. This manifesto would go on to serve as the point of departure for what Mike Oliver later coined the Social Model of Disability, which of course, is a popular or well‑known cultural artefact of disability scholarship and activism that has had international appeal. Like Ed Roberts and the Rolling Quads, this drew out to the broader services agenda away from education to include transport, labour market conditions and so forth. Bringing things a bit closer to home and to the present day, the notion of inclusive education today is frequently presented within a rights‑based argument. That is to say that people with disabilities are the rights holders. Part of this framework is that, as rights holders, they have the right to enrol and participate in learning and it's our responsibility to make that happen. There's a really interesting quote here from Lucy Series, something that she published last year that refers to this rights‑based discourse through the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. She writes, “The benchmark against which successful implementation of the CRPD will be measured is the extent to which disabled people really do enjoy equal rights in comparison with others in their society.” I will return to this rights situation in a couple of slides down the track. I'm kind of returning to my second provocation here. I've gone back to the Bradley Report from 2008 and gone through it a bit like a discourse analysis to make sense of how, in this document, inclusive education is understood, inclusion for people with disabilities is understood in a fairly landmark report from 2008. I think these are interesting terms and I'll go through the list for you. There's widening participation, equity, access and participation of underrepresented groups of students and social inclusion. What is interesting here is, again, like I say, temporal bounded ideas about what inclusive education is. I think we could probably all argue that it goes a bit respond legal enrolment and widening participation today and that we really would like to be lobbying for involvement of people with disabilities in some of the other aspects that are important to universities today such as what is knowledge and whose knowledge counts, impact in research, inclusion in the employability agenda. I think these are really important points that it's incumbent on all of us to consider in our roles. I've recently taken quite an interest in time or, more specifically, how, as educators and educational support, we utilise time in ways that can either promote or hinder inclusive education. Now, there's been a lot of casual references made to time in this conference that I've found fascinating. Yesterday and the day before, a lot about being time‑poor, about educators understanding that to make something accessible or inclusive may take more time. Merrin's presentation this afternoon was really interesting about students who could gain a lot by getting some extra time for their examinations. These are really common, reasonable adjustments that are made. Courses of study in higher education are often subject to strict temporal conditions. Students are expected to apply themselves to pre-set blocks of learning, time through semesters, assessment periods, showing progress against year level curricula and these are preconceived programs of duration. Students are therefore - if we are able to get through without disclosing a disability or a need for a reasonable adjustment, students are therefore included on the basis that they can comply with a normative way of doing things within the timeframes that have been set. Now, at our university, there's 11 weeks for a trimester, probably about 10 weeks of teaching, maybe two hours of that per week. It doesn't leave you a lot of time to engage with things and perhaps you need more time. Much of the literature about the experiences of student exclusion actually speak to the contrary of the capacity to comply with this time. There's often discussions made about insufficient time or the inability to adapt to restrictions of time. Teachers often argue as well that they haven't got time, as I said earlier, to make adjustments for students. Really interesting area to be putting research into but I guess disclosure and individualised planning provides a way that temporal standards can be challenged. However, disclosure is not always something that people want to do, nor are plans implemented consistently. So, here's where I finally get to what is on the slide and that is a concept of crip time, which you might be familiar with. Crip time is really drawing on crip theory. That is to say, our disabilities are there and we may take differential ways of time and ways to access our work. There's a great quote from Ellen Samuels on the screen. Ellen Samuels is an academic, a disability scholar from the United States who lives with a condition that means that she has variations in time and capacity to participate in day‑to‑day life. She writes, "We who occupy the bodies of crip time know that we are never linear and we rage silently ‑ or not so silently ‑ at the almost straightforwardness of those who live in the sheltered space of normative time." I find this to be a fascinating idea and have really started writing about it myself in terms of how assistive technologies also provide for variability in time. For example, using a screen reader, I can get through text really quickly, but as Karen McCaul showed us the other day, when the text isn't accessible, it makes it a lot slower. Also, yesterday, Helen spoke of all of these activities, trying to get a train to the City of London, that produced variations in time, which I think is a really important aspect of accessibility that we might want to take on board when we're trying to support educational inclusion. Here's where I come back to the rights‑based argument. We know that rights are frequently breached and I think it's important that we don't get carried away with the universalities of rights. Thinking about this, I've gone to explore some literature that explores some of the critiques of human rights in what we would call, I guess, academically but also how they affect people on the ground. Michalinos Zembylas has done a fantastic review of universal rights and some of the critiques of these. I find them really interesting for the ways that - hopefully, my point will come out as I get to my point in this slide. Universal human rights define a preferred universal human identity that not everyone can really reach. That might be a problem for us if we're trying to include people on the basis that there's a single framework for what that might look like or even one that it's widening participation to those who are considered non‑traditional. They've also come up with ‑ well, the second critique there is that human rights tend to be written in a way that helps people to achieve an outcome that is driven by capitalist interests. Now, to go back on the first few slides that I was showing with Ed Roberts and Mike Oliver, what I had described there were manifestos that are dependent on voice and experience of people with disabilities. Nothing about us without us, which is great, but these examples have been significant to the movement primarily because in their ways, they're voices of people with disabilities that have involved political action about what counts as knowledge and whose knowledge counts. Here's the issue that I want to raise. At the same time, the examples are given in global north contexts by white men with physical impairments who advocate for universal design approaches to respond to the segregation based on their limited experiences. That is to say, in the globalised world that we live in today, there's a lot more going on, there's a lot more differentiated people with diverse intersectional abilities who come to our universities and ought to be included on the same basis. So, to that end, the argument that I'm putting forward here is that the tools that we've been using and the ideas that we've been drawing on have very much been limited in themselves in that they were underpinned by ideas that were not as diverse as we perhaps might have thought they were and perhaps their utility might be built on, or their utility might be made more plausible if we build on them instead of just dragging them out of the cupboard and using them at face value. I might quickly mention, you might have noticed that there's a click every time Deb changes slide. If, perhaps, you take nothing more from this presentation today, there's a transitional tool that you can go to in PowerPoint to put a click or any sound you like in animations that helps people know what slide that you're going onto and I find that really useful. I hope maybe you might as well. Here, I am returning to Dan Goodley's argument that while in our discussions about inclusion of higher education, we might start with disability, we certainly don't end with it as we seek to transform the way we practice. I've also suggested that neither the social model position nor the medical model position as singular frameworks of explanation are sufficient to explain how best to support the inclusion of students with disabilities in either of the educational sectors. I'm also nervous a little bit about voice for reasons that I have kind of explained as well in that issues can easily arise when we exaggerate the concept of emancipation and student agency and empowerment associated with listening to their voiced experiences. We run the risk of essentialising identities by giving only those with the loudest voices to be heard while others remain on the periphery. From that end, biases can actually appear in our practices. What is my suggestion to that end? What I've been building an argument towards today is to recognise and work affirmatively with the hybridity and messiness of disability and any number of other intersectional circumstances as a point of departure. That is the interconnectedness and interdependence that underpin inclusion. That's to recognise that all of us take responsibility here and not just the individual student whose autonomy we're trying to reach at all costs. To this end, the role of disability support in taking up such an orientation is to promote such a position, albeit one that supports a person's temporal differentiation and their technological use, or perhaps the necessity or desire to work with a note taker in person along with any other new advancements of technology that may come about for us. It is the turn to the relational and the productive potential of difference that allows us to go on. I make the provocation that, in the interests of time, I invite everyone to consider what opportunities or possibilities are lost when we neglect to stop or at least slow down to ask questions. That is kind of the end of much of my presentation but I will get you to go to the next slide, Deb, and we turn to shameless promotion here. Darlene mentioned a book that we managed to get published last year and I'll just speak to it briefly. It's called a manifesto and it comes from diverse voices from people with disabilities who have attended university and that has been really important to us, that it perhaps isn't about the traditional voices with disability but the non‑traditional voices. Underpinning our project was an understanding that genuine attempts to be inclusive in the present day must reach further to not only people with physical impairments but also sensory, intellectual, developmental and psychosocial conditions that may manifest episodically and any number of intersectional identifiers that can also impact a person's capacity for study, including ethnicity et cetera. From the book itself, we have really focused on getting contributors from global south contexts, all people with disabilities, students who experience mental health concerns, the culture of the academy, leaving behind the limitations of mere just compliance with disability policy and so forth. There's the book cover there, I hope. We won't stay here long. It's published by Peter Lang. One thing of interest here, it was actually the last piece of writing that I'm aware of that Mike Oliver actually penned for anybody because he's written the forward. Again, making a nod here to the relevance that the social model has been fabulous for us as people with disabilities who are seeking an education and employment but he's even kind of mentioned in his forward that he understands that the world is changing and the world should change and we need to conceptualise our way around those changes. Thank you so much. It's been a pleasure and I think I have come in at just four minutes under time, so there might be time for some questions or comments there, Darlene.

DARLENE: Well done. Thank you, brilliant.

DR BEN WHITBURN: Thanks very much.

DARLENE: Such a powerful way to end the day. I just am amazed how much we can pack into three hours and going from, you know, the presentation from DESE, it felt like at the start of this morning but it was this afternoon, to end with you, Ben, and everything in between. It's just been amazing.