



# Solitary Courage: Mona Winberg and the Triumph over Disability

*Mona Winberg*

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# Solitary Courage: Mona Winberg and the Triumph over Disability

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## **Solitary Courage: Mona Winberg and the Triumph over Disability** Mona Winberg

*Solitary Courage* is the story of a mother's tough-love determination, her severely disabled daughter's astonishing triumphs, and a documentary record of the political battles, organizational conflicts, and human struggles that citizens with disabilities face and fight every day of their lives.

Mona Winberg became a pioneer of independent living, and emerged a leading advocate for citizens with mental and physical disabilities. Her courageous causes erupted from her deep reservoir of compassion and concern. Her unflinching challenges to the *status quo* expressed both optimism and realism about life and society. Her life is testament to the power of *Solitary Courage*.

Between 1986 and 1999 she was the only newspaper columnist in North America regularly writing about disability issues. Through her award-winning column "Disabled Today" in Toronto's *Sunday Sun*, Mona Winberg painstakingly built up a body of work of more than 600 articles chronicling front-line battles for equality. She was a realist, a wise person with a no-nonsense approach, kindly, but clear-eyed.

*Solitary Courage* begins with the story of Mona Winberg's life, followed by a representative selection of 156 of her columns organized into 20 thematic chapters, the best of Mona in her own words. The last part of the book reflects upon Mona Winberg's legacy of lessons that still connect to programs and policies touching the lives of Canadians with disabilities today.

The subjects are wide-ranging and engaging because Mona used personal examples of individuals with disabilities and news-making issues raised by their plight. She also reported on the street-level outcomes of government policies. This variety and approach to disability issues provides real education and genuine human interest, whatever a reader's background or experience.

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