

# 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\\_what.is.asp](http://www.fvkasa.org/culture_what.is.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:

Google		Yahoo
43,700	April 9, 2008	280,000
59,400	June 23, 2008	347,000
64,600	September 5, 2008	429,000
54,100	October 29, 2008	286,000
49,300	March 21, 2009	384,000



## For More Information: Institute on Disability Culture Links:

[http://web.me.com/disculture/Disability\\_Culture\\_and\\_Disability\\_Studies\\_Links/1st\\_Read\\_and\\_Caveats.html](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](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMSrpZi_6WM)

### Crafts

Thembaletu 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](http://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

AccessSurf Hawaii:

[http://www.freedomhi.com/video/video\\_access\\_surf.html](http://www.freedomhi.com/video/video_access_surf.html)

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