

Jennifer
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great choice

Images of Disability Portfolio
Individual Reflection

Visual Image ~ Pelswick

http://www.nick.com/all_nick/tv_supersites/pelswick/

When first looking at this cartoon, you see a bunch of kids zooming down the street. Most are wearing smiles though some look just a little afraid. The mischievous faces and bright colors grab you, and if you didn't look again you may even miss the wheel chair. Though I did know a bit about Pelswick from class and reviewing the web-site, this image struck me as I considered its message.

Pelswick is the brainchild of John Callahan, a cartoonist who was left quadriplegic after a car accident some years ago. His brand of humor is unique, and his jokes at times push the envelope and blur the lines between funny and just plain sick. So naturally I was surprised to see him creating Pelswick, a cartoon geared towards children.

This image is an advertisement for Pelswick that I accessed as a link from Callahan's page. It is also a part of Nickelodeons main web page. As soon as I saw it, the first thought that jumped into my head was "reciprocal friendship"! We had just covered that concept in class and had read an article about it. I was so excited to see this idea actually at work in popular culture! Again, the theme here is a subtler one as this image is geared toward children. The underlying messages are simple and positive (similar to the book I read for review - The Great Gilly Hopkins).


✓

yes!

} good connection

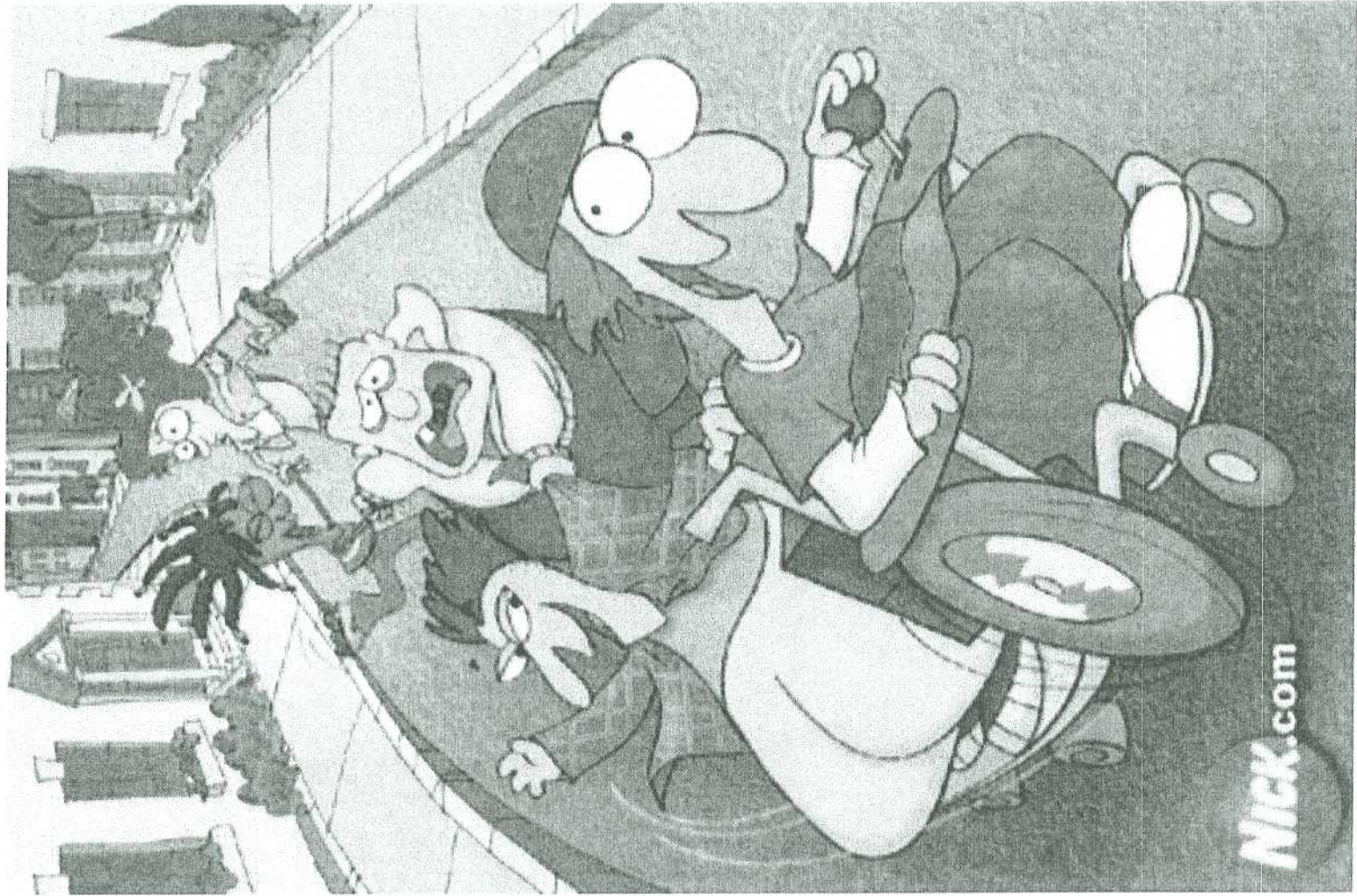
Here we see Pelswick playing with his friends. And just as in the article "Hell Bent on Helping" the kids here appear to be *friends* and not just helpers. Holding onto each other as they

zoom through town - the kids seem to be having just as much fun with Pelswick as he is having with them!

Relationships, positive contributions, and choice are all affirming values of disability represented in this visual image. The devalued roles and negative images - object of pity, burden, dread, ridicule, sick, etc do not appear. Pelswick is not isolated from the kids, he's not being doted or teased- he's simply having fun as part of the group. In fact, the only negative image one could construe from his cartoon revolves around kids playing in the street! 

I believe that this image reflects positive values associated with disability, and once again has special significance as it is geared towards children. Helping to instill affirming values in young minds helps to make the transition to positive representation of disability in our culture all the easier. And I know that I myself have been drawn in by this image, and have made a special note to catch Pelswick's next show!

10/15/02
JF



NICK.com