

Session 1

Disabled People's Organisations History & Culture

(Part One and Two)

Session 1: Disabled People's Organisations; History & Culture
 March 2010

Session:	1
Title:	<p>Disabled People's Organisations; History and Culture (Parts 1 and 2).</p> <p>Part 1: Histories of Disabled people and their organisations.</p>
Objectives:	<p>To provide an overview of the history and culture of disabled people and disabled people's Organisations'.</p> <p>This includes both a distant and a more recent 'radical' history of disabled people, containing early representations and their politicisation and gives a timeline of activity.</p> <p>At the end of this is a disability history exercise that encourages participants to consider their own 'disability' history'.</p>
Method:	Presentations, discussion, exercise.
Delivery time:	3 – 3.5 hours depending on the size of the group
Resources:	Facilitator, flipchart, markers pens and handouts with images.

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Welcome/Domestics	Welcome participants, say names, housekeeping and format for the session.
Ground rules	Ask students to set the ground rules for the group to work within, write these on flip and display on the wall throughout the session
Introduce	The session on the history of disabled people
Show	Visual Aid 1 – Session Objectives Expand as necessary
Issue	Handout 1 – Session Objectives
Present / Say	<p>Disabled people have been largely absent from history, but they have been around since the dawn of humankind. Where they have been mentioned it is often negative.</p> <p>In the Bible for example, Leviticus 21. 16-24, it is recorded that disabled people held the same status as prostitutes and were considered unclean.</p> <p>Allan Sutherland's Chronology of Disability Arts 1977 / 2003 (2005) says that 'History is crucial to any culture, and it is essential to Disability... It is through a sense of history that we define who we are, what journey we have undertaken and how far we have come. We also, implicitly, map out the future'.</p> <p>By looking at events of the past, we can explore how our knowledge of disability has been formed, and as a result what assumptions arise from that knowledge.</p>

<p>Ask</p>	<p>Participants to name any historical figures who were disabled people? These can be real or fictional.</p> <p>Discuss for 5 mins.</p> <p>Conclude with the point that disabled peoples history is unknown and unwritten.</p>
<p>Present / Say</p>	<p>An early historic time line of disability includes,</p> <p>400BC 'Cripple' pension arranged by Lysias at the council of Athens.</p> <p>865 A.D. Legend says that the Danish prince, Ivarr the Boneless, responsible for leading the Great Heathen invasion and subsequent occupation of England in 865, was a Disabled man.</p> <p>1100s Institutions for the quarantine of people with leprosy became prolific throughout Europe, these places became known as leprosariums.</p>
<p>Show & Describe</p>	<p>Visual Aid 2 - The Egyptian stele image, factually describe the image to the group.</p> <p>'The image shows a faded stone tablet with an arched top. In the centre is a man wearing a tunic on his waist, a head dress and a large necklace. He is positioned side on, facing the left and is holding a large goblet in his left hand and a sword in his right hand. Under his left shoulder he leans on a cane, his right leg is significantly thinner than his left. To his right is a woman with long black hair, she is patting a small cat like animal and offering a</p>

	<p>dish containing food to the man. Behind her is a small person, possibly a child or a servant. Around them are lots of items, indicating their wealth maybe.'</p> <p>Explain that this was thought to represent someone who had polio in the 18th Egyptian Dynasty (1403–1365 BC).</p>
Issue	Handout 2 - The Egyptian stele image
Ask	<p>Ask what other meanings they can take from this image? How is disability being represented here?</p> <p>5 mins.</p> <p>Conclude with the point that the representation of disability in this image can be seen not as negative, showing its tragedy but rather is positive as it shows disability as a fact of life.</p>
Present / Say	<p>A time line of disability in the middle ages includes,</p> <p>1388 The Statute of Cambridge ("Poor Law") distinguishes between the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor claiming alms.</p> <p>1530s The dissolution of the monasteries creates large numbers of beggars, many of them disabled people who had previously been supported by the church. The Poor Law Act is introduced in 1535.</p> <p>1601 Elizabethan Poor Law explicitly defines 'deserving poor' as disabled people and children – this sets the tone for the next 300</p>

	<p>years of 'state administration' of disabled people's lives.</p> <p>1750 The Industrial Revolution in Britain brings urbanisation and the breakdown of rural state and church welfare. The spread of poverty in cities leads to a growth in the number of institutions, asylums and workhouses to keep the 'economically unproductive' off the streets.</p>
<p>Show & Describe</p>	<p>Visual Aid 3 & 4 - The two images and say, 'the art work of Pieter Bruegel the elder (1528-1569) such as:</p> <p><i>'The Cripples' 1568</i></p> <p><i>'The Peasant Dance' 1568 and</i></p> <p><i>'The Parable of the Blind or The Blind Leading the Blind' (1568)</i></p> <p>depict the presence of impairment, often as metaphor for misery, suffering and moral degradation (Stainton 2004), but it was not until the rise of industrialisation that disability became institutionalised as a distinct and separate feature'.</p> <p>Describe the first as 'quite a bright coloured oil painting with 5 people without limbs using crutches. They are in the centre of a town square, 3 are looking to the left, 2 to the right. They appear dirty and unclean. To the right is a person looking away from them with a begging bowl in their hand'.</p> <p>Describe the second as 'a darker image, with 5 blind persons holding each others</p>

	<p>shoulders walking. The first person on the right side is falling into a ditch, with the others about to follow suit. There is a church in the distant background.'</p>
Issue	<p>Handout 3 & 4</p> <p><i>'The Cripples' 1568</i></p> <p><i>'The Peasant Dance' 1568</i></p>
Ask	<p>Ask what other meanings they can take from these images?</p> <p>How is disability being represented here?</p> <p>5 mins.</p> <p>Conclude with the point, that while disability and impairment were obviously present in the past, they weren't necessarily known in the way that we know them today.</p>
Present / Say	<p>A time line of a recent radical disability history includes,</p> <p>1965 The formation of Disablement Income Group (DIG), campaigning for recognition of the extra costs of disability / impairment.</p> <p>1969 The independent living movement begins in Berkeley, first Centre for Independent Living (CIL) for the community at large.</p> <p>1972 Scotland established the first "union of mental patients" (SUMP). This represents a trend by disabled people to become self organised.</p>

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	<p>1974 Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) assert a social model of disability</p> <p>1981 Disabled People's International is formed. This happens at the World Congress of Rehabilitation International in Winnipeg Canada during June 1980, when Ed Roberts states 'Cabbages of world, unite!'</p>
Show & Describe	<p>Visual Aid 5 - 'Cabbages of the world, unite!'</p> <p>Explain:</p> <p>The picture depicts a cabbage leaf with features made out of Mr Potato Head items, therefore creating a face, hands and feet. The cabbage leaf is holding a placard in its right hand which states 'Cabbages of the world unite'.</p>
Issue	<p>Handout 5 - 'Cabbages of the world, unite!'</p>
Present / Say	<p>1988 People First founded, by and for people with learning difficulties.</p> <p>1991 Regard founded by and for LGBT disabled people</p> <p>1995 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)</p> <p>2007 United Nations (UN) convention on rights of disabled people.</p>
Present / Say	<p>The coming together of disabled people around political issues represents their radicalisation. What grew out this was the</p>

	<p>formation of disabled people's organisations (DPOs). DPOs are set up, run and controlled by disabled people themselves and focus on human rights and equality for disabled people. DPOs seek to redress a history of disempowerment – of non-disabled people doing things 'for' disabled people, on their behalf, without their participation.</p> <p>DPOs are a lifeline and community source of liberation for disabled people and highly effective in promoting inclusion and delivering innovative and empowering activities and services.</p> <p>Among many things, DPOs are involved in campaigning, influencing policy and social change, information, advice and support services, independent living, advocacy and arts.</p>
Exercise 1	Disability History Activity
Split	<p>Participants into groups. Ask them to think about some memories and stories they have about disability.</p> <p>Say that these can be personal (it happened to you), about an organisation they are involved in (something the organisation did) or an external event (the DDA).</p> <p>Write these down under these headings;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1 year ago •5 years ago •10 years ago •15+ years ago

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	Once you have a few memories and stories under each, discuss the following questions;
Ask	<p>Have things changed for disabled people over the last 15 years?</p> <p>What made these changes happen? How would you describe the history of disability and disabled people?</p> <p>Is the history of disabled people similar to that of the women's, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) and Black, Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities?</p>
Present / Say	Disability is not a straight forward thing to understand. There are a range of words associated with it and many ways of describing it. These will mean different things to different people. It covers a variety of issues, and is used to talk about our bodies and minds, the way society discriminates, cultural and political issues and whether or not you are entitled to resources, like welfare benefits or protection under the law.
Refer to	The Disability Discrimination Act
Show	<p>Visual Aid 6 – The Equality Act 2010</p> <p>Expand & discuss</p>
Issue	Handout 6 – The Disability Discrimination Act
Present / Say	The World Health Organisation sees disability as an umbrella term that includes impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions and focuses on the

	interaction between features of a person's body / mind and those of the society where we live.
State	Previously disability was understood solely as a tragic and medical issue. To challenge this activists and campaigners pushed forward alternative ways and models to understand disability
Show & Describe	<p>Visual Aid 7 – The Medical Model, The Charity Model, The Administration Model</p> <p>The picture depicts a wheelchair user enclosed within a red circle with a red line across the middle diagonally, beneath the symbol the following is written:</p> <p>LAMED by your language</p> <p>CRIPPLED by your charity</p> <p>INVALIDATED by our doctors</p> <p>VICTIMS of your system</p> <p>HANDICAPPED by society</p> <p>This picture is from Ju Goslings Abnormal exhibition from the residency at the National Institute of Medical Research</p>
Present / Say	<p>The Medical Model, The Charity Model, The Administration Model</p> <p>A model is a representation or way of showing what something is like or how it works. There are a number of different models of disability and many ways to talk</p>

	<p>about it.</p> <p>The Medical Model = disability is your problem because your body and / or mind is broken and can be only treated by medicine.</p> <p>The Charity Model = you are a poor little disabled person so we must raise money to improve facilities for you.</p> <p>The Administration Model = you are a number in the system, you must apply for help but we will decide what help you get.</p>
Issue	Handout 7 - The Medical Model, The Charity Model, The Administration Model
Present / Say	The Social Model = you are not disabled by society, your impairment is not the problem, society discriminates against you.
Show & Describe	<p>Visual Aid 8 – Social Model of Disability</p> <p>This picture shows a brick wall topped with barbed wire and glass, there are arrows pointing from left to right across the top of the wall, hanging on the wall there are 3 signs:</p> <p>1 = Attitude Barriers 1 = Physical Barriers 3 = Organisational Barriers</p> <p>There is a fourth pointed sign staked into the wall at the extreme right of the picture which states:</p> <p>This way to join in with society, the point is facing up to the top of the picture in the centre</p>

	<p>where a man is sitting on a fence waving.</p> <p>In front of the wall at the forefront of the picture there are 4 people,</p> <p>Person 1 a man is looking up at the top of the wall to his left.</p> <p>Person 2 is a woman who is facing forward and is wearing dark glasses and holding a cane.</p> <p>Person 3 is looking to her left at the top of the wall and is holding a stick, person 2 is holding onto her right arm for support.</p> <p>Person 4 is a woman in a wheelchair she is facing to her right looking up at the top of the wall.</p> <p>Next to person 4 there is a ladder propped against the wall</p>
Ask	<p>Students what is their understanding of the social model?</p> <p>This may generate some debate, encourage this</p>
List	<p>Suggestions on flip</p>
Issue	<p>Handout 8 – Social Model of Disability</p>
Present / Say	<p>The social model makes a distinction between impairment = the diversity of your body / mind, and disability = discrimination by social barriers.</p> <p>If the way society was organised was</p>

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	<p>different, more inclusive and better at understanding disabled peoples lives we could take part as citizens. It is the attitude, physical, organisational barriers that prevent us from working, learning, having a family and stop us living full lives.</p>
State	<p>Disabled peoples history is largely unwritten. While present in distant history, this differs from a more recent radical history where disabled people asserted the discrimination they face and set about organising themselves to campaign for civil and human rights, and the resources to achieve independent living.</p>
State	<p>That throughout history the picture has been painted in a negative light depicting disabled people as non-contributory in terms of economic society</p> <p>Today we can see that the tide has turned. Disabled people are achieving on a daily basis in all sorts of areas of life including contributing to the economy.</p>
Split	<p>Students in 2s.</p>
Ask	<p>Them to discuss what independent living means for them as disabled persons and come up with 3 words that describe independent living.</p>
Collect	<p>Words from students writing them on a flipchart.</p>
Present/say	<p>'Independent Living is a philosophy and a movement of disabled people who work for self-determination, equal opportunities and self-respect.</p> <p>Independent Living does not mean that we</p>

	<p>want to do everything by ourselves and do not need anybody or that we want to live in isolation.</p> <p>Independent Living means that we demand the same choices and control in our ever-day lives that our non-disabled brothers and sisters, neighbours and friends for granted. We want to grow up in our families, go to the neighbourhood school, use the same bus as our neighbours, work in jobs that are in line with our education and interests, and start families of our own.</p> <p>Since we are the best experts on our needs, we need to show the solutions we want, need to be in charge of our lives, think and speak for ourselves – just as everybody else.</p>
Split	<p>Participants in 3 groups, give each group a description of disabled person:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alice, a young single mother who has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. 2. Eric, a blind student who just graduated from university and is looking for a job; 3. Maria, 65 years old lady with learning difficulties. She needs support with basic everyday tasks. <p>Ask each group to identify barriers that might prevent this person from living independently, and suggest how those barriers should be resolved.</p>
Ask	<p>Each group to present the results of their work.</p>
Present/say	<p>Removing barriers to independent living and having choice and control in our lives is very important, but it is as much as important to accept who we are and be proud of who we are.</p>

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Ask	Each student to continue the phrase: "I'm proud to be a disabled person, because..."
Present/say	<p>Disability Pride is about disabled people celebrating their lives and place in the world. Like other equalities and cultural groups Disabled people often celebrate pride event in public, showing off their diversity, being proud of who they are. Disability pride is a central part of disabled people's movement and poses a direct challenge to systemic disability and negative representations of disability.</p> <p>Since 1992 the United Nations has promoted 3rd December as the International Day of Disabled Persons and often disability pride events will be organised to coincide with it. Typically, a disability pride event would include arts and culture activities, performed by disabled artists, performers and speeches by disabled activists.</p>
say	Now we'll do last exercise to sum up all we've done during this session.
Distribute	Visual Aid 9. Describe it.
Split	students in groups
Ask	<p>Groups to think about the future and how understandings of disability may change. Think about these in terms of you personally (it may happen to you or your descendants), organisations (a community group, the government, the United Nations) or external events (globalism, climate change, fashion and trends).</p> <p>Think about these as 'news headlines' or 'titles of books', and then write them down for; 10 years in the future</p>

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	20 years in the future 50 years in the future 100 years in the future To think
Ask	Groups to present results of their work
Return	Students to their groups and ask to think political, economic, social and technological changes that will influence understanding of disability in the future?
Ask	Groups to share results of their work. Discuss if necessary.

Session Objectives

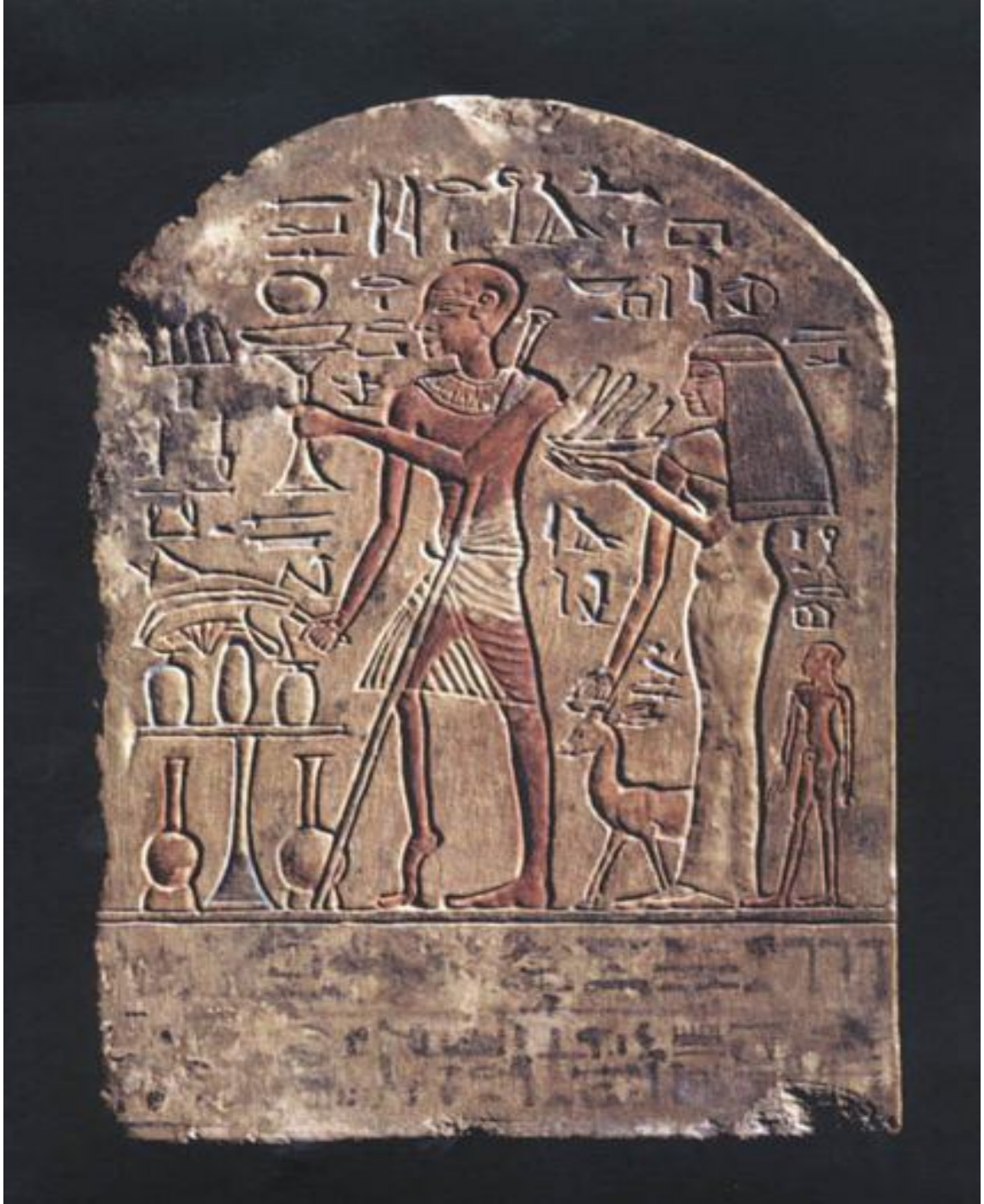
- To provide an overview of the history and culture of disabled people and disabled people's Organisations'.

- This includes both a distant and a more recent 'radical' history of disabled people, containing early representations and their politicisation and gives a timeline of activity.

- At the end of this is a disability history exercise that encourages participants to consider their own 'disability' history'.

Visual Aid 1 / Handout 1

Egyptian Stele



Visual Aid 2 / Handout 2

The Cripples



Visual Aid 3 / Handout 3

The Peasant Dance



Visual Aid 4 / Handout 4

Cabbages of the world unite!



Visual Aid 5 / Handout 5

The Equality Act 2010

Defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

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Visual Aid 6 / Handout 6

The Medical Model, The Charity Model, The Administration Model



LAMED by your language
CRIPPLED by your charity
INVALIDATED by our doctors
VICTIMS of your systems
HANDICAPPED by society

Visual Aid 7 / Handout 7

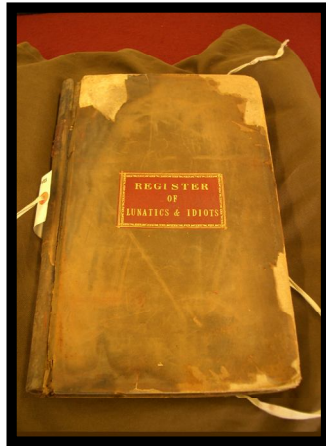
Social Model of Disability



Visual Aid 8 / Handout 8

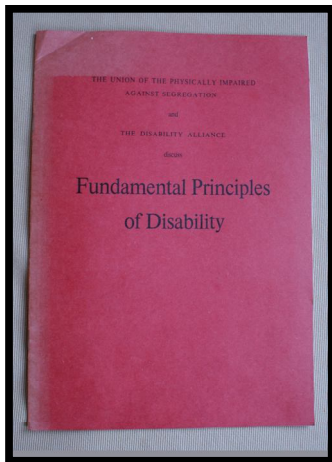
Visual Aid 9: Disability in 200 years

1870s – Register of Lunatics & Idiots



The picture shows an old large book. Its title is the 'register of lunatics and idiots'. This book was used in East London to record names of people with learning difficulties and mental health issues. It shows how negatively disabled people have been seen in the past. It was not until 2006 that the words "idiots and lunatics" were removed from the Electoral Administration Bill.

1970s – Disability is Discrimination



The picture shows a little red book called the 'fundamental principles of disability'. This records a discussion between some radical disabled people in 1974. It sets out the 'social model of disability'. This challenges negative views and claims disability as a human and civil rights issue. In the last 40 years this view has changed the way disability is seen and has had a significant influence on government policy. In the social model 'disability' is redefined as the discrimination caused by an inaccessible society.

2070s – What comes next?



The picture above shows an upside down wheelchair. What does the future hold for disabled people? Will the meaning of 'disability' change over time? What will this be like? Will disabled people be more or less included in society? How will this happen? What do we need to do to make sure having an impairment or health issues doesn't mean that you will face disability discrimination?