

Knocking on a PhD door: Thinking one megabyte at a time

Pathways 11

Sharpening Ideas: Refining & Redefining

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By
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Men in Black

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Unknown to the boy, this was the conception of what would become a lifelong academic pursuit



Knocking on a PhD door

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Friends, I'm about to embark on something big
So big I can't see it, so its bright
this feeling energizes me
And I feel like I'm knocking on a PhD door

Knock knock knocking on a PhD door x4



Introduction

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My journey from:
meeting John Hickman and Malcolm Fraser
to now knocking on the door of my own PhD



School Assembly

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From the small laugh, the
boy could tell that these
problems were like
walks in the park



Life's destinations:

boyish dreams

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... a big house in the
views

... living in a
government housing
unit in the western
suburbs on the
Adelaide plains



Life's destinations: a trip to Italy

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Life's destination: Iraq!?!?

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High School Education

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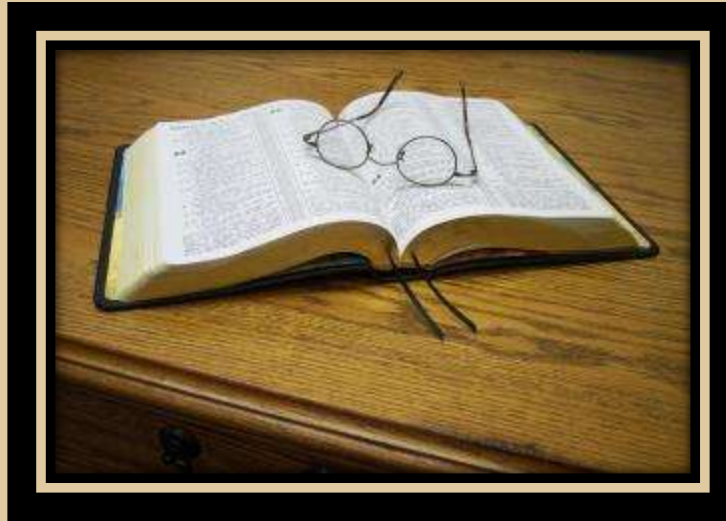
A group of students from Regency Park attended the local High School



Literacy in School

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Throughout my schooling
I had trouble reading



I read three books in a week
once I got my glasses



Knocking on a PhD Door

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Don't put my skills down anymore
yes I can use them heaps more,
they have gotten me this far, yeah
And it feels like I'm Knocking on a PhD door.

...

People, I've been studying for years
So long I'm beginning to love it even more
My future is bright, so bright to see.
And they can see it all the way from heaven's door

Knocking on a PhD door x4



Transitioning from High School

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[in 1990] Going from high school where I had nearly full time support to Uni where possibly I would have very little support didn't tickle my fancy



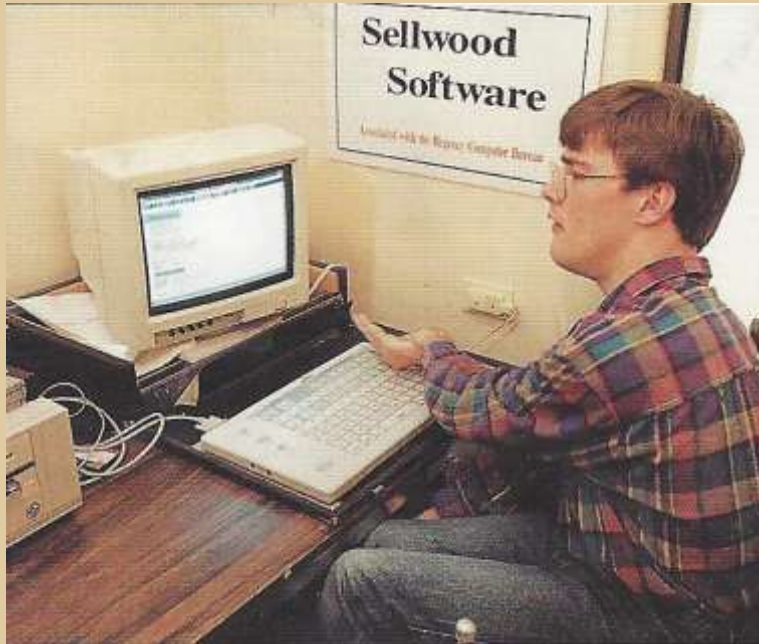
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Self-Employment and Seeking Open-Employment

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My own business
developing
database systems
for community
agencies

Then full time
employment



Open-Employment

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I enjoyed working as part of a team and the many challenges I faced ... I soon became a team leader

Yet towards the end, it became like a roller-coaster with huge highs, fast dips and sharp twists and turns



Going to University

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To consider: self-employment, open employment or an academic path

... that lovely feeling you have when you leave your last exam of the semester -
What bliss!



Negotiating with “Cowboy Bob”

16

Cowboy Bob is one of those guys who like to let you know where you stand

We built a rapport and respect for each other through our friendly bantering



Honours Research Project

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Centred on telecommunications for people with CCN yet had a strong focus on enabling people to be empowered in their environment and life

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Proposed PhD Topic

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The two central questions:

1. How does AAC help or hinder people with CP and CCN to express their sexuality?
2. What impact, if any, do contemporary discourses of gender and sexuality have on people with CP and to what extent does AAC reflect changes and accommodate and facilitate diverse genders and sexualities?



Knocking on a PhD door

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My lord has given me strength to carry through
I know he will always will
He has done it thus far
And it feels like I'm Knocking on a PhD door

Hickman took it one step at a time,
I'm taking it one byte at a time.
Will I write a book on it like he did , who knows
But I feel like I'm Knocking on a PhD door.

Knock knock knocking on a PhD door x 4



Advice to Supporters

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People with disabilities receive enough negativity from the general public let alone from their family

We need our disability support teams to positively reinforce what we can do



Conclusion

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AP PHOTO

"Do not figure out why we can't do something. I want you to figure out how we do something..."

President Barack Obama (2012)



Acknowledgements

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