Disability Culture: Global And Diverse

Three More Definitions

Most people who are disabled do not have parents who are disabled. That means we are different than other cultures who learn their culture from their parents, we have to learn it from each other.

Not all people agree people with disabilities have a culture, but there are thousands of disability rights groups, books and materials that explain we do.

Naomi Ortiz, Project Director
National Kids as Self Advocates: “What is Disability Culture?”
(http://www.fvkasa.org/culture_whatis.asp)

Culture is about the life styles of population groups, whether large or small, national, or local, or even international. It cannot be imposed on us by leading disabled individuals from the top down, any more than it could, or can, be imposed upon us by occupational therapists, art therapists, or any other therapists that are forced upon us in the future. It must arise out of the spontaneous desire of disabled people to share our feelings, experiences and desires, our loves and hates, our pleasures as well as our sufferings, amongst ourselves. In other words, we have to make the choice that we want to identify ourselves as disabled people.

Vic Finkelstein, DAIL (Disability Arts in London)
http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/finkelstein87a.html

Osamu Nagase, Professor, Graduate School of Economics, University of Tokyo, translates: Asaka, a disabled activist in Japan, who had been exposed to Aoi Shiba, responds: “My disability is my identity” and “I, not only myself I think, don’t really care whether I have a disability or not, in my next life, if there is no social disadvantage and if there is no discrimination”.

“Disability Is My Culture”
Rachel Scoggins
Tucson, AZ

People with disabilities have forged a group identity. We share a common history of oppression and a common bond of resilience. We generate art, music, literature, and other expressions of our lives and our culture, infused from our experience of disability. Most importantly, we are proud of ourselves as people with disabilities. We claim our disabilities with pride as part of our identity. We are who we are: we are people with disabilities.

(Steven E. Brown, Movie Stars and Sensuous Scars, 2003, pp. 80-81) (http://web.mac.com/disculture)

Identifying Disability Culture

“Hits” returned when entering the search term “disability culture” on:

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<th>Search Engine</th>
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For More Information: Institute on Disability Culture Links:
http://web.me.com/disculture/ Disability_Culture_and_Disability_Studies_Links/1st_Read_and_Caveats.html

Multimedia Sampler

Art
Abderrahmane EL Moudni:
http://www.arafoss.com/

Comedy
Josh Blue, Winner, “Last Comic Standing,” 2006:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMSrpZi_6WM

Crafts
Thembalethu Beaders: http://www.thembalethu.com/

Dance
Concorde Dancers (United Kingdom):
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pU3nexI0KUU

Film
Superfest International Film Festival:
http://www.culturedisabilitytalent.org/superfest/index.html

Music
Beethoven’s Nightmare: www.beethovensnightmare.com

Literature
Breath & Shadow: A Journal of Disability Culture and Literature:
http://www.abilitymaine.org/breath/index.html

Music and Comedy
Jesper Odelberg (Sweden)-Boys on Wheels:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wg1NfoBxzHo

Recreation
AccesSurf Hawaii:
http://www.freedomhi.com/video/video_access_surf.html

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