

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology of Disability: Soci/Gero/SoWk/Wome 4511

Winter 2010

Wed & Fri, 10:00 - 11:30

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Course Description:

This course introduces students to the field of disability studies, a field that problematizes the definition of disability and argues that disability is socially constructed. We will examine the medical and social models of disability and the ways in which they have an impact on perceptions of disabled people. As well, we will examine the significance of the experience of disability, looking in particular at how and why experience varies, and we will consider how that experience informs individual consciousness.

This upper-level course is organized as a combination of lecture and seminar, with more emphasis on seminar discussion than on lectures. **In keeping with the advanced nature of the course, students are expected to actively participate in discussing issues raised in readings.** In other words, students are expected to be present for each and every class. Students are also expected to take seriously the contributions to discussions from classmates.

Required Readings

1. Stone, Sharon-dale. 2010. ***Sociology 4511 Readings Package, Winter 2010.***
2. Titchkosky, Tanya. 2007. ***Reading & Writing Disability Differently: The Textured Life of Embodiment.*** Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
3. Other required readings will be posted on the WebCT site for this course (marked with *).

Recommended (not required):

Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2006: Analytical Report. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Posted on WebCT.

Advancing the Inclusion of People with Disabilities: 2008 Federal Disability Report. Ottawa: Government of Canada. Posted on WebCT.

Evaluation (for details, see Assignments section of outline):

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Comment Papers (5)	45%
Book Review due March 12	15%
Final take-home exam due April 21	20%
In-class participation (every class)	20%

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is unacceptable and subject to various sanctions. It involves not only copying word-for-word a portion of someone else's written work without crediting the author, but also paraphrasing the ideas of others without crediting the original author. See the website How to Avoid Plagiarism at <http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/plagiar.html>, and see University Regulations section "**IX Academic Dishonesty**," Lakehead University Calendar. You will receive zero on an assignment if any part of it is plagiarized, and your name will be reported to the Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities.

Schedule of Weekly Topics and Readings

1. Jan 6-8: The significance of disability.
In class documentary: Small Differences.
 - Linton, Simi. "Reassigning Meaning," Readings Package #1
 - Davis, Lennard J. "Constructing Normalcy," Readings Package #2
2. Jan 13-15: Definitions of disability.
 - Sally French and John Swain, "Whose Tragedy? Towards a Personal Non-tragedy View of Disability," Readings Package #3
 - Goering, Sara. 2008. 'You Say You're Happy, but ...' *Bioethical Inquiry* 5: 125-135*
 - Sunderland, Naomi, Catalano, Tara and Kendall, Elizabeth. 2009. 'Missing Discourses: Concepts of Joy and Happiness in Disability.' *Disability & Society* 24 (6):703 – 714*
3. Jan 20-22: Disability Theory and the Concept of Ableism
 - Bill Hughes, "Disability and the Body," Readings Package #4
 - Mike Oliver, "The Social Model in Context," Readings Package #5Recommended:
 - Campbell, Fiona A. Kumari. 2008. 'Exploring Internalized Ableism Using Critical Race Theory.' *Disability & Society* 23 (2):151 — 162*
4. Jan 27-29: Responding to Disabling Attitudes (1)
 - Sally French, "Can You See the Rainbow? The roots of denial" Readings Package #6
 - Lois Keith, "Encounters with Strangers" Readings Package #7
 - Robert Murphy, "Encounters: The Body Silent in America" Readings Package #8
5. Feb 3-5: Responding to Disabling Attitudes (2)
 - Tighe, Cynthia Anne. 2001. 'Working at Disability: A Qualitative Study Of The Meaning Of Health And Disability For Women With Physical Impairments.' *Disability & Society* 16 (4): 511–529*
 - Olney, Marjorie and Karin Brockelman. 2003. "Out of the Disability Closet: Strategic Use Of Perception Management By Select University Students With Disabilities." *Disability & Society* 18 (1): 35–50*
 - Isabel Dyck, "Body troubles: Women, the Workplace and Negotiations of a Disabled Identity" Readings Package #9Recommended:
 - Low, Jacqueline. 1996. 'Negotiating identities, negotiating environments: An interpretation of the experiences of students with disabilities.' *Disability & Society* 11 (2): 235-248*

6. Feb 10-12: The built environment as disabling.

- Sally French, "What's so great about independence?" Readings Package #10
- Brendan Gleeson, "Can Technology overcome the disabling city?" Readings Package #11
- Rob Imrie, "Oppression, Disability and Access in the Built Environment" Readings Package #12

FEB. 15-19: STUDY WEEK BREAK FROM CLASSES

7. Feb 24-26: Issues in Bioethics and Human Rights.

In-class documentary: The Sterilization of Leilani Muir

- Rembis, Michael A. 2009. '(Re)Defining disability in the 'genetic age': behavioral genetics, 'new' eugenics and the future of impairment.' *Disability & Society* 24 (5):585 — 597*
- Mark Priestley, "Birthrights," Readings Package #13

8. Mar 3-5: Disability Across the Life Course.

- Mark Priestley, "Generating Debates: Why We Need a Life Course Approach to Disability Issues," Readings Package #14
- Allison Rowlands, "Acquired Disability in Young Adulthood" Readings Package #15
- Sheets, Debra J. 2005. "Aging with Disabilities: Ageism and More." *Generations* 29 (3): 37-41*

Recommended:

- Barron, Karin. 1997. "The Bumpy Road to Womanhood." *Disability & Society* 12 (2): 223-239*

9. Mar 10-12: Independent Living.

In-class movie: Rory O'Shea Was Here

- Colin Goble, "Dependence, Independence and Normality" Readings Package #16
- Sally French and John Swain, "The Relationship between Disabled People and Health and Welfare Professionals" Readings Package #17

Book Review due March 12

10. Mar 17-19: Disability and Conceptions of Adulthood.

In-class documentary: When Billy Broke His Head

- Bob Sapey, "Disability and Social Exclusion in the Information Society," Readings Package #18
- Robert D. Wilton, "Working at the Margins: Disabled People and the Growth of Precarious Employment," Readings Package #19

11. Mar 24-26: Claiming a disabled identity.

In-class documentary: Shameless: The Art and Politics of Disability

- John Swain and Colin Cameron, "Unless otherwise stated" Readings Package #20
- Carol Thomas "Narrative identity and the disabled self" Readings Package #21
- Watson, Nick. 2002. "Well, I Know This is Going to Sound Very Strange to You, But I Don't See Myself as a Disabled Person." *Disability & Society* 17 (5): 509-527*

12. Mar 31 – Apr 6: The Future of Disability.

- No readings. Course wrap-up and discussion of take-home exam.

ASSIGNMENTS

Critical Reading Towards Critical Writing

Your written assignments in this course are expected to be **critical**. This means that you need to reflect on what you are reading and offer your own evaluation of the ideas presented. To be critical is not necessarily to find fault with the text, it is to carefully evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the ideas and arguments presented. An excellent resource that will help you with this is the webpage published by the University of Toronto Writing Support Centre:

<<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/reading-and-researching/critical-reading>>. You are strongly encouraged to download the superb advice on this page and follow it (even if you think you already know how to write critically). There are also links on this page to other pages with writing advice.

Note that all written assignments MUST follow the Guidelines For All Written Work posted on WebCT

Participation: In-Class (20%)

In class: Readings should be understood as raising issues and offering perspectives, rather than understood as representing the final word on anything. Class time will be to a large extent devoted to the in-depth discussion and debate of issues raised in readings and in documentaries.

Participation in class discussions is a way for you to demonstrate your understanding of issues raised in the readings and other material. Students are expected to contribute to **every** class discussion. Thus, you need to **read and think about the required readings so that you will be prepared to critically discuss them in class**. You are also encouraged to show in class that you have read and considered the recommended readings, and are able to critically comment on them. You will not earn class participation marks by simply talking in class. Your **class participation mark will reflect the degree of thoughtful and critical reflection** shown by you as you engage with course material.

Comment Papers (45%)

You are required to write 5 comment papers (1 1/2 – 3 pp. ea., typed, double spaced) each to critically comment on required readings for one week. Each comment paper is worth 9% of your final mark. You are encouraged (but not required) to also incorporate comments on the recommended readings for the week.

You are strongly advised to plan to write papers earlier in the term rather than later, so that you will be sure to get them all completed. If you want to improve your marks you are allowed to hand in one extra comment paper, and your mark will be based on the highest five marks.

You may comment on any week's readings starting January 13, but in all cases the papers will be **due at the beginning of the Wednesday class during which we discuss the readings. Late papers will not be accepted**. You are encouraged to submit your comment papers by email at least one hour before class begins. Details will be discussed in class. In your comment papers, you must:

- give full bibliographic information on the readings at the top of the 1st page (ASA style, see the Sociology website)
- identify ways in which the readings relate to each other, and how they support or contradict each other
- evaluate the usefulness of each reading for adding to an understanding of the subject of disability and justify your evaluation with specific examples

Critical Book Review (15%)

Critically review Titchkosky's book *Reading and Writing Disability Differently*. Length: 5-7 pp. typed, double spaced. The goal of this assignment is not to summarize what the book says, but:

- ⇒ identify Titchkosky's central purpose in writing the book and analyze the significance of the book in terms of how it adds to an understanding of the subject of disability
- ⇒ identify and analyze the significance of important arguments made in the book
- ⇒ evaluate the extent to which Titchkosky succeeded in fulfilling her purpose for writing the book
- ⇒ evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the book with regard to how it adds to an understanding of the subject of disability

You need to also address the following points in your review:

- ⇒ does Titchkosky make her own perspective clear and does this add or detract from the value of the book?
- ⇒ what is your own relationship to the subject of the book and how does this affect your understanding of the book?
- ⇒ what in particular is valuable about the book?
- ⇒ would you recommend the book to someone who wants to understand the subject of disability? Why or why not?

In writing this review, **it is at all times crucial that you justify your analysis**. Whether you criticize or commend the author, you need to say **why** you do so and you need to give evidence to support what you say.

It is not necessary to do additional research for this assignment, but you might find it useful to consult the following internet resources:

A Concise Guide to Writing a Critical Book Review:

<<http://www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/bookreview/index.cfm>>;

Writer's Handbook: <<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/CriNonfiction.html>>;

Writing Book Reviews: <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/bookreview.html>.

Due Friday, March 12. Late reviews will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day (including weekends)

READINGS PACKAGE REFERENCES

- Davis, Lennard J. 1997. "Constructing Normalcy." Pp 9-28 in *The Disability Studies Reader*, edited by Lennard J. Davis. NY: Routledge.
- Dyck, Isabel. 1999. "Body Troubles: Women, the Workplace and Negotiations of a Disabled Identity." Pp 119-37 in *Mind and Body Spaces: Geographies of Illness, Impairment and Disability*, edited by Ruth Butler and Hester Parr. N.Y.: Routledge.
- French, Sally. 1993. "Can you see the rainbow? The roots of denial." Pp 69-77 in *Disabling Barriers — Enabling Environments*, edited by John Swain, Vic Finkelstein, Sally French and Mike Oliver. London: Sage.
- French, Sally. 1993. "What's so great about independence?" Pp. 44-48 in *Disabling Barriers — Enabling Environments*, edited by John Swain, Vic Finkelstein, Sally French and Mike Oliver. London: Sage.
- French, Sally and John Swain. 2001. "The Relationship between Disabled People and Health and Welfare Professionals." Pp. 734-753 (Ch 32) in *Handbook of Disability Studies*, edited by Gary Albrecht, Katherine D. Seelman and Michael Bury. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- French, Sally and John Swain. 2004. "Whose Tragedy? Towards a Personal Non-tragedy View of Disability." Pp. 34-40 in *Disabling Barriers —Enabling Environments, 2nd Edition*, edited by John Swain, Vic Finkelstein, Sally French and Mike Oliver. London: Sage.
- Gleeson, Brendan. 1999. "Can technology overcome the disabling city?" Pp. 98-118 in *Mind and Body Spaces: Geographies of Illness, Impairment and Disability*, edited by Ruth Butler and Hester Parr. N.Y.: Routledge..
- Goble, Colin. 2004. "Dependence, Independence and Normality." Pp. 41-46 (Ch 9) in *Disabling Barriers —Enabling Environments, 2nd edition*, edited by John Swain, Vic Finkelstein, Sally French and Mike Oliver. London: Sage.
- Hughes, Bill. 2004. "Disability and the Body. Pp. 63-68 in *Disabling Barriers —Enabling Environments, 2nd edition*, edited by John Swain, Vic Finkelstein, Sally French and Mike Oliver. London: Sage.
- Imrie, Rob. 1998. "Oppression, Disability and Access in the Built Environment." Pp. 129-46 in *The Disability Reader: Social Science Perspectives*, edited by Tom Shakespeare. London: Cassell.
- Keith, Lois. 1996. "Encounters with Strangers." Pp. 69-88 in *Encounters with Strangers: Feminism and Disability*, edited by Jenny Morris. London: The Women's Press.
- Linton, Simi. 1998. "Reassigning Meaning." Pp. 8-33 (Ch 2) in *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity*. NY: New York University Press.
- Murphy, Robert. 1995. "Encounters: The Body Silent in America. Pp. 140-58 in *Disability and Culture*, edited by Benedicte Ingstad and Susan Reynolds Whyte. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Oliver, Michael. 2009. "The Social Model in Context." Pp. 19-30 in *Rethinking Normalcy: A Disability Studies Reader*, edited by Tanya Titchkosky and Rod Michalko. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc.
- Priestley, Mark. 2003. "Birthrights." Pp. 35-60 (Ch 2) in *Disability: A Life Course Approach*, by Mark Priestley. London: Polity Press.
- Priestley, Mark. 2004. "Generating Debates: Why We Need a Life Course Approach to Disability Issues." pp 94-99 (Ch 14) in *Disabling Barriers —Enabling Environments, 2nd edition*, edited by John Swain, Vic Finkelstein, Sally French and Mike Oliver. London: Sage.
- Rowlands, Allison. 2001. "Breaking My Head in the Prime of My Life: Acquired Disability in Young Adulthood." Pp. 179-191 in *Disability and the Life Course*, edited by Mark Priestley. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Sapey, Bob. 2004. "Disability and Social Exclusion in the Information Society." Pp. 273-278 (Ch 41) in *Disabling Barriers —Enabling Environments, 2nd edition*, edited by John Swain, Vic Finkelstein, Sally French and Mike Oliver. London: Sage.
- Swain, John and Colin Cameron. 1999. "Unless otherwise stated." Pp. 68-78 in *Disability Discourse*, edited by Mairian Corker and Sally French. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Thomas, Carol. 1999. "Narrative identity and the disabled self. Pp. 47-55 in *Disability Discourse*, edited by Mairian Corker and Sally French. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- Wilton, Robert D. 2006. "Working at the Margins: Disabled People and the Growth of Precarious Employment." Pp. 129-150 in *Critical Disability Theory: Essays in Philosophy, Politics, Policy, and Law*, edited by Dianne Pothier and Richard Devlin. Vancouver: UBC Press.