



## Disabling newspaper headlines

Although, in 1988, the National Union of Journalists issued guidance on how to write and not write about disabled people as part of its Campaign for Real People, negative portrayal persists. The guidance argued that stereotypes of disabled people are insulting and identified the most common stereotypes used to describe disabled people: courageous, brave, pitiable, pathetic, helpless, tragic victim, recipient of charity,

eternally grateful, abnormal, sufferer, searching for a cure, asexual.

Below are some headlines found in newspapers.

- What stereotypes can you identify in these headlines?
- Get your local paper and find examples.
- Write to the editor complaining about the use of stereotypes.

**THE BEST OF BRITISH**  
 Phil fights deafness to lead chess challenge  
*Haringey Weekly Herald*

**A TEST OF COURAGE**

Mum with no legs has real drive  
*Manchester Evening News*

**QUEEN S COUSIN LOCKED**

40 year nightmare for abandoned Kate  
*Sun 1987*

Love letter sorrow for disabled romeo Phil  
*London Paper*

**Wheelchair Victim Robbed of Pension**  
*Daily Mirror*

**FREEDOM FOR KATHIE**  
 Special van gives sclerosis sufferer her independence  
*Bury Newspaper*

Granny on air. She's blind and deaf but button-up 'Em' sure ain't dumb

*Woolwich and Charlton Mercury*  
 September 1990

**27 YEARS OF HELL - and he's still SMILING**

Heartless idiots laughed at his knobbly face ...and webbed feet and hands  
*Star Sunday Sport*

**YOU SPASTICS**

**Shock taunt as Anne s children face newsmen**  
*The Sun 1987*

...THANKS TO THE POLICE DEPENDANTS' TRUST IT DIDN'T CRIPPLE THE FAMILY

*Solicitors Journal*

**MS victim gives incredible lead**

*Middleton Guardian 4th July 1996*

Computer project aims to mobilise disabled in their thousands. IT opens up bright new future for Penny.  
*Daily Mail*

**SCANDAL**

of how parents were forced to take tragic victim elsewhere for operations. Top hospital refused to treat Down s children  
*Daily Mirror*

**Ban at club is lifted for deaf mute Andy**  
*Sheffield Star*

Heartbreak story of mother's 23 year struggle -

**"I loved my tragic sons so much I had to kill them"**

*The Sun*

**"Why Should I hide away?"**

The story of Vicky Lucas (Facially Disfigured)

*The Guardian*