



Disability Justice

Disability Alliance discussion series

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From the ADA to Justice

- ADA is built on a civil rights model and focused on opening up access to the existing social structure to include people with disabilities.
 - The focus is on modifying built spaces, political and economic systems, and resource allocation in schools and other settings to combat ableist oppression. Disability appears in the gap between how systems are designed and how people with diverse bodyminds exist. Rights are guaranteed through litigation.
- Disability Justice is a response to that by (LGBTQ+) disabled people (of color) who were left out of mainstream disability rights movements.
 - The focus is on making sure that those left behind are included (disabled Black and Indigenous people and people of color, disabled poor people, disabled queer, trans and gender expansive people, and disabled people who are incarcerated and institutionalized). A priority is working with other social justice movements to ensure that no one is left behind and recognizing how ableism is entangled with other forms of oppression.



Practical differences

- Disability Rights wants to build ramps at Mt. Rushmore to provide access to a broader array of people.
- Disability Justice wants to return the sacred Tunkasila Sakpe Paha (Six Grandfathers) to the Lakota.

[source](#)

10 Principles of Disability Justice

1. Intersectionality
2. Leadership of Those Most Impacted
3. Anti-Capitalism
4. Cross-Movement Solidarity
5. Wholeness
6. Sustainability
7. Cross-Disability Solidarity
8. Interdependence
9. Collective Access
10. Collective Liberation

[Sins Invalid 2015](#)

Disability Justice and Equity 2030

"We do not live single issue lives." – Audre Lorde

- People are disabled by environmental conditions including war, natural disasters, poverty, sexism, and racism. ([WHO, 2011](#))
- Systems of oppression make it harder to get health care and effective supports.
- Focusing on legal compliance creates a false separation from DEI ([Shallish, 2015](#))
- We need to simultaneously work against the disabling structures that harm people of color while also recognizing the humanity and wholeness of disabled people of color.

Disability Justice at School

- Design for difference: build [anti-racism and Universal Design for Learning](#) principles into course structure, content, and delivery methods
- Approach students from an asset lens – this means not engaging in surveillance-based, pathologizing, coercive or punitive teaching practices
 - no LockDown browser, no TurnItIn, *not* requiring that cameras are turned on during Zoom classes
 - believing students when they express a need without demanding formal documentation as "proof" that their needs are valid, providing multiple options for students to demonstrate understanding, and expecting that students are capable of being skilled learners when they have the right supports
 - interrupting students who make racist sexist ableist homophobic transphobic statements and letting all students know that such behaviors are unwelcome *and why*



Disability Justice at Work

- Capitalist White supremacy culture demands productivity, efficiency, perfection and puts profits and products over people. ([Okun](#)) This is antithetical to Disability Justice.
- Remember our shared mission
- Remember our shared humanity

Rethinking Our Practices

- Unhelpful
 - Punitive attendance policies.
 - Mandates that all work/learning be done in person.
 - Putting up barriers to accommodations rather than offering them to everyone who needs them.
 - Inflexible scheduling.
- Helpful
 - Invite (LGBTQ+) disabled people (of color) to work with you in cooperatively revising policies and practices.
 - Think about how accommodations can be beneficial at the group level.
 - Wear a mask if you can ([Macfarlane](#), 2022)
 - Thank people for raising concerns about accessibility or discrimination

What does Disability Justice mean for you?

- Get used to discomfort and uncertainty
- There's no recipe for making disability justice happen, there's no road map showing what the end goal is
 - there is no end, and the journey will be co-created
- Read, listen, observe, question your observations and observe again, ask questions, get embarrassed, repeat... [You're Gonna Screw Up](#)

Keep Learning

- Just care : messy entanglements of disability, dependency, and desire; Akemi Nishida.
- Care work : dreaming disability justice; Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha.
- Crip kinship : the disability justice & art activism of Sins Invalid; Shayda Kafai.
- Black disability politics; Sami Schalk.
- Disability Visibility Project; Alice Wong
 - Oral history interviews and podcasts, books, guest blog posts, and original essays from BIPOC writers.



Q&A

- To join the Disability Alliance, contact Anne Ludvik or Jessica Schomberg to get added to the Team!
- To participate in a follow-up discussion facilitated by Dr. Dani Scott, sign up to join us again on April 28!