Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Disability Studies and Disability Activism
Organised by the
Department of Disability Studies
Faculty for Social Wellbeing
University of Malta

Emerging Disability Issues: Varieties of Disability Activism and Disability Studies
2nd to 4th May 2018
Victoria Hotel, Sliema, Malta

ABSTRACTS

Prof David Abbott, University of Bristol

Disabled men: negotiating sex, gender and personalised support in the UK

Sexuality and gender are not always at the forefront of discussions about disability. This paper draws on two recent empirical studies in England which focus on 1) disabled men's sense of being a man and their gendered interactions with the world of social care and 2) gay, bisexual and trans disabled men and their experiences of trying to get good quality and personalised social care support. Both papers suggest that disabled men are often not afforded more than one identity label - that of the de-gendered, asexual (or perhaps heterosexual) disabled person. The research presented does highlight ways in which disabled men have resisted unhelpful categorisation and the impact of securing choice and control over day-to-day support.

Dr Jennifer Van Aswegen, Policy Analyst, Disability Federation of Ireland

Dr David Hyatt, University of Sheffield

Prof Dan Goodley, University of Sheffield

Disabling discourses and ableist ideologies. Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024

Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024 was launched into Irish policy in October 2015. Representing a significant policy event in Irish disability policy-making, this paper aims to subject this this policy to a critical interrogation through the lens of critical dis/ability studies, using methods developed from Critical Discourse Analysis and Poststructuralist analysis Methodologically, this is a creative hybrid of analytical tools with which to interrogate disability policy highlighting the potential to achieve the goals of emancipatory disability research, which lies at the heart of both perspectives. As Ireland stands at the brink of ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, the rationale for undertaking such an approach to disability policy analysis becomes increasingly urgent. Responding to a number of eminent Irish and UK disability scholars to engage with neoliberal tensions and discourses that limits the scope of thinking and possibilities surrounding disability policy-making, this study highlights concerning trends in disability activation policy against a backdrop of deepening neoliberal and economic imperatives. Drawing on theories of discourse, ableism and normativity the study presents a series of snapshots, representing a critical reading of the policy text. What emerges is a deeply troubling portrait of disabled people rendered abject, invisible and less than human, constructed on normative assumptions where ableism is forefronted as natural, necessary and rational for the normal functioning of society. The reading presents a deeply concerning

disablist discourse of deficit, tragedy, and individualisation, couched in a paternalistic medicalised lexicon of intervention and recovery. This study contributes to the growing body of literature highlighting the importance and value of CDA and problematisations in critical disability policy research. The study highlights the need for innovative methodological approaches in the field of critical disability policy studies in order to challenge the normative disabling discourses that prevails in such policymaking processes. In addition, it demonstrates the value of using both a Critical Discourse Analysis and Problematisation approach together in what can be termed a 'hybridised framework' for undertaking a discursive critique of (disability) policy.

Ms Arianne Attard**,** University of Malta

TYPE OF PRESENTATION: Oral Presentation

Like Riding a Bicycle: Perspectives on the Employment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

Employment is a right and an expected milestone marking adult life within our society. Yet persons with intellectual disabilities are more likely to find barriers to access and maintain employment within the labour market. Adopting the systems theory as the main conceptual framework, this research seeks to understand the perspectives around the employment of persons with intellectual disabilities by focusing on the journey of employment one individual (Fabio), together with the perspectives of the key individuals involved in this aspect of his life: his parents, supervisor, colleagues and job coach. In doing so, all participants are seen in terms of a system, and the patterns of interaction in between them are considered when interpreting their perceptions. The research adopted a qualitative approach and one-to-one interviews were held with all participants using a semi-structured interview guide. The data collected was analysed using thematic analysis, interpreted from a systemic and social model framework and then presented in the form of a journey. The context and profile, relationships and interaction and the concept of disability, were the overarching themes which played a significant role throughout Fabio's employment journey. The journey of employment is likened to the experience of learning to ride a bicycle: one removing the obstacles that

may come in the learner's way and continuing to support the individual until they feel confident enough to let go and ride independently. Similarly, the perceptions of Fabio's employment journey have been influenced by the context and the profiles of those around him, the relationships and interactions between all participants' throughout and the concept of disability established. In acknowledging these themes as the main components of Fabio's journey, it is then useful to interpret the employment experience through these themes and make adjustments where necessary with the aim of restoring balance within the system.

Ms Baiba Baikovska, Riga Stradins University

Construction of disability in Latvia

Social constructions are directly impacting lives of people. For example, when I did research using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on Disability law of Latvia, which is one of the main policy documents in Latvia on disability issues, it showed that people with different impairments are viewed from a medical model point of view. Impairment from a medical standpoint is viewed as an individual problem and people with impairments as people in need of medical treatment, excluding social factors which construct disability. It means that power over lives of people with impairment is given in the hands of medical experts and the former are denied of the freedom of self-determination. In this paper, using social constructionism theory, the social construction of disability and CDA, I will look at different discourses constructing disability in Latvia. Four main ones I take a look at are - media discourse, political discourse (referring to policies and processes in which it is produced), NGOs' discourse, and academic discourse. To give a wider understanding of the constructing of disability in these different discourse I provide four different examples from each kind of discourse. For example, in academic discourse I choose one study course in my university and discuss how disability is talked about there and how it is constructing disability. In conclusion, I hope to see how those discourses are working together and how they are constructing disability or in contrary helping to diminish it.

Dr Angharad E. Beckett**,** Associate Professor of Political Sociology and Deputy Director of the Centre for Disability Studies

Ms Veronica Montanaro, Speech and Language Pathologist, TAASC Service Co-ordinator and Visiting Assistant Lecturer, University of Malta

Maria Mizzi, Paediatric Occupational Therapist at Secretariat for Catholic Schools, Malta

Exploring children's perspectives on inclusive play

"Inclusive play stresses the importance of including all children, disabled children as well as non-disabled children, by fostering an environment where diversity is respected and valued. At its best, inclusion enables all children (…) to play together". (Ludvigsen et al, 2005).

Under Article 31 of the UNCRC all children have the right to play. For disabled children this right is further enshrined within the UNCRPD (Article 30). Malta has signed and ratified both conventions. General Comment 17 on CRC Article 31 emphasises that 'accessible and inclusive environments and facilities must be made available to children with disabilities' to enable their play and 'families, caregivers and professionals must recognize the value of inclusive play, both as a right and as a means of achieving optimum development'. It states that one way States Parties can promote disabled children's equal and active participation in play is by 'awareness-raising' amongst peers.

In this paper we present findings of a pilot project, conducted in Malta, exploring primary-age children's: a) experiences and perceptions of 'inclusive play'; b) their ideas about how inclusive play might be enhanced within their school/s and communities.

Consulting children is vital to the development of inclusive play opportunities (Casey 2010). It allows adult 'allies' to learn from their

suggestions. Capturing children's views can be challenging. Capturing the views – as we must if we are to be truly inclusive – of disabled children, including those who have speech, language and communication needs, presents an additional challenge. In addition to sharing the research findings we also discuss our application of an an arts-based approach, photo-elicitation, a mapping technique and focus group discussions to work with two groups of disabled and non-disabled children. We reflect upon whether/how these approaches allowed us to achieve our goal of their deep level of research involvement (Tisdall 2012).

Ludvigsen, A., C. Creegan and H. Mills (2005) Let's Play Together: Play and Inclusion. Evaluation of Better Play Round 3. Viewed online at: http://www.barnardos.org.uk/lets_play_together_report.pdf (15/10/17).

Tisdall, E.K.M. (2012) 'The Challenge and Challenging of Childhood Studies? Lessons from disability studies and research with disabled children.', *Children & Society*, 26(3), pp.181-191.

Ms Denise Beckwith, PhD candidate, Western Sydney University

Silent Tears; the creation and collaboration of art to highlight disability, gender and violence

Women with disability are often missing from discussions relevant to responses to violence. This is a global phenomenon. Art can be used to heighten awareness of the breadth and the nature of the violence that occurs to women with disability. Silent Tears is a multimedia exhibition reflective of art being used as a form of advocacy. Silent Tears illuminates the stories that have been shared by the participants, who are women with disability, who have been subjected to violence and women who have acquired their disability caused by violence. This exhibition created by internationally renowned photographer Belinda Mason, videographer Dieter Knierim and documentary photographers Margherita Coppolino and Denise Beckwith brings the experiences of violence and abuse to the attention of the global community. The uniqueness of Silent Tears is that it creates a bridge for women to see that women with disability do experience violence and also that violence causes disability to women. Additionally, the exhibition provides a platform for women to share their stories of violence in an unquestioning manner and to be heard. The women share their stories as they realise they are representative of many women who do not possess the strength, capacity or resources to tell their story. Silent Tears does not reflect violence that the women with disability have experienced throughout the course of their lives. The value of this exhibition as an advocacy platform is that the viewer has the opportunity to see the participants as people first and foremost. This is courtesy of Beckwith and Coppolino's documentary photographs being reflective of everyday scenes relatable to everyone, then Mason's photography is representative of the point at which women make decisions to move forward through the experiences of violence, whilst

Knierim's videography component humanises the women even further as their voices can be heard.

Ms Denise Beckwith, PhD candidate, Western Sydney University

Disability theories and research methodologies - Sexual identity and violence: The voices of women with physical disability

Often the voices of women with physical disability are absent or marginalised in relation to the topics of sexual identity, sexuality and violence. Additionally within the research landscape, women are either objectified or subjectified. Imagine research that utilises a methodology centring the voices of women with disability as protagonists rather than subjects or objects. When researching people with disability, particularly women with physical disability, it is only fitting that an eclectic research approach is taken as the primary identity for women with disability is their disability. To avoid siloing it is essential that a pluralistic approach be adopted and women's voices and narratives are central. When designing research exploring sexual education provision to women with physical disability and their experiences of violence, the researcher wanted to highlight the voices of these women so they are able to obtain power and control. This has been done by developing methodology that is based upon critical phenomenology giving value to the lived-experience of women with physical disability and also by giving them control and autonomy by using the critical method of PhotoVoice. This method enables women to inform viewers of the photographs of how they construct and experience their sexual identity when sexual education is not relatable or practicable to them due to the presence of physical impairment and the societal belief that sexual functioning is only a privilege of the normal. To overcome the misconception that women with disability are only their disability critical theories which focus on identity such as crip theory, feminism and intersectionality are also going to be adhered to as this demonstrates the multi-layered nature of identity.

Dr Lara Bezzina, Independent Researcher

Participatory Video: Creating Spaces where Disabled People's Voices Can be Heard

Disabled people have been virtually invisible citizens of many societies and have been marginalised in most cultures throughout history (Quinn and Degener, 2002). While in western contexts this led to the emergence of the disability rights movement in the late twentieth century, the situation of disabled people in the Global South remains on the whole deplorable. Power (2001) observes that part of what characterises disability in Southern Africa is the 'voicelessness' of disabled people. This is "not because they are unable to speak but because they are both denied space in which to speak and when they do speak they are not listened to" (McEwan, 2009). Today, disabled people in Global South contexts are subject to representations both by non-disabled people who, in some contexts in sub-Saharan Africa, consider disabled people as representing evil or hailing from the supernatural world; as well as by international NGOs who tend to portray them as helpless victims, and, by ignoring the lived experiences of disabled people, continue to silence them. Participatory video creates a space for voices that are not normally heard to be heard, or faces which are not normally seen to be seen. This paper is based on participatory research facilitated in Burkina Faso, which sought to create spaces in which people with disabilities can be 'visible' and express their views (Lunch and Lunch, 2006). A group of disabled people came together to design, film and partially edit a film in which they share their lived experiences, including their successes and the challenges they encounter. They also speak out to the state authorities and international organisations who work with disabled people, asking them to engage with the reality on the ground before intervening. In this way, participatory video brings on disabled people as co-producers of knowledge and takes up Oliver's (1992) call for disability

research to be "part of the struggle by disabled people to challenge the oppression they currently experience in their daily lives".

References:

Lunch, N. and Lunch, C. (2006) *Insights into Participatory Video: A Handbook for the Field*. Available at: http://insightshare.org/resources/insights-into-participatory-video-a-handbook-for-the-field (Accessed: 19 March 2018).

McEwan, C. (2009) *Postcolonialism and Development*. London: Routledge.

Oliver, M. (1992) 'Changing the Social Relations of Research Production?', *Disability, Handicap & Society*, 7(2), pp. 101–114.

Power, M. (2001) 'Geographies of Disability and Development in Southern Africa', *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 21(4), pp. 84–97.

Quinn, G. and Degener, T. (ed.) (2002) *Human Rights and Disability: The current use and future potential of United Nations human rights instruments in the context of disability*. New York: United Nations Publications.

Mr Bo Chen, PhD Fellow, Centre for Disability Law and Policy, National University of Ireland Galway

Shared Authority and Silenced Service Users: Decision-making Framework of Mental Health Treatment in China

Who makes decisions about mental health treatment is a crucial issue for mental health laws worldwide, and substituted decision-making has long been criticised by disability movements and fundamentally challenged by the CRPD. While paternalistic psychiatry and the power imbalance created by mental health laws in the West have received much attention, this presentation will explore decision-making structures in China. Based on qualitative interviews conducted in China, the presentation will demonstrate a decision-making structure within which family members rather than psychiatrists are the most important and final decision-makers regarding admission, treatment and discharge. Compared to service users of Western mental health systems, whose autonomy is restricted by coercive and usually paternalistic medical professionals and mental health laws, having your family members on your side is the crucial factor for service users in exercising their legal capacity in China. The presentation, then, will provide a number of explanations for this scenario with emphasis given to two factors: family members are fee-payers and potential trouble-makers for mental health facilities. As mental health facilities in China are not fully funded by the government and social insurance would not cover the cost of treatment, all mental health facilities, regardless if public or private, have to make a profit to be self-sustaining. Family members have earned their decision-making power because of their fee-paying role and the psychiatrists' authority has been limited to making proposals. At the same time, the fact that service users have very limited access to justice serves to encourage psychiatrists to listen to family members rather than service users. The

presentation will conclude with a recommendation that, echoing the principles of the CRPD, service users' involvement should be improved at all levels.

Ms Isabel Bonello, Ms Charmaine Mifsud, Ms Rosanne Fenech, Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilty, Malta

The experience of overprotection of people with intellectual disability and their families

Our presentation on the experience of overprotection in the lives of people with intellectual disability in Malta is the result of an inclusive research project which consisted of ten focus groups with persons with intellectual disability, parents of persons with intellectual disability and staff working in the disability sector. The aim of this research was to investigate how much there is overprotection happens and what factors cause it. The findings from the focus groups show that many adults with intellectual disability in Malta have overprotection in many areas of their lives, including work, leisure and relationships. Many of them spend most of their time in structured environments where there is someone supervising them. Many of the research participants also mentioned that overprotection is created through the continued dependence of persons with intellectual disability on their families to engage in different activities. Furthermore, some parents take time to get used to the idea of their adult sons and daughters with intellectual disability going out on their own, since they feel that they are still like young children. However, there are also parents who find ways of providing support for their sons and daughters to live less protected lives. Overprotection is increased because of the lack of services to provide support for persons intellectual disability. When an adult with intellectual disability needs support, it is often the parents that they turn to. Where parents are willing and able to find a solution, the person with intellectual disability can lead a more independent life.

Mr Kurt Borg, Staffordshire University

Narrating Disability: The Doing and Undoing of the Self in Language

This paper analyses a set of themes from Christina Crosby's memoir "A Body, Undone: Living On After Great Pain" (2016). Crosby narrates how her bicycle accident resulted in "a body shot through with neurological pain, disoriented in time and space, incapacitated by paralysis and deadened sensation." Through her memoir, Crosby presents a reflection on the nature of selfhood in terms of the dependencies that embodied experience implies. This account of selfhood will be compared with Judith Butler's account of vulnerable subjectivity, an account which has important implications on how the activity of narrating the self is theorised. Moreover, this paper argues that Crosby's memoir serves as a critique of dominant disability discourses that affect the social formation and reception of disability narratives. Crosby's own memoir functions as a counter-narrative that subverts norms that privilege certain narrative accounts of disability over other accounts. This can be seen, for example, when Crosby discusses the severely debilitating effects of pain, or how her disability negatively impacted her sexual life. It will be argued that such descriptions can be seen as countering socially privileged accounts that unilaterally characterise disabled subjects as strong, resilient and autonomous. This paper, then, reflects on the socio-political character of disability narratives, and how and why certain narratives, such as Crosby's, can function critically, and motivate a critical analysis of contemporary representations of disabled people. Finally, approaching Crosby's memoir philosophically enables a wide-ranging consideration of topics found in the memoir, such as the therapeutic nature of writing, narrative identity and its difficulties, the subversive and hegemonic uses of self-narratives, and the political import of the personal.

Ms Amy Camilleri Zahra, Assistant Lecturer, University of Malta

Professor Mary Anne Lauri, University of Malta

Representations of Disabled Women in Malta

Being a woman and being disabled is often associated with a higher risk of experiencing discrimination than disabled men and non-disabled men or women (Pinto, 2013). The study of social representations of disabled women can aid in improving disabled women's wellbeing and in securing their independence and autonomy (Council of Europe, 2003). In this study, the representations of disabled women were investigated. This paper reports the findings of a survey carried out in Malta in 2016 with a random sample of 526 participants. Perceptions of disabled women were investigated using 12 Likert scale statements and an open ended question. The topics covered by the statements were employment, education, relationships and motherhood. Results were analysed using SPSS. The adjectives given by the participants in the open-ended question were analysed using Multi-Correspondence Analysis (MCA). The results of the survey show that younger people (16-29 age group) have more positive representations of disabled women than those forming part of the 30-49 age group. They believe that disabled women are good students and employees. No gender differences were found. The results of MCA showed that those participants who were over 65 years old tended to perceive disabled women as 'less fortunate' and 'pitiable'. The

participants belonging to the 16-29 age group used adjectives emanating

from a perception of disability ingrained in a rights based perspective

such as 'equal', 'determined' and 'disadvantaged'. Whilst those

participants belonging to the 30-49 and 50-64 age group tended to

perceive 'disabled women' as 'courageous' and 'intelligent' whilst at the

same time as 'fragile' and 'unlucky'. Implications of these findings will be

discussed in the light of how representations can be changed in order to

increase disabled women's participation and social integration in the

community.

Pinto, P. C. (2013). Women, disability and the right to health. In M. Hobbs & C. Rice (Eds.), *Gender and women's studies in Canada* (pp. 444 – 454). Toronto: Women's Press.

Council of Europe. (2003). *Improving the quality of life of people with disabilities: enhancing a coherent policy for and through full participation.* Retrieved from http://www.coe.int/t/e/social_cohesion/socsp/Speech%20Güvenen%20E.pdf

Dr Lee Campbell, Senior Lecturer in Fine Art, University of Lincoln, United Kingdom

You Don't Need Eyes to See, You Need Vision: Performative Pedagogy, Technology and Teaching Art to Students with Vision Impairment

This paper links experiential learning and Performance Art with public pedagogy on sight/visual negation and contributes to knowledge by drawing together performance as pedagogy to demonstrate how teaching styles can accommodate those with vision impairment and adapt (performance) art to make it more accessible. In so doing, it seeks to develop inclusion for students with a vision impairment. Intermeshing practice, teaching and research around issues of access, participation and education, it builds upon previous work exploring teaching strategies for the visually impaired within contemporary art practice and shares useful adaptations to help make learning about art more accessible for students with vision impairment. It also sheds light upon aspects of the question, 'What are the basics that an educator needs to know when designing art programs for persons with visual impairment?'. This paper can be read as a benchmark for critical engagement in its attempt to combine performative pedagogy with an emphasis on technological means, access and visual impairment. While vision is favoured over other senses and with the increasing importance of digital and virtual realities as a major component of students' lives, never has there been a time in which the meanings of access are so broadened via technological mediation—that

draw on all senses—to which artworks, as suggested, respond. Relying on all senses becomes an aspect of public pedagogy that is more inclusive. By using the techniques suggested here, hopefully teachers can help make sure that students with a vision impairment do not feel singled out, potentially 'othered' but comfortable in engaging in a shared learning experience with others that does not accentuate their difference but is structurally engineered so that learning can take place through our bodies and not just our eyes. Knowledge acquisition is not exclusively derived from what we see.

Dr Katharina Crepaz, Max Planck Institute for Social Law and Social Policy & Technical University of Munich

Engaged Citizens, Sought-After Voters? Political Participation of People with Disabilities in Germany and Italy

The UN CRPD outlines in article 29 that "States Parties shall guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others". The present paper aims to investigate which impact, if any, these steps have had on the political participation of people with disabilities on regional, national and European levels, which barriers for further participation opportunities are still present, and how they could possibly be abolished in the future. In order to do so, I will look at two EU countries, Germany and Italy, which differ in the extent of voting rights for people with disabilities. In addition, the two countries also exhibit different cultures and approaches in dealing with disabilities in other areas of daily life, which is expected to also have an impact on political participation opportunities. Both countries have recently held or will hold general elections in the near future (Germany voted in September 2017, while Italy is scheduled to vote in early 2018); campaigning on behalf of political parties and whether specific measures are taken to appeal to people with disabilities as voters will also constitute an interesting frame of reference. Public views, approaches to disability and active citizenship, as well as potential barriers for participation will be investigated through document analysis (party programs, official statements, media coverage of the electoral campaign) and structured

interviews with party representatives and disabled persons who are politically active in different contexts (parties, civil society, NGOs). As thresholds for participation are expected to be lower on the regional level, a comparison between the regions of South Tyrol (Italy) and Bavaria (Germany) will be especially focused on. Both regions hold elections in 2018, also providing an additional level of comparison of party programs, campaigning, involvement, public discourses etc. between national and regional levels.

Dr Tillie Curran, University of West England

Dr Sarah Manns, University of West England

A round table discussion on research approaches supporting disabled young people's voice in a rapidly changing society

We open the round table with an introduction to Disabled Children's Childhood Studies (Curran and Runswick-Cole 2013; 2014; Runswick-Cole, Curran & Liddiard 2018) as a distinct area of study that i) centres disabled young people's experiences and voice; ii) is focussed upon ethical practice and iii) questions the hegemony on the norm around both childhood and disability. While childhood studies contest passive constructions and Eurocentric mantras around the 'standard child' and, disability studies challenge the medical discourses of childhood and the scope of its authority, we suggest Disabled Children's Childhood Studies offer more than a combined critique. Disabled children's childhood studies do not see disabled children in the negative or as lacking: '*having problems'* or of '*being problems'* but as positively *having childhoods'*. Studies of health conditions or service evaluations are not studies of childhoods

We then discuss how the three key principles above are applied in the design of a current UK based project 'Imagining Young Disabled People's Transitions in a Time of Major Societal Change', in which young disabled people act as peer researchers to explore new ideas for their adult lives.

Run by a user led organisation and partnered with an academic institution and social services provider, the project places the lives of these young people at the centre of the knowledge generated. Unusually the foci are the hopes and aspirations of these young people, aged 14- 25 years old and this stands in opposition to the oft heard 'service led' concerns of 'transition'.

The adoption of a knowledge café research design first provided 7 disabled young people with direct experience of ethics, research questions and methods so that they could begin to shape the project and opt for roles that interested them. In the café events that follow this peer research team are engaging with over 50 young disabled participants with exploration around enablers and opportunities for moving forward into their hopes and aspirations in the context of changes such as automation, connectivity, social mixing and cultural diversity. The purpose of the project is from the outset is its significance to young disabled people

We identify three key aspects of preparation: relationship building with a disability equality framework around 'what we can do'; getting to know each young person and their particular interests; and prepared flexible use of creative methods throughout the research process. This approach contrasts with the notion of research rigour and validity that is claimed from uniformity of methodology. We aspire instead to try out and develop the decolonizing approach proposed by others researching with young

people about the issues that matter to them in their lives (Runswick-Cole and Goodley, 2012).

Two questions are posed for an asset based discussion:

1) What are the ethical concerns and what support needs to be in place for all involved in peer research?
2) How can activist research become a possibility in a context of normalcy?

ImaYDiT (I made it)
http://www.drilluk.org.uk/disability-research-independent-living-learning-drill/pilot-projects/research-pilot-grants-2017

K. Runswick-Cole, T. Curran and K. Liddiard, (eds.) (2018) *The Palgrave Handbook of Disabled Children's Childhood Studies.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Ltd

Curran, T. and Runswick-Cole- R., (2014) 'Disabled Children's Childhood Studies - a distinct approach?', *Disability and Society* - available here: http://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/pbYCdSWMvgnq4fmXIKgz/full

Curran, T. and Runswick-Cole, R. eds., (2013) *Disabled Children's Childhood Studies - Critical Approaches in a Global Context*, Palgrave Macmillan, ISBN: 978-1-137-00821-3, ISBN10: 1-137-00821-0, http://us.macmillan.com/disabledchildrenschildhoodstudies/ http://www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?pid=575353

Ms Erin Davenport

Installation art as queer aesthetic: A case study

Rainclamation is an installation art project, which features wooden panels with melted wax next to elevators at Davidson College. The installation reclaims the space around elevators from an area of stigma fraught with the experience of being "seen" as a disabled body in need of an elevator to one of beauty in relishing in a disabled identity that inspires art. The aesthetic inspirations responded to the question of "what would rain look like running through color?" Thus, the design incorporates another level of reclamation, taking rain from a source of significant stress for people with physical disabilities and transforming it into the source of beauty. Also painted on each panel is erasure poetry derived from physical education manuals from the 1950s. The original manuals included letters emphasizing physical fitness as an essential attribute. The project takes those documents, the false universality of which erases disabled bodies, and erases them, resulting in couplets of poetry and a third level of reclamation. The art is meant to be at once acceptable to able-bodied viewers (to get it installed, we had to agree with the head of Residence Life's claim that "this art won't be political, right?"), and revolutionary to disabled viewers. It balances the controversial and the sanctioned, and speaks to the politics of bodies which govern both sexuality and disability. I hope to further explicate the creative process behind this work, as well as review linkages to queer theory. I will connect the inspiration for this art to existing feminist disability theory, such as the work of Rosemarie Garland-Thomson. I will explain how this project is derivative of my personal experience with, and concerns regarding, disability disclosure in public spaces, and invite others to think about ways they can transform their personal experiences into public art and activism.

Ms Maria Cynthia deBono, University of Malta

The Blending of Phenomenology and Emancipation in Disability Research

The disability context has been a contested area of research involving issues of power, accountability, oppressive practices and uncertain significance of produced work (Richards, 2008). In the 1970s, phenomenological research started evolving as a methodology, consistent with phenomenological philosophy (Stones, 1988, as cited in Groenewald, 2004). This type of research contrasted with positivist research as it founded itself in an empathic understanding of the concrete lived experience (Finlay, 2009; Neuman, 2006). The emphasis on constructed individual meanings within phenomenological research can draw light upon the diverse experiences among persons with disabilities. However, the individualised standpoint might not be so appealing to advocates of the social model of disability. Phenomenology has conventionally remained attached to the medicalised perspective and disability writers within the field of disability claimed that this makes phenomenological research potentially oppressive. Nonetheless, French and Swain (2006) believe that phenomenologically-driven research in the disability field has its place on the disability agenda. The supreme value of insider knowledge and the centrality of the body are common fields in both phenomenology and disability studies, and these topics could be potential starting points for the merging of the two fields. In the past three years,

Maltese postgraduate students have blended phenomenology and

emancipatory principles together in their research on disability-related

subjects. Through analysing these projects, one realises how

phenomenological research can be emancipatory. This new research

direction could be fruitful in understanding better the diverse reality

within the Maltese disabled population, as well as highlighting the factors

required for social change.

Finlay, L. (2009). Debating phenomenological research methods. Phenomenology &
Practice, 3(1), 6-25. Retrieved from http://www.psyking.net/HTMLobj-3824/Debating_Phenomenological_Research_Methods.pdf

French, S., & Swain, J. (2006). Telling stories for a politics of hope. Disability & Society, 21(5), 383-396. doi:10.1080/09687590600785654

Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. International
Journal of Qualitative Methods, 3(1). Retrieved from
http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/3_1/pdf/groenewald.pdf

Neuman, W. L. (2006). Social research methods. New York: Pearson Education.

Richards, R. (2008, December). Writing the othered self: Authoethnography and the problem of objectification in writing about illness and disability. Qualitative Health Research, 18(12), 1717-1728. doi:10.1177/1049732308325866

Ms Heilien Diedericks, Master's student, King's College London

Misdiagnosis and Disability: A Critical Analysis of how the Medical and Social Models of Disability Account Respectively for Misdiagnosis

Upon reviewing the literature on disability models, there seems to be a gap in the current literature regarding disability models in relation to misdiagnoses. Recent findings suggest that a significant proportion of women diagnosed with eating disorders have undiagnosed autism. This case of apparent misdiagnosis is examined through the lens of two dominant disability models – the medical model and the social model – and it is argued that both models cannot offer a satisfactory account for the disability in question. The models fail because they misidentify the relevant medical impairment or disabling social factor, respectively. Consequently, the normative elements of both accounts, namely the medical and social responses for which they call, fail to obtain. Surprisingly, it appears that the biopsychosocial model best accounts for misdiagnosis. By acknowledging the interactive effect between an individual's social context and the body, the model allows access to a greater set of conceptual and practical tools when evaluating a disability. It is only when an individual's social condition is understood, and within that social context also her impairment, that the appropriate social and medical responses can be implemented.

Dr Martina Farrugia, Lawyer

Legal Capacity, an Overview of Available Legislation in Malta and its Compatibility with the CRPD

The UNCRPD is an important document affirming the rights of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others. Intrinsically it recognises the right of equal recognition before the law for all persons with disabilities, a right so often denied to persons with disabilities due to a perceived lack of mental capacity. Under the CRPD, legal capacity is recognised as a core right, and has been described as the right to all rights as without it, an individual is barred from exercising activities most people take for granted including the right to get married, to buy and sell property, to inherit, to vote, to go to court and give evidence and to refuse treatment. Article 12 CRPD, makes a dramatic break away from traditional substitute decision making regimes requiring State Parties to amend their laws to reflect this. Instead it advocates for supported decision making regimes. Malta ratified the UNCRPD in 2012 and in doing so, has become bound by its spirit. Yet what does ratification mean for Malta? Malta's current legal system contains provisions relating to the Interdiction and Incapacitation of persons, two regimes which have been declared to be in conflict with the Convention. In a move towards CRPD conformity, it introduced a Guardianship Regime which can be described as a half-way house between a substitute decision making regime and a supported decision making regime as intended under the CRPD. This paper will discuss the concept of legal capacity and its interpretation according to General Comment No.1 of the Commission on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities together with its interpretation under the ECHR. It will then go on to analyse the Regimes under the Maltese Legal System which regulate the same, namely Interdiction, Incapacitation and Guardianship, and their compatibility with the CRPD.

Dr Audrey Farrugia-Bernard, Assistant Professor, Eastern Michigan University

Accessibility?: The Examination of Syllabi in Speech-Language Pathology Programs in the U.S.

Students studying speech-language pathology in the United States severely lack diversity as the vast majority of enrolled students are White women. During the 2014-2015 academic year in speech-language pathology programs across the country, only 5% undergraduate and 4% graduate students were males and 13.5% undergraduate and 16.5% graduate students were a racial/ethnic minority (CAPCSD & ASHA, 2016). In addition, 127 of 270 undergraduate programs and 183 of 266 Master's programs in speech-language pathology reported that only 589 and 352 students, respectively, had a documented disability (CAPCSD & ASHA, 2016). While there is a growing body of research dedicated to increasing and supporting the racial and cultural diversity of speech-language pathologists in the United States (ASHA, n.d.), there remains a paucity of research on recruitment and retention strategies for individuals with disability. This presentation examines the syllabi of undergraduate and graduate courses in speech-language pathology in order to investigate accessibility for students with a disability. Common themes are reported and suggestions for syllabi wording that promotes accessibility for all are presented.

References

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, (n.d.). Exemplary Practices in Recruitment, Retention and Career Transition of Racial/Ethnic Minorities to Communication Science Disorders (CSD). Rockville, MD: Author. Retrieved from http://www.asha.org/practice/multicultural/recruit/exemplarypractices/

Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders & American Speech Language-Hearing Association. (2016).

Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) Education Survey National Aggregate Data Report: 2014–2015 academic year. Retrieved from http://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/2014-2015-CSD-Education-SurveyNational-Aggregate-Data-Report.pdf

Ms Raquel G. Ferreira**,** MA Communication in Multicultural Contexts, University of Luxembourg

Silent sea of paradoxes - Communication challenges of linguistic minorities and ideologies around deafness and multilingualism in the context of the Grand-Duchy

When talking about communication and multilingualism, important versions of linguistic expression and the majority of its performers is often neglected: Sign Languages (SL) and Deaf people. It has been proved that relevant insights on language planning, acquisition, testing, attrition and maintenance could be provided by bringing light onto the cultural dynamics involved in this often misunderstood language (Sutton-Spence & Woll, 2004). Yet, aligned with discourses of normality and standardization, the development and acknowledgment of SL as independent and fully-fledged systems also seem to remain conditioned to stigmatizing matters. The primary purpose of this study was to investigate how Deaf communities within the context of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg cope with the multilingualism of the country. The dissertation first explores the peculiarities of Deaf culture, their communication endeavours in the specific context of Luxembourg and how these dynamics differ from those of essentially monolingual environments. Secondly, it reveals how some of the main issues faced by such community actually align with those faced by other (hearing) linguistic minorities of the country, despite of the Deafness component. Anchored in these two complementary axes, the research exposes the

potential impact of cultural impasses and common ideologies lying beyond these matters, from early education to later stages of employability and socialization. The study follows a case-study structure, having Qualitative Content Analysis as its main guideline. Under the Language Ideologies framework, the analysis focuses on how some discourses around Multilingualism, Sign Languages, disability and Deafness might potentially contribute to the perpetuation (rather than the improvement) of debatable current policies at educational and legal levels. Moreover, it aims to elucidate how bringing such matters to the surface could ultimately lead to the development and accomplishment of adequate measures of linguistic promotion, rights and accessibility which are extendable to Deaf and Minority linguistic communities in multilingual contexts overall.

Sutton-Spence, R., & Woll, B. (2004). British sign language. In Davies, A., & Elder, C. (Eds.), *The handbook of applied linguistics*. (pp. 165-186). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Justin E. Freedman, Doctoral Candidate, Syracuse University

Examining a Simulated Discussion of Disability-related Accommodations Between University Students and Standardized Faculty Members

In this presentation, I discuss how I used frameworks from disability studies to create a clinical simulation with university students who have been identified with a disability. Each semester, postsecondary students around the United States and Canada engage in conversations with their professors about disability related accommodations. Conversations with professors about accommodations are a potential barrier to meaningful and equal participation in postsecondary education because students have reported feeling stigmatized when discussing accommodations with faculty. To many in the field of disability studies, the term 'simulation' may have a negative connotation. Simulations have been used to demonstrate disability for non-disabled individuals, often in ways that perpetuate negative attitudes by highlighting individual limitations instead of foregrounding social barriers. Or, simulations have been used as a method for examining people with disabilities, often in unnatural contexts, and using ableist comparison to supposedly 'normal' individuals. In this study, I partnered with students to create an authentic opportunity in which study participants practiced discussing accommodations with an actor who I carefully trained to portray a professor. I describe the process of developing this study with individuals who identify with disabilities serving as experts to create the simulation. I also share the results of the

video recorded simulations and follow up interviews, which provide insight how university students discuss their disability identity and their need for accommodations when interacting with a university professor. When sharing results, I discuss themes that emerged from the data, including issues of power and authority, as well as how listening to students can help to evolve the way we think about self-advocacy. I plan to invite audience participation, asking others to share about the landscape of disability and accommodations in postsecondary education in countries around the world.

Ms Vickie Gauci, Assistant Lecturer, University of Malta

Technology and Employment of Disabled People in Malta : a complex entanglement of multiple assemblages

This research explores how employment of disabled people in Malta is/could be enabled via the capacities of technologies, both assistive and mainstream. Disabled people's right to work on an equal basis with others and to have access to relevant technologies to support them in this regard, is enshrined within the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006). The study's starting point is a social barriers approach and then builds upon it to develop a mode of analysis informed and inspired by new materialist perspectives (Latour 2005; Deleuze and Guattari 1988; De Landa, 2016). In particular, the research deploys the concept of the 'network' and the 'assemblage' to analyse technologies as components of complex entanglements of human and non-human entities. This qualitative participatory study began with a series of 3 focus groups conducted with 15 disabled employees. 25 participants were then interviewed. During the focus group discussions and interviews, participants were asked to describe their engagement with technology and its consequences for their doing, being and becoming in the workplace. Finally, 7 of the participants were observed whilst at work. The focus during the observations was on 'events', particular episodes of enactment of dis/ability within the workplace. Finally, the multiple data-sources were dredged to identify and understand the consequences of the entanglements of people, things and affects: whether the emergent

properties of these entanglements are conducive to or limiting of

dis/ability. All participants in this research had physical or sensory

impairments. The research concludes by communicating the findings in

ways that is hoped will prompt disabled people and their organisations to

call for necessary change and improvements in the availability and

operation of technologies supporting their participation in work.

Furthermore, the implications of the findings for various stakeholders are

set forth, with a clear set of recommendations for enhanced policy and

practice.

DeLanda, M., 2016. *Assemblage Theory.* Edinburgh:Edinburgh University Press.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F., 1987. *A Thousand Plateaus : Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* Minneapolis:University of Minnesota Press.

Latour, B., 2005. *Reassembling the Social : An introduction to Actor-Network Theory.* New York:Oxford University Press.

United Nations, 2006. *The United Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.* Available at : http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf

Ms Sarah Hofmayer, PhD candidate, NUI Galway

The Impact of Legal Capacity on Employment for Persons with Disabilities: An Austrian Case Study

This paper will look at the often ignored impact of legal capacity questions on employment. It will use the Austrian legislation as an example to highlight dilemmas that can also be found in many other countries. This paper builds on former work experience of the author and a legal analysis under current Austrian and international law, bringing an especially timely aspect into this research as a new legal capacity legislation will enter into force in Austria in 2018. It will therefore discuss the potential of current amendments in the field of legal capacity for employment issues. Legal capacity is not only a requirement for entering into a labour contract or its termination but also necessary in many cases so as to carry out tasks at work. Many employees have to set acts that legally bind their business or employer, for example by entering into contracts with customers, sending out invoices or buying materials for the business itself. Such acts are only legally valid, if the employee has the required legal capacity. They can only create binding agreements for their employer, if they could enter into such a legal agreement themselves. These issues are noticed often only when entering into a labour contract or even only during the employment relationship and need then to be resolved quickly so as to ensure the job maintenance. This poses several questions, which this paper will attempt to provide a first, careful set of answers to. The guiding questions of this paper are as follows: How can supported decision making work in the field of employment, especially during the everyday tasks of labour? How can we ensure more clarity amongst support persons, employers and persons with disabilities and thereby increase the job safety? Which legal amendments are necessary to resolve these dilemmas?

Dr Juho Honkasilta, Lecturer, University of Helsinki

Understanding ADHD – Sociocultural Discourse Approach

The existence and realness of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) has been debated for decades. As a solution, education scholars have proposed an auspicious bio-psycho-social (BPS) perspective, in which psychomedical and social factors are striven to be synthesized to build a complete understanding of ADHD. This transdisciplinary approach however is biased toward bio-psycho factors and would benefit from adding further weight to sociocultural factors. Based on my previous research on families who live with ADHD diagnosis in the context of Finland, this paper considers how ADHD exists and is real as a social kind by drawing on Ian Hacking's notions of (social) constructionism. The issue of the existence and realness of ADHD comes thus down to questions regarding the meanings given to the label and their functions deployed in discourse practice, in other words, the discursive representations and realizations of ADHD as certain kinds of things. The core argument of the paper is that ADHD takes the following discursive forms in lives of those who live with the label entity in a way or another: it is (1) a neurobiological condition, (2) a neuropsychiatric disorder, (3) a legal entity, (4) an emancipation of liability, (5) an instrument of humanizing, (6) an instrument of empowerment, and (7) an identity category. The paper discusses the functions of the afore-mentioned forms of ADHD adding thus culture to BPS model. In so doing, it further argues for the importance of synthesis of Disability Study models in order to understand the phenomenon called ADHD.

Professor Bill Hughes**,** Professor of Sociology, Glasgow Caledonian University

Strange Frontiers: Intersections of disability and race in the early modern period

Since Pliny-The-Elder in Antiquity barbarians and monsters, 'real' or imaginary were, in the representations that defined them - interchangeable others whose nefarious characteristics were transferable. Both racism and ableism combined in promoting the difference between the familiar and the strange; where the value of the former was ubiquitously inflated and the worth of the later invariably undermined. The classical revivalism of the early modern period re-ignited 'physiognomic consciousness' as a moral template for the representation and evaluation of the different people's 'introduced' to the 'west' by its imperial adventures. The intersection of ability and whiteness as the symbols of propriety, beauty and reason in early modernity plays a profound role in locking the geographical other – savage and heathen - into a script of monstrosity and deformity. In this paper, I argue, that indigenous impairment, as it was conceived in early modernity on the Atlantic rim and understood in terms of defectiveness, deformity and monstrosity, formed a template or script for understanding the 'barbari' that were 'discovered' by imperial expeditions. Racism and ableism performed a mutual service in legitimating the hegemony of those who sought to become 'the lords of the world'.

Xanthe Hunt, Department of Psychology, Stellenbosch University

Leslie Swartz, Department of Psychology, Stellenbosch University

Stine Hellum Braathe, Department of Health, SINTEF Science and Technology

Poul Rohleder, Department of Psychology, University of East London

(Re)presenting the self: Reflections on a photovoice project with people with physical disabilities in South Africa

The way in which something is visually represented both reflects and creates, the way in which we – as members of predominantly visual societies – think about and relate to it. Photovoice is presented as an emancipatory, participatory research method with the potential to put minority subjects in charge of their own representation in the visual realm. In this talk, I consider the possible role of images created as a result of photovoice projects in reflecting and perpetuating problematic beliefs about people with physical disabilities. Reflecting on images from a photovoice study conducted in the Western Cape of South Africa, we argue that – once in the world – the meaning of images is often hostage to interpretations which reify untruths about the subject. I consider how photovoice projects may actually give rise to images that perpetuate the subjugation of their subjects. I also consider whether the images generated by our participants might cleave open a space for a truly emancipatory politics of self-representation through photography. The process of coming to speak for oneself is central to the development of one's own political agenda. If a picture speaks a thousand words, then representation – particularly – self-representation, *can* be political. I argue that images of subjects generated by those subjects could constitute a challenge not only to dominant aesthetics, but also to the discursive regimes and ideologies which underlie them.

Mr Douglas E. Kidd, M.L.S. Alumnus, Disability Studies Program, University of Toledo, Ohio.

Neurodivergence Enminded/Embodied: Living with Severe Traumatic Brain Injury

This essay positions Douglas Kidd's experience as a severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) survivor relative to other TBI survivors and in the context of persons with disabilities (PWDs) living in the United States and the world. This autoethnographical account examines the life of a neurodivergent individual whose brain functions in ways that deviate significantly from the dominant societal standards of "normal." Douglas explores the profound changes to his identity and resultant social disconnection he encounters since acquiring a severe TBI during an auto accident more than a decade ago. These profound alterations to his identity affect Douglas' ability to process, then adjust to the demands of his surroundings. As Douglas decodes, deciphers, and processes the world, at times his brain damage triggers and/or produces episodes of temporal dissonance. As these shifts in timing occur, they have tremendous impact on his emotional stability. Despite these seeming difficulties, Douglas celebrates his altered awareness of time and his new identity as a disabled person. This paper examines how Douglas's emergence through trauma, coma, and amnesia to his new life with cognitive, emotional, psychological, and physical impairments enhance expression of his humanity. Douglas demonstrates the salient aspects of his new life - emotional sensitivity and volatility - may on the surface seem detrimental and undesirable; however, these qualities greatly enhance his identification with and empathy for others, which in turn drive his artistic, social, cultural, and political expression, along with his quest for community.

Mr Antonios Ktenidis, Doctoral Researcher, School of Education, University of Sheffield

Unruly Bodies in Austere Secondary Schools: Stories of Students with Dwarfism in the United Kingdom

Three reports from the Equality and Human Rights Commission of the United Kingdom covering the austerity era (2009-2017) demonstrate the disablist inequalities that disabled youth encounters during schooling, especially during their secondary education. This presentation draws on the stories of young people with dwarfism aged 11-17 years old that were gathered during the last four months of 2017, which were focused on their experiences from their secondary education. This presentation aims: 1. To propose a narrative approach that engages with embodiment and performativity theories to acknowledge both the embodied and performed identities of researcher(s) and participants in and out of their stories. 2. To provide reflections from the fieldwork addressing the emotional labour involved in it, the required flexibility and the decisions on the spot and the incessant struggles with the discursivity of my positionality as a 'researcher'. 3. To look into some of the stories that young people with dwarfism generously shared with me and discuss some of the emerging themes. Setting these three aims for this presentation is an attempt to decolonize research by refusing to 'purify' and 'neutralize' the research (process) and 'scientify' the stories and by being critically reflexive, acknowledging the power struggles involved in the project.

How Fair Is Britain: Equality, Human Rights And Good Relations in 2010, The First Triennial Review" (2010)

Is Britain Fairer? The State of Equality and Human Rights 2015" (2015)

Being Disabled In Britain 2016: A Journey Less Equal (2017)

Dr Elizabeth Mathews, Assistant Professor, Dublin City University

Contesting hegemonic discourses of deafness: mainstreaming and the medicalisation of deaf education in Ireland

Historically, the field of deaf education has been an ideological battleground between medical and social models of d/Deafness and their respective educational approaches: speech and sign language. Until the 1970s, the dominance of one model over the other was played out in schools for the deaf. Particular schools favoured oralism or manualism, and shifts occurred in response to changing social conditions. One consistent feature of this educational system, however, was that deaf children had the opportunity to interact with their deaf peers, supporting the development of the Deaf community and the intergenerational transfer of a social model of Deafness. This fostered the growth of sign languages, often regardless of the philosophy of the particular school.

From the 1970s onwards, however, deaf education changed with the arrival of what became known as *mainstream* education. As a result, the intergenerational transfer of the social model of Deafness was no longer guaranteed since generations of deaf children simply did not meet in schools. At this point, the medical model started to emerge as the dominant or *hegemonic* way of understanding what it meant to be deaf. This paper examines the contemporary mainstream system of deaf education in Ireland, focusing on the interplay of power in the various spaces deaf children inhabit (home, school, clinic). Drawing on empirical evidence, it uses the stories of families as told by parents (especially mothers) to unpack the policy, practice, and ideological foundations of mainstreaming.

Professor Monika Mitra, Associate Professor Lurie Institute for Disability Policy, Brandeis University

Barriers to perinatal care among women with physical disabilities: Making the case for inclusion

There is a notable lack of literature about the health care experiences during pregnancy among women with physical disabilities. This study examines the unmet health needs and barriers to care during pregnancy and childbirth among women with significant physical disabilities in the United States. Telephone interviews were conducted with 25 women with significant physical disabilities who had delivered babies in the past ten years and 14 US clinicians with substantive experience in providing obstetrical care to women with physical disabilities. Four primary themes related to unmet health needs emerged from the interviews with women with physical disabilities. They include (1) need for information about the interaction between their specific disability and pregnancy, (2) access to appropriate prenatal care providers who have provided care to other women with a similar disabling condition, (3) negative provider attitude with providers viewing them as asexual, incapable of procreating and bearing children, (4) inaccessible equipment and provider sites and community settings. In addition, four themes related to the barriers and facilitators in providing prenatal care emerged. They include (1) system-level barriers, including the reimbursement system, lack of time, shortage of practitioners with experience and willingness to provide care to women with disabilities; (2) lack of information relating to how specific disabling

conditions might affect pregnancy and the need for guidelines and practice recommendations for providing prenatal care; (3) need for practitioner education and training including clinical and attitudinal training; and (4) lack of accessible offices and equipment. This study sheds light on the perinatal care experiences of women with physical disabilities and documents the health care needs and barriers to care during pregnancy and at childbirth from the perspective of women with physical disabilities and clinicians.

Dr Teodor Mladenov, Marie Curie Individual Fellow, European Network on Independent Living

Assessing Personal Assistance

Personal assistance has been promoted by disabled activists since the 1970s to enable disabled people to have choice and control in their everyday lives and over their support. In this presentation, I will reflect on the initial results of a two-year research on personal assistance in Europe, conducted in the framework of a Marie Curie Individual Fellowship and hosted by the European Network on Independent Living (ENIL). The project seeks to involve personal assistance users in co-creating a tool to assess the quality of personal assistance schemes, to make cross-national comparisons, and to advocate for policy changes.

During the first stage of the research, I used ENIL's membership network to invite assistance users, their organisations and allies to evaluate a series of statements about personal assistance, elaborated on the basis of a literature review. The statements describe possible elements of personal assistance schemes, including details about guiding principles, funding mechanisms, needs assessment procedures, organisation of provision, working conditions of assistants, etc. The aim is to evaluate – in principle and by prioritising the users' perspective – the potential impact of what is described by each statement on users' choice and control.

Reviewing these initial results, I will address the following questions: What elements of personal assistance are perceived by the respondents as barriers and what elements – as enablers of choice and control? To what degree is there a consensus? Is there a difference between the answers of users and non-users? How do the results relate to my previous research (Mladenov, 2012) and recent debates on personal assistance within disability studies (e.g., Shakespeare et al, 2017)?

Mladenov, T. (2012) 'Personal assistance for disabled people and the understanding of human being', *Critical Social Policy*, 32(2), 242-261.

Shakespeare, T., Porter, T. and Stöckl, A. (2017) *Personal Assistance Relationships: Power, Ethics and Emotions*. Norwich: UEA.

Professor Michele Moore, Professor of Inclusive Education, Editor,
Disability and Society

**Alliances between the disabled people's movement and the
transgender movement**

The proposal that transgender people and disabled people share the same

conditions of oppression is gaining a level of liberal consensus. Arguably

transgender people and disabled people can forge alliances to reject the

way in which dominant medical discourses regulate their lives. The

viability of this proposed alliance is powerful because transgender people

and disabled people have group identities negotiated in response to social

injustice. However, I argue that the proposition that disability and

transgender can be politically and theoretically aligned is not progressive,

has confusions embedded within it which do not best serve the interests

of transgender children and that the struggles of disabled children and

their families are undermined if their interests are subordinated to the

politics of transactivism. My research into the experiences of parents with

children identifying as transgender, and with children themselves,

grounds this conclusion. I argue alliances should not be made between

the disabled people's movement and the transgender movement. To

reject the medical model for disabled children on the grounds it is

oppressive logically requires rejection of the medical model for their

gender nonconforming peers. The transgendering of children does not,

however, escape from the medical model but endorses it. Ideas from the

history of Disability Studies provide possibilities for freedom from

medicalization for disabled children and offer alternative ways to respond

to, and care for the welfare of, children who question gender. The idea that political resistance should take identical forms between transgender people and disabled people is an overly simplistic way of challenging the social barriers that lead to different forms of exclusion. I argue that transgender activism, unlike disability activism, far from disrupting oppression and promoting inclusion, intensifies surveillance, creates pathology and tightens public control with the effect of manufacturing oppression and exclusion.

Ms Hannah Morgan, Senior Lecturer in Disability Studies, CeDR, Lancaster University

Practicing In the wake of the social model: Social Work with Disabled People

It is now 35 years since Oliver built on UPIAS' Fundamental Principles of Disability to articulate a social model of disability in his seminal text *Social Work and Disabled People* (1983). Despite repeated policy and professional commitments to adopting the social model as the basis for working with disabled people the relationship between the social model and social work education and practice remains chequered and uneven in its application. Social work continues to operate in problematic ways in disabled people's lives, at best often ineffectual at upholding people's rights and at worst oppressive and highly damaging. This paper contends that the formal adoption of the social model by professional bodies, service providers and educators is often static, abstract and lacking in the professional curiosity necessary to engage with an evolving model underpinned by vibrant and nuanced discussions and debates within disability studies. Reflecting primarily on social work education and practice in England, I explore the contemporary relevance of Finkelstein's professions aligned to the community as the basis of enabling social work practice that has an active engagement with not only the social model but also with disability studies and disabled people's organisations.

Ms Hannah Morgan, Dr Susie Balderston, Ms Lucy Allwright, CeDR, Lancaster University; Vision Sense; AVA (Against Violence and Abuse)

Tackling Violence Against Disabled Women and Girls in co-production with housing, mental health and social care services

This paper reports initial findings from a user-led, Disability Research for Independent Living and Learning (DRILL) funded project that seeks to tackling barriers in services for longer-term safe independent living for disabled or Deaf women who are victim-survivors of violence and abuse. To date, research has concentrated on the scale of the problems, improving reporting, short-term safeguarding and crises provision. Disabled survivors tell us that prevention, statutory services working together, accessible safe housing and longer term mental health support are necessary. Service providers, policy makers and educators need user-led information and advice about how to better work together to protect disabled women and girl's UNCRPD Article 15 and 16 rights (Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse). This England and Wales based project, which involves a review of all available serious case reviews (recently renamed safeguarding adult reviews) involving disabled women or girls, interviews with disabled victim-survivors about their experiences of longer-term support and with service providers in housing, health and social care, will identify the barriers and gaps in existing provision as well as examples of best and replicable practice. This paper will also look forward to the final six months of the project where we will be co-producing an accessible best practice toolkit and e-learning module so that social workers, mental health and housing professionals can learn how to make their services accessible, inclusive and relevant for disabled/Deaf victim-survivors after violence.

Mr José Nogueira, PhD Candidate, ISCTE - Lisbon University, Portugal

The myths and the facts about autism and work in Portugal

The integration of people with autism in the labour market is not an easy task, but it is an important factor for their inclusion. In Portugal, the right to non-discrimination in employment is enshrined in national legislation. Portugal has also specific active employment measures for people with disabilities. This presentation discusses the developments on access and participation of people with autism in the labour market in Portugal. Firstly, the research attempts to understand features such as: i) the role of active employment measures and other public incentives; ii) the contribution of organizations of persons with autism and the public training centres; iii) the main barriers to the participation in the labour market; and iv) the role of people with autism and their families in the activation process. Secondly, the presentation shows results about the integration of people with autism in Portuguese companies. Results will be presented on: i) the access to a job; ii) the integration process; iii) the professional route; iv) the remuneration policy; and v) the satisfaction of employers and the satisfaction of workers with disabilities about their career. The research is based on quantitative and qualitative data. We compared data from a recent study (Gonçalves & Nogueira, 2012) with information gathered through interviews with key actors, organizations, and families. The results show that when there is a well-defined strategy and proper monitoring for each case, involving a key player within the company, the success is possible.

José Nogueira, PhD Candidade, ISCTE - Lisbon University, Portugal

The inclusive school in Portugal: the perspective of teachers, families and key actors

Since the World Conference on Special Needs Education, organized by the Government of Spain in cooperation with UNESCO in 1994, the paradigm of "Education for All" has been consolidated: to provide education for children and youth with disabilities in the regular education system. In the last years, Portugal implemented interesting policies to ensure that all children with disabilities, including those with autism, have access to a quality education in the mainstream public education system. Reference schools for autism and implemented structured units of education based on the TEACCH method were created within the regular system. Nevertheless, the children continue to be part of the regular class. The presentation is based on new data exploration of a recent quantitative study concerning the impact of public schools on the quality of life of children with autism their families (Nogueira et al. 2014) complemented with data obtained by qualitative methods. A survey was administered to a sample of 300 households with children/youth with autism. In addition, information was also obtained by interviews and focus group to professionals, teachers and other stakeholders. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS and qualitative data was studied through content analysis. The main domains of the analysis are: i) the access to the public education system; ii) families satisfaction about the inclusion process; ii) the resources and players; iii) the training of educators and the adequacy of the methods; iv) family support; and v) the impact of public school in the family and child with autism syndrome disorder.

Dr Emily Jane O'Dell, Assistant Professor, Sultan Qaboos University

Contemporary Disability in the Arab World: From the Literary Imagination to On-the-Ground Activis

This paper will explore literary and cinematic representations of disability in the Arab world and address the current challenges and opportunities in promoting disability activism in the Middle East. The paper begins by examining cultural productions about disabled people in literature and film, and considers how these representations reflect the reality of the everyday lives of disabled people. To do so, the paper includes relevant facts on disability policy and legislation in the region to investigate how disability is adjudicated in the public sphere. Using experiential anthropology, the paper then draws upon the personal experiences of the author in attempting to forge new paths for disability activism in the Levant and Gulf. Drawing upon disability theory, the author addresses the limitations of importing western models and notions of disability to the Middle East without explicit consideration of local culture and individual needs. Using specific case examples from her activism on the ground, the author will address youth and mental illness, refugees and PTSD, children with cancer, adoption and disability, and regional access to pain management.

Ms Tessa Overmars-Marx, VU University, Netherlands

Social inclusion in the neighbourhood, from the perspective of people with intellectual disabilities, neighbours and group home staff members

People with intellectual disabilities live increasingly in regular neighbourhoods but do not necessarily feel included. This is not only determined by (1) personal characteristics but also by (2) how neighbours respond to their arrival and (3) by the way group home staff members support their residents. The aim of this study is to gain more insight into social and physical aspects of the neighbourhood that relate to the process of social inclusion from the perspective of various groups involved in this process. We conducted three studies: 1. a photovoice study involving eighteen people with intellectual disabilities in three neighbourhoods. The participants took photographs of their neighbourhood and following we discussed these photographs during an interview. 2. Semi-structured interviews with 26 neighbours in two neighbourhoods. 3. Nine group interviews with on average eight staff members of group homes within three neighbourhoods. To encourage the group discussions we used a topic list. The results show how each unique perspective has its own perception on the social and physical aspects of the neighbourhood that either facilitate or hinder the process of social inclusion in the neighbourhood and therefore emphasize the importance of an ecological approach in studying the process of social inclusion. Social inclusion is often related with major goals like creating a caring community. Our study shows the significance of small and informal

activities and situations, starting with recognizing and being recognized in the neighbourhood. Regarding a next step, neighbours show willingness to engage if they are approached as a neighbour with their own interests and needs. This process of interaction can be encouraged by group home staff members. However, they often struggle with a delicate balance between protecting residents and taking the risk of exposing residents to the neighbourhood. To enhance neighbourhood social inclusion, we recommend service providers to support staff members in striking the right balance.

Dr Erin Pritchard, Post doctoral teaching fellow, Liverpool Hope University.

Considering female researcher safety in disability research: The difficulties of recruiting people with dwarfism at conventions held by associations for people with dwarfism.

Disability research often favours the use of disabled researchers carrying out research with disabled participants. It also encourages a rapport to be built with potential participants. However, little consideration has been given to the ethical implications of this sort of research process, especially in relation to researcher safety. Focusing on gender, disability and sexuality, situated in space, this paper explores the problems encountered when trying to recruit participants at a convention held by an association for people with dwarfism. This paper draws on my own experience, as someone with dwarfism, of being sexually assaulted when trying to recruit participants at a particular space. It was apparent that some members of the association use the space to try to find a partner. This paper suggests that the safety of the researcher, including in relation to the risk of sexual assault by participants, needs more consideration within disability studies.

Ms Yeni Rosdianti Rasiyo, Center for Disability Law and Policy, National University of Ireland, Galway

Positive/Preferential Measures in an Equality Framework: The Fulfillment of The Right to Work of Persons with Disabilities in Indonesia

After passing the new law on 2016 (Law number 8/2016) concerning persons with disabilities which mostly brings the UN-CRPD into national law, the human rights protection of persons with disabilities in Indonesia demands a progressive realisation to be put in place. The "invisibility" of persons with disabilities has to end. The right to work, which is the focus of this paper, aimed to benefit persons with disabilities to live independently in dignity within an inclusive society. The principle of equality and non-discrimination should be strengthened through legitimate claims for the state to conduct its obligations to fulfil human rights. Accordingly, substantive equality that equipped with positive/preferential measures, plays a pivotal role to address the removing of discrimination, both in direct and indirect forms. This paper will assess the challenges of the law including its concordance with the Local Government Acts with regard to the right to work. Such challenging circumstances evoke questions related to how state obligations protect the right to work of persons with disabilities towards an accessible supported open employment as well as self-employment, and which factors influence its functioning and the extent of its greater success. It will also scrutinize certain mechanisms ensuring the implementation of laws and policies to protect and fulfil the right to work of persons with disabilities in Indonesia, by drawing upon a positive/preferential measures framework to achieve equality in reality.

Professor Kirstein Rummery, Professor of Social Policy, Senior Fellow Centre on Constitutional Change, University of Stirling

From activism to political participation: An ethnography of gender, disability and politics

Disabled people and women are often active participants in third sector and new social movement organisations, but are less often members of political parties or found running for office. Theories of lack of supply (disabled people and women choosing not to participate in mainstream political activities) and lack of demand (political parties failing to recruit disabled people and women) have failed to adequately account for this phenomenon. Drawing in theories and evidence from feminist political theory, the author looks the structural, attitudinal, physical and cultural barriers to political participation. She then applies these theories to data drawn from a participant ethnographic study of running for political office as a disabled woman in the 2017 snap general election in the UK. She concludes that it is structural oppression and lack of intersectional support, rather than individual motivation, that acts as a barrier to disabled people and women's political participation, and discusses ways in which the transition from third sector to political activation can be constructed to include more disabled people and women.

Dr Mark Sherry, Professor of Sociology, University of Toledo, Ohio

Critiquing 'sex rights': Disabled men using disabled women who are victims of sex trafficking

In recent years, there has been a push for 'sex rights' for disabled people. In my work with human trafficking victims, I have met disabled sex slaves who have been used by disabled men whose justification for such behaviours involves an assertion of their rights to sex. In this paper, I want to question and problematize this discourse. Rights do not exist in isolation - they are always relational and interactive. In the cases discussed in this presentation, it will be argued that the rights of women to be free from slavery override the rights of these disabled men to sex. These cases should give disability advocates a moment to pause before endorsing an unqualified right of disabled people to commercial sex.

Dr Murray K. Simpson, University of Dundee

The death drive: Crippled body(work) in David Cronenberg's Crash

This paper explores the connection between disability and eroticism. It takes as its starting point the interconnection between the disabled body – specifically the body that has become impaired through automobile accidents – as simultaneously abject and erotic. The traumatized body is read as a signifier for the Freudian death drive, in need of restraint and discipline. Romance is the civilizing of the death-driven eroticism exhibited in David Cronenberg's movie 'Crash' (1996). In Crash, a young professional couple have a relationship that revolves around a very open sexuality. Following an automobile accident, the husband, Ballard, then his wife, become increasingly drawn into a circle centered around the enigmatic and charismatic figure of Vaughn. This group crave sexual excitement and exploration in the destructive theatre of automobile accidents, both actual and staged. Here, disfigured bodies of people and cars signify the excess of the death drive, pushing beyond the amoral presociality of nature and against the normativity of civilization. In this state, the automobile, as signifier of sexual potency, danger and excitement in American culture, functions as an objet petit a for Cronenberg, taking the subject ever closer to the fulfilment of desire at the moment of death, which is the end of desire. For that reason, the impaired body does not directly or intrinsically signify sexual fulfilment, but only insofar as it is a physical sign of the danger and excitement of the automobile. The body impaired through mechanical violence assumes an extreme sexualization here because of the residue of the various overdetermining factors.

Dr Liz Tilly, Building Bridges Training, UK

Inclusive research; ethical issues in supporting people to tell their story

Building Bridges Training, a UK social enterprise, seeks to make a difference to people's lives through delivering training, research and resources. In 2010, a short term project was established to enable people with a learning disability to 'research their own lives' and with the group member's consent, to use this data for a PhD thesis. An unexpected outcome was that the members formed a strong bond and greatly valued the opportunity to tell their stories and the role of being researchers. They clearly articulated that they wanted to continue as researchers after the project came to an end, so further grant funding was successfully sought. Seven years later the group continues to go from strength to strength, researching the issues affecting them and peers in their social networks from a disability rights and a social model of disability perspective. Issues covered include housing, welfare benefits, coping with independent living, health, managing money etc. Their research enables professionals and academics to have a better understanding of these challenges. The group has had a number of articles published in both practitioner and academic journals, written three reports and made a short film. This paper will consider the ethical dilemmas their success has meant for myself as the founder and only non-disabled person directly involved in the group. These issues and dilemmas cover anonymity and confidentiality, the need for flexible roles, including to also be an advocate and supporter and discuss the extent this conflicts with my role as a co-researcher. Power, ownership and control of the research agenda will also be discussed.

Dr Liz Tilly, Senior Lecturer, University of Wolverhampton

Transfer of DLA to PIP in the UK; implications for people with a mild learning disability

As part of the ongoing UK Government's welfare reform programme, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is changing disability benefits. Starting in 2013 PIP (Personal Independence Payment) is replacing DLA (Disability Living Allowance). The transfer was originally planned for completion in 2017, however this transition period is now extending into 2018. This research project, grounded in disability rights and the social model of disability, explored whether people with a mild learning disability lost or gained disability welfare benefit income following their reassessment. This is due to there being no replacement for the DLA 'low rate' care component in PIP. The research project also explored whether access to and type of support received during the reassessment process affected the assessment outcome, and what impact, for those affected by a change of income have on independent living and the ability to live a full life in the local community. This hidden population already face financial hardship due to the combined effect of not being eligible for learning disability services, living long-term on welfare benefits and having poor budgeting skills. In the first stage of the project 50 people with a learning disability were recruited, they completed a questionnaire about their welfare benefits including DLA and PIP rates, and the level and type of support they receive, and later shared their PIP assessment results and scores. In the second stage, 10 people from this group were interviewed after the outcome of their PIP assessment was known. The interviews were provided qualitative data in the form of case studies, and in-depth accounts of the personal impact, to highlight the findings of the questionnaires. An analysis of the points scored in the independent assessments was also undertaken. This presentation will share emerging findings from the research project and discuss implications for policy and practice.

Dr Maria Tsakiri, Independent researcher (Frederick University/UNICAF)

Disability, Activism, Love and Anger in Lebanon and Greece

My paper will attempt to outline some of the characteristics and actions of different agents of action in Greece and Lebanon. As a reaction to austerity, exclusion and divisive practices, activism takes place in different forms in the two countries. Even though the socio-political factors that have an impact on disability are different, arts are the common ground where the collective action takes place and gives visibility to disabled people and disability politics. In my analysis, I will be looking at the cases of the Movement of Artists with Disabilities (Greece), the Movement of People with Disabilities for Emancipation – Zero Tolerance (Greece), and The Home of cine-jam (Lebanon), and Movies on the Move (Lebanon), as agents of collective action. Drawing on theories of affect (Goodley, Liddiard and Runswick-Cole, 2017) and the notion of crip killjoy (Johnson and McRuer, 2014), this paper will explore the development of disability commons (Runswick-Cole, and Goodley, 2015), and the implications of love and anger in disability politics.

Goodley, D., Liddiard, K. & Runswick-Cole, K. (2018) Feeling disability: theories of affect and critical disability studies. *Disability & Society*, *33*(2), 197-217.

Johnson, M.L. & McRuer,R. (2014) Cripistemologies: Introduction. *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*, 8 (2), 127-147.

Runswick-Cole, K. & Goodley, D. (2018) The 'Disability Commons': Re-thinking Mothering Through Disability. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Disabled Children's Childhood Studies*(pp. 231-246). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Prof. Simo Vehmas, Stockholm University

Profound intellectual disability and sex: a matter of right or abuse?

This paper explores the difficult issue of sexuality of people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD). The need for writing this paper arose from an embarrassing realization of ignorance and negligence regarding the possibility of erotic life for people with PIMD. This realization took place as a part of an ongoing ethnographic study about people with PIMD and what makes a good life for them. One of the main intellectual and ethical commitments of the project from the very beginning was to represent the lives of the research participants in their full complexity. It was only after the fieldwork that I realized that the 'full complexity' of their lives had not included sexuality – it was not in the centre, not even on the fringes of the initial research agenda. This paper is a part of the process of understanding and coming to terms with a subconscious exclusion of a crucial element of humanity from a research that had the intention of providing a thorough picture of the lived experiences of PIMD. I will especially concentrate on discussing the tension between two concerns. One is the ethical conviction of seeing sex and sexuality as a right and the other is the epistemic concern of making reliable judgments about the preferences of those with very limited cognitive and communicative capacities.

Ms Philippa Walch and Ms Claire Sheriden, Local Area Coordinators, Baptcare Family and Community Services, Tasmania.

Dual diagnosis: A challenge for support providers.

Coordinating services for people with disabilities in Tasmania gives a unique opportunity for working with individuals from all walks of life. Our presentation will discuss how support is provided to people with dual diagnosis of mental health and disability, following closely through case studies and outlining the challenges for two individuals: Bill and Muriel. Aman et al. (2016) states that people with intellectual disabilities are three times more likely to have a mental illness than the general population. Schizophrenia is the most commonly diagnosed mental illness among people with intellectual disabilities and the symptoms are often more severe (Morgan et al.,2008). The case study of Bill will follow his journey through diagnosis of schizophrenia, explaining the difficulties of arranging support for a client who periodically chooses to live on the streets travelling around Australian cities. Mental illnesses, such as developmental and personality disorders, are also commonly diagnosed conditions among people with an intellectual disability (Howlett et al. 2016). Individuals with disabilities are more than twice as likely to have an unknown diagnosis of a mental health disorder according to Howlett et al., (2016). The case study of Muriel, wheel chair bound as a result of childhood polio, who was banned from all the local doctors and allied health services will illustrate the co-occurrence of a personality disorder and disability, The experience of Local Area Coordination (LAC) highlights

the challenges of referring people with an intellectual disability to services in the community, with Morgan et al., (2008) referring to an "administrative divide" between the two services and a "structural impediment" existing for inter-agency services. The case studies clearly show the need for services to be aligned. This study explores how best LACs can access resources form both mental health and disability services to achieve positive outcomes for this group of clients.

Aman, H., Naeem, F., Farooq, S., & Ayub, M. (2016). Prevalence of nonaffective psychosis in intellectually disabled clients: systematic review and meta-analysis. *Psychiatric genetics*, 26(4), 145-155.

Howlett, S., Florio, T., Xu, H., & Trollor, J. (2015). Ambulatory mental health data demonstrates the high needs of people with an intellectual disability: Results from the New South Wales intellectual disability and mental health data linkage project. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry,* 49(2), 137-144.

Morgan, V. A., Leonard, H., Bourke, J., & Jablensky, A. (2008). Intellectual disability co-occurring with schizophrenia and other psychiatric illness: population-based study. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 193(5), 364-372.

Professor Nick Watson, University of Glasgow

The 'wicked' problems of disability: Developing a solution-focussed approach to researching disablement

Despite over 20 years of anti-discrimination legislation, disabled people remain among the most disadvantaged in the UK. For example, recent research by JRF suggests that over 50% of people living in poverty in the UK are either disabled themselves or live with somebody who is disabled. Disabled people face barriers across a range of different sectors including employment, housing, leisure, culture, rights to a family life and personal citizenship. The problems disabled people are what is termed "wicked" in that they are difficult to resolve and for many of the problems the various stakeholders involved cannot even agree what the problem is, let alone where the solution lies. They are multifaceted and cannot be met through one simple intervention and if they are to be tackled successfully require complex, intersectional, multi-disciplinary solutions. If we are to help disabled people research should not solely be on the disadvantage faced by disabled people, but rather it must also develop and mobilise evidence and knowledge that can promote change. This paper aims to explore how we can best set about researching these issues and argues that what is needed is a challenge led, solutions focused approach. It will argue that many of the traditional approaches to disability research have failed primarily because they have not taken account of the complexity of the situation and the needs of all those involved. Research should help to create new innovative ways to tackle the barriers faced by disabled people and embed that knowledge within the appropriate practice areas. The paper will make a case for collaborative action research methodology to build evidence and fill gaps in knowledge and understanding.

Alison Wilde, Leeds Beckett University

Crip happens: Representations of disability and impairment in popular comedy films

This paper explores the ways in which popular comedy films construct images of impairment and disability, and position the film viewer in a variety of ways. It is clear from disabled people's histories and criticisms of cultural representation that comedy and humour has played a major part in forming cultural attitudes towards disabled people, shaping disabled people's images of themselves; this is one of the many reasons why it deserves scholarly attention. I will argue that meanings of disability and impairment drawn from cinema need to be grounded in an understanding of cinematic practices and processes. A valuable framework for so doing is by recognizing the importance of genre in the production of cinematic texts and also in shaping the expectations of the audience. I argue that an understanding of genre/form and of processes of audience interpellation and viewing position are crucial to such enterprises, alongside other key cinematic issues, e.g. narrative analysis, cinematography, sound and mise-en-scène. As a genre which rarely uses disabled protagonists as romantic leads (often working to exacerbate old tropes of deviant sexuality or asexuality), the paper will focus primarily on the construction of images of impairment, and illness in romantic comedies. These will include an exploration of different impairments, such as physical impairments in 'Me before You' and mental illness in 'Greenberg', examining some of the implications of different comedic strategies and forms of protagonism for meaning-making in film audiences.

ABSTRACTS OF POSTERS

Ms Raquel G. Ferreira, MA Communication in Multicultural Contexts, University of Luxembourg

Silent sea of paradoxes - Communication challenges of linguistic minorities and ideologies around deafness and multilingualism in the context of the Grand-Duchy

When talking about communication and multilingualism, important versions of linguistic expression and the majority of its performers is often neglected: Sign Languages (SL) and Deaf people. It has been proved that relevant insights on language planning, acquisition, testing, attrition and maintenance could be provided by bringing light onto the cultural dynamics involved in this often misunderstood language (Sutton-Spence & Woll, 2004). Yet, aligned with discourses of normality and standardization, the development and acknowledgment of SL as independent and fully-fledged systems also seem to remain conditioned to stigmatizing matters. The primary purpose of this study was to investigate how Deaf communities within the context of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg cope with the multilingualism of the country. The dissertation first explores the peculiarities of Deaf culture, their communication endeavors in the specific context of Luxembourg and how these dynamics differ from those of essentially monolingual environments. Secondly, it reveals how some of the main issues faced by such community actually align with those faced by other (hearing) linguistic minorities of the country, despite of the Deafness component. Anchored in these two complementary axes, the research exposes the

potential impact of cultural impasses and common ideologies lying beyond these matters, from early education to later stages of employability and socialization. The study follows a case-study structure, having Qualitative Content Analysis as its main guideline. Under the Language Ideologies framework, the analysis focuses on how some discourses around Multilingualism, Sign Languages, disability and Deafness might potentially contribute to the perpetuation (rather than the improvement) of debatable current policies at educational and legal levels. Moreover, it aims to elucidate how bringing such matters to the surface could ultimately lead to the development and accomplishment of adequate measures of linguistic promotion, rights and accessibility which are extendable to Deaf and Minority linguistic communities in multilingual contexts overall.

Sutton-Spence, R., & Woll, B. (2004). British sign language. In Davies, A., & Elder, C. (Eds.), *The handbook of applied linguistics*. (pp. 165-186). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Ms Jaski Kohli, Accessibility Counselor, California State University, East Bay

Exploring the Transformative Potential of the Social Model of Disability

Although the enrolment of individuals with disabilities in higher education continues to increase, the completion rate of this student population does not reflect the same trajectory. While the attrition rate of students with disabilities is a complicated issue, the use of academic accommodations is one of the contributing factors to college completion. However, research indicates that some students are reluctant to self-disclose and utilize accommodations due to the stigma of having a disability. The stigma of disability often stems from the medical model of disability, which identifies disability as a deficiency and abnormality and seeks to fix, cure, or normalize individuals with disabilities. On the other hand, within the framework of the social model of disability, there is a distinction between impairment and disability, where the former is viewed as a description of the physical body and the latter is viewed as the outcome of societal barriers. Moreover, within the social model, treating disability is understood as decreasing societal barriers, while increasing understanding and awareness. As disability services staff on college campuses play a role in shaping students' identity, this poster presents the results of a qualitative study of the impact of a social model of disability workshop on college students' self-perception of disability.

Prof. Dr Mathilde Niehaus, University of Cologne

Jana F. Bauer, University of Cologne

Creating a more inclusive university and scientific world: The PROMI project for doctoral students with disabilities

University graduates with disabilities have – due to their high educational level – rarely been the focus of research so far. But a pilot study from Germany (Niehaus & Bauer, 2013) indicates that they encounter various disabling barriers – despite their high qualification. One career option for university graduates is to obtain a doctoral degree. Doctoral degrees promote career opportunities in most fields and are a formal precondition for scientific careers in Germany. Hence, it should be beyond question that admission to doctoral studies should be equally accessible for graduates with disabilities. The PROMI project for doctoral students with disabilities has been initiated as a combination of research and practice project to implement inclusive structures and processes at universities and to identify barriers and best practices. Funded by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs the project provides 45 additional part-time jobs for severely disabled doctoral students at 21 cooperating universities nationwide. The formative and participatory evaluation combines qualitative and quantitative data and includes all relevant stakeholders. There has been a wide interest of universities as well as university graduates with disabilities to participate in the PROMI project. This indicates that "inclusive university" is an upcoming topic that has been raised by the UN-CRPD. The PROMI project develops transferable and sustainable solutions to enhance this topic.