

4B—Identity Matters #1

Disability in the Academy and the Academic Library Profession

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The United Nations guiding principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities includes non- discrimination, full participation, and inclusion in society. Unfortunately, many scholars with disabilities are not represented in the academic and library staff of universities, where ableist understandings may have become institutionalized in the beliefs, language, and practices of nondisabled people. This paper uses critical disability theory (CDT) to examine the hegemonic construct of ableism. Originating from critical race theory, CDT examines the spaces between the social constructions of disability and medical models of disability. The presentation explores how the academy can integrate CDT principles to value the social capital of people with disabilities beyond theory into practice within universities, and away from a current, commodified, disability business that replicates conditions of isolation and poverty.