



Raymond's Room: Ending the Segregation of People With Disabilities

By Dale DiLeo

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Thirty years ago, as a young man working at a facility for children with autism, Dale DiLeo was shown a tiny, hot and smelly bedroom. Reserved for up to four young men with autism, those least trusted by staff, this room was locked--from the outside--all night long. It was named after Raymond, the room's perennial resident. Raymond's Room makes a compelling case that today, people with disabilities are still locked away from the rest of society. They may not be necessarily housed in rooms like Raymond's, but they are placed in facilities and programs run by a public monopoly unwilling to change. "People with disabilities are the last minority group in which legal segregation for housing and employment is still routinely provided," writes DiLeo. "And their lives are controlled by one of the last publicly-funded monopolies in America today." Using research, anecdotes, and heartwarming stories, DiLeo takes aim at the billion-dollar "disability industrial complex" that segregates people with significant disabilities from mainstream life. Calling people with disabilities society's "hidden citizens," he describes a system that prevents people from working and living in our communities, despite new techniques and approaches proven effective in helping even those with the most serious challenges to be employed and to have a home to call their own. DiLeo describes the downsides to current practices in the field and then offers up proven alternatives.

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Editorial Review

Review

DiLeo encourages a society of more independent living and working choices to enrich the lives of the disabled. Professionals resistant to change may argue they are providing a service that no one wants to do... DiLeo exposes the true face behind the altruistic mask of governmental agencies --Foreword Magazine

Occasionally, a book will come along that actually has the power to change a society. Those are books like Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, Carson's Silent Spring, Haley's The Autobiography of Malcolm X and Roots, Ginsberg's Howl, Friedan's The Feminine Mystique, Galbraith's The Affluent Society and Sinclair's The Jungle. Now let me introduce you to Dale DiLeo's Raymond's Room, an essential work that belongs in the same list...If you never read another book in your entire life, read Raymond's Room. --The Asian Journal

[DiLeo] has thought about these people deeply and compassionately. ... a warm, highly readable memoir and guide to unprejudiced vision. ... would interest both the disability professional and the general reader. --St. Augustine Record

From the Author

After 30 years of working in the disability field, I am exasperated at our lack of progress in helping people to have real jobs, homes, and friendships in their communities. Raymond's Room is about my life experiences and lessons learned about the segregation of people with disabilities in the places I have worked, visited and managed - institutions, day facilities, group homes, and more. In my book I speak out about labeling, discrimination, and a service system that struggles despite caring, but underpaid staff. My hope is to educate not just professionals in the field, but families, neighbors and friends about what segregation does to the lives of people they care about.

About the Author

A widely sought-after speaker and consultant, and well known advocate for people with disabilities, Dale DiLeo has provided training throughout the US and in Canada and Europe on community inclusion for persons with disabilities. Dale has trained over 75,000 participants over the past 30 years, serving as the keynote for the European Union of Supported Employment in Oslo, Norway and presenting again in Barcelona, Spain. He has consulted with state and private agencies, universities, professional associations, and corporations. He is the Past President of the Board of the Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE), and is the lead author of that organization's highly respected Ethical Guidelines in Supported Employment. His latest book, Raymond's Room, focuses on ending the shameful segregation of people with disabilities in community life.

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