The Disabling and Enabling World of Ability expectation and Ableism: The need for Ability expectation and Ableism governance
The case of EDI (Equity, Diversity inclusion)

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- University of Calgary, Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies

- Talk for the launch of the book Ableism in Academia

- Theorising experiences of disabilities and chronic illnesses in higher education

- Edited by Nicole Brown and Jennifer Leigh

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The WolbPack

Logo and name of group was generated by Verlyn Leopatra (a WolbPack Alumni)

My Degree
Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies Program

Vision
Responsive, sophisticated and just understandings of people of diverse abilities.

Mission
Our mission is to generate research, education, policy and practice partnerships to improve well-being of people with diverse abilities
https://cumming.ucalgary.ca/bcr/about

My lens:
Ability expectation and ableism studies (short Ability studies) investigates how ability expectation (want stage; nice to have) and ableism (need stage; ability essential to have) hierarchies and preferences come to pass and the impact of such hierarchies and preferences (Wolbring 2008).

Ability expectations (want stage): It would be nice to have a given ability

Ableism (need stage): The stronger version of ability expectation where one sees a given ability as essential

Wolbring, G. (2008). The Politics of Ableism. *Development, 51*(2), 252-258.

Wolbring, G. (2008). Why NBIC? Why Human Performance Enhancement? *Innovation; The European Journal of Social Science Research, 21*(1), 25-40.

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The concept of ableism was developed by the disabled people's rights movement during the 1960s and 1970s(Various, 2006) to question irrelevant normative body ability expectations and the "ability privileges (i.e. ability to work, to gain education, to be part of society, to have a positive identity, to be seen as a citizen)" that come with them and the disablism the ability expectation and ableism oppression, the negative treatment, of the ones judged as impaired as "ability-wanted" by applying irrelevant body ability expectations.

Miller, P., Parker, S., & Gillinson, S. (2004) Disablism How to tackle the last prejudice.   Retrieved September 12, 2018, from http://www.demos.co.uk/files/disablism.pdf
Wolbring, G. (2014). Ability Privilege: A needed addition to privilege studies. Journal for Critical Animal Studies, 12(2), 118-141.
Wolbring, G. (2020). Ableism bibliography. Ableism blog at wordpress.com. http://ableism.wordpress.com/ableism-bibliography

Ability expectations/ Ableism consist of

- Body/mind linked abilities
- Ability to live out certain values and beliefs,
- Ability to have a good life
  - Capability approach The Human capability approach was developed by Amartya Sen, Martha Nussbaum and Sudhir Anand focuses on people's ability-to-do-and-to-be. Abilities needed for a good life

Ability expectation and Ableism (AA) dynamics exist between:

- Humans –Humans
- Humans-Animals
- Humans-Nature
- Humans- Post/transhumans

- Humans-Cyborg humans
- Humans-non sentient machines
- Humans- Sentient machines
- Animals-Sentient machines
- Nature-Sentient machines

With other words
AA play themselves out on the intersections of different forms of humans; humans-post/transhumans; humans-cyborg humans; Humans-Animals , Humans-Nature and humans/animals/nature-non sentient/sentient machines.
Ability Studies can be a tool "to tackle the big questions of our day" and "to create entirely new areas of knowledge and coming to entirely novel solutions " (UofC goal)
It can be a tool "to rally around big societal issues, connecting scholars, and reducing barriers" (UofC goal)

You can find many different Ability studies concepts at:
https://wolbring.wordpress.com/ability-expectationableism-glossary/

Ability Security

- one has a chance for a decent life independent of ones abilities (Wolbring, 2010)

Ability expectation oppression

- Being oppressed by ability expectations of others see linkage to colonial theory (Wolbring and Ghai, 2015)

Ability Privilege

- describes the advantages enjoyed by those who exhibit certain abilities and the unwillingness of these individuals to relinquish the advantage linked to the abilities especially with the reason that these are earned or birth given (natural) abilities (Wolbring, 2014)

Ability Expectations/Ableism can be used to Disable (disablism) Or Enable (enablism)

Ability Studies and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

Can be enabling if done right

The book some take home messages

- Systemic disabling (conscious or unconscious) use of irrelevant ability expectations
- Animal farm philosophy of who is focused on
- Intra and inter Identity conflicts
- Danger of internalizing norms
- Disabling use of what is defined as research and as evidence
- Danger of disablement by being forced into self-denial in order to advance
- This is why the concept of ableism and studies in ableism provide a helpful theoretical framework and an effective lens to theorise and make sense of personal experiences.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

In Canada EDI definition of disabled people is linked to Employment Equity language Government of Canada. (2020c). Employment Equity Act (S.C. 1995, c. 44). https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/E-5.401.pdf

Persons with Disabilities

For the purpose of employment equity, persons with disabilities are persons with long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment(s) and who:

a)   consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment, or

b)   believe that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment, and

c)   includes persons whose functional limitations owing to their impairment have been accommodated in their current job or workplace

Some examples of disabilities:

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The last slide exhibits a lack of ability identity security

Ability identity security (includes ability self-identity security

to be able to be at ease with ones abilities includes that one can build an identity around ones set of abilities and that one will not be forced to an expected ability identity (Wolbring, 2010)

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Equity implies that in order to be fair and just, we must acknowledge that people are different and therefore, need different support in order to have equal access to opportunities.
As such EDI has to fulfill Ability equity

Ability inequity

- an unjust or unfair distribution of access to and protection from abilities generated through human interventions (Wolbring, 2010)

Ability inequity

- an unjust or unfair judgment of abilities intrinsic to biological structures such as the human body (Wolbring, 2010)

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Some examples of disabilities:

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The Appendix G form facilitates

Ability Inequity

Ability accommodations are NOT limited to disabled people

• Everyone gets accommodation (washrooms, ….).

• Everyone has ability needs.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Office ensures that U of T is meeting the AODA standard obligations as legislated by the Province of Ontario and makes the University accessible for all staff, faculty, librarians and students. The Office delivers online and in-person training, as well as provides outreach and resources among other support services

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- Anti-Racism & Cultural Diversity Office (ARCDO)

https://antiracism.utoronto.ca/

The Anti-Racism & Cultural Diversity Office joins the University of Toronto in denouncing Anti-Black racism in all its forms. There is no denying the pain, sadness and anger that many are feeling given recent events of racialized violence. As we navigate, strategize and action-plan during these difficult times, the Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office invite students, staff, faculty, librarians, chaplains and community to join us in spaces of restoration, critical dialogue and action planning.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- The Sexual & Gender Diversity Office (SGDO)

The Sexual & Gender Diversity Office (SGDO) develops partnerships to build supportive learning and working communities at the University of Toronto by working towards equity and challenging discrimination
VALUES
The Sexual & Gender Diversity Office operates by:
Centring principles of equity and intersectionality
Facilitating supportive and inclusive communities within the university
Engaging in ongoing learning, support and advocacy concerning sexual and gender diversity
Connecting the University of Toronto with broader LGBTQ communities
Recognizing our histories and supporting a creative vision for the future

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

My question

So why not an office on Ability Diversity?

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- Statistics Canada. (2020a). Table 37-10-0165-01 Selected population characteristics of postsecondary faculty and researchers by region, role, and employment status. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3710016901

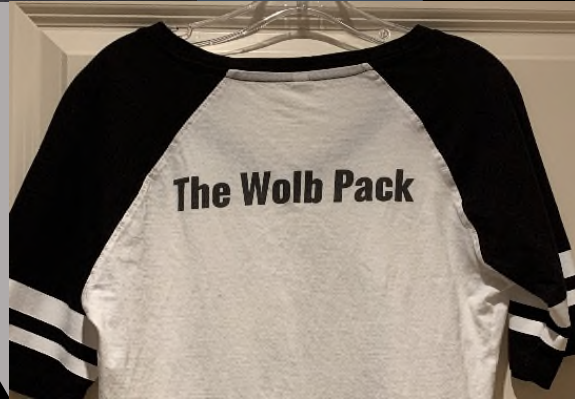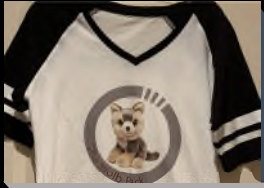| Population characteristics[8] | 2019 Canadian University professor, instructor, teacher, or researcher[4] | |
	Proportion experienced unfair treatment or discrimination in the past 12 months[5, 6]	Proportion subjected to at least one type of harassment in the past 12 months[7]
	2019	2019
	Percent	
Male gender [M][9]	11.0	22.0
Female gender [F][10]	23.0	34.0
Gender diverse [D][11]	x	x
Visible minority [1][12]	23.0	28.0
Not a visible minority [2][13]	15.2	28.0
Indigenous identity [1][14]	30.0	37.0
Non-Indigenous identity [2][15]	16.5	28.0
Has a self-reported disability[16]	35.0	47.0
Has no self-reported disability	15.4	26.0

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Some examples of disabilities:

- Invisible disability impairment, for example:

  - Learning disability or comprehension impairment (ex. dyslexia)

  - Mental illness/psychiatric (ex. depression, addiction, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia)

  - Chronic pain

  - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

  - Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Physical disability or impairment, for example:

  - Coordination or dexterity (difficulty using hands or arms, for example, grasping or handling a stapler or using a keyboard)

  - Mobility (difficulty moving around, for example, from one office to another or up and down stairs)

  - Visual impairment or loss (unable to see or difficulty seeing)

  - Hearing impairment (deaf or hard of hearing)

  - Speech impairment (unable to speak or difficulty speaking and being understood)

- Ongoing medical condition (ex. diabetes)

Conclusion

- EDI initiatives around disabled people have problems
- Ability studies concepts can enable EDI discourses
  - Ability identity security
  - Ability security
  - Ability equity
- Decrease in BIAS of what gets funded by research agencies in relation to disabled people needed for EDI
- Increase in intersectionality of EDI
- Decrease in Silo thinking in EDI
- Increase in transdisciplinarity of EDI
- Ability Studies/Studies in ableism as a lens can enable and enrich EDI discourses

Cheers!