Acknowledgments

This second edition of Rethinking Disability appears some 13 years after the first one in 2003. It would not have been possible without the support of earlier contributors, such as Gary Albrecht, Philip M. Ferguson and Gerald Gold, who kindly agreed to have their earlier contributions retained in a new edition. It would also not have been possible without contributions from new authors, who were contacted independently because of their proven work. We owe our gratitude to the ALTER European Society for Disability Research, whose 2014 meeting allowed us to identify a few additional contributors. A special effort was made to include chapters that are based on fieldwork in countries in the Global South, whose authors endeavored to give a voice to a material and posthuman perspective that overcomes Euro-centrism in disability research.

The editors of this volume and their collaborations are the result of serendipity, namely people who happen to have crossed each other’s paths with a lucky outcome as a result. Patrick Devlieger, an anthropologist and Megan Strickfaden, a designer and anthropologist, met at KU Leuven and continued to collaborate, thanks to a generous invitation from the University of Alberta and collaboration during the disABILITY MUNDUS doctoral schools held in Leuven in 2013 and in Lisbon in 2014. That continued encounter generated an interest in connecting cultures with the materiality of life, and a perspective on disability from the material side of life. Another encounter is one with Beatriz Miranda-Galarza, a sociologist by training with experience in culture and development work. Over the years she has developed a cultural perspective that is grounded in families, and the plural societies in which she has lived, such as Ecuador, Belgium, UK, and the Netherlands. She continues to develop a diasporic and disability view on development perspectives that favor the entwinement of societies. The final encounter is with Steven E. Brown, a champion of disability culture, and one who firmly believes that disability leads to challenging oneself with the potentialities of what people can do with disability. Steve’s former location at the University of Hawaii’s Center on Disability Studies, and its intercultural focus, led to a vision forward, into the future of the twenty-first-century.

The editors would like to express their gratitude towards their own universities, the centers and communities that they work within, and the myriad of people with disabilities who consistently contribute to their understandings of ability through disability. They would also like to sincerely thank Mari Bergen for her tireless efforts to make this book the best it could possibly be. This book came together while Patrick Devlieger was granted sabbatical leave with the support of the KU Leuven’s Faculty of Social Sciences, and the hosting at Stellenbosch University. The final touches of the book came into place while Megan Strickfaden was granted sabbatical leave with the support of the Department of Human Ecology, Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences (ALES) at the University of Alberta. Patrick would like to especially acknowledge the many Master’s, Doctoral and Post-doctoral students with whom he collaborated while using the first edition of the book. In particular, the collaboration with Frank Renders, Joao Coelho, Carolina Valdebenito, Jori De Coster, Cindy Declerck, Eric Metho, Vincent Nwokorie, and Lambert Nieme at KU Leuven. Beatriz Miranda-Galarza would like to thank the people affected by leprosy in Ecuador, Indonesia and Brazil, especially those involved in the SARI and the BRIDGES Projects, and also 17, Instituto de Estudios Críticos in Mexico, where the space opened to Critical Disability Studies is offering new opportunities to rethink disability in the
Spanish-speaking world. Steven E. Brown thanks a legion of colleagues, peers, students, and supporters who have listened and helped him to refine his thinking over the past decades. In particular, he thanks Helen Kutz and Suzette Dyer, his first mentors in the world of disability rights and still close friends, all his colleagues at the Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawaii, who chanced bringing an outlier back to academia after a 20 year absence; and all the students who have contributed to the continued advancement of my thinking and knowledge and to the success of a new course, “Disability History and Culture: From Homer to Hip Hop.” Finally, none of this would have happened without the constant support and love of his wife and partner, Lillian Gonzales Brown, who listens, critiques, and supports her workaholic husband.

Megan Strickfaden would like to thank the students who study (dis)ability and open up new lines of thinking each day; these students include Sandra Tullio-Pow, Adolfo Ruiz, Janice Rieger, Hui (Tori) Ren, Pachy Orellanna-Fitzgerald, Linda Marie Johnson, Vanessa Zembal, Lara Pinchbeck, Nicole Gaudet, Afrin Biswas, Jori De Coster, Sheila Schneider, Peter-Willem Vermeersch, Greg Nijs, Stijn Baumers, and (especially) Jasmien Herssens. Megan would also like to thank her support group who consistently make life’s challenges easier: Kai Barrett, Aerlan Barrett, Orsolya Welch (and the gang), Elaine Johnston, Mari Bergen, Money Sindhi and Andrea House.

During the final stages of editing this volume, the editors learnt that Gerald Gold had passed away. His pioneering work will live on.

It is our hope that the second edition will find its way to many more students and serve as an inspiration to scholars worldwide.
Introducing disABILITY MUNDUS: 
History, Critical Theory, and Plurality through the Lens of Disability Culture

Patrick Devlieger, Steven E. Brown, 
Beatriz Miranda-Galarza, & Megan Strickfaden

Situating disABILITY MUNDUS: A Prelude to ‘Disability in the World’

As a concept and scholarly area of study, disability is riddled with a complex history and an array of theories about, for and with people who are disabled, that are often descriptive and sometimes critical, and rarely comparative (Albrecht 1992; Murphy 1990; Kudlick 2003; Stone 1985; Eiesland 1994). Furthermore, explorations into disability are multi-, inter- and trans-disciplinary, largely because disability is individual, social, cultural, public, private, material and deeply contextualized. While it is valuable to understand the breadth of the scholarly study of disability, it is also significant to acknowledge and study disability through a specific perspective, in the case of this book, through the lens of disability culture or the anthropology of disability. In such a venture we assume that disability constitutes culture and is not merely influenced by it. By asserting foundational aspects of this book, we shed further light on what is meant by the perspective disABILITY MUNDUS. The word ‘mundus’ is Latin for the ‘world’. The world refers to studies in contemporary anthropology across the globe to better understand subcultures and culture in general. Mundus also refers to the Latin language, which is known to have united different people and nations that were divided by their cultures and languages. Thus disABILITY MUNDUS refers historically to world perspectives on disability that are of a contemporary nature, in which we explore contextualization of disability in history, through the material and immaterial, its expressions in culture and society, its local and global nature, its educational context, and its trans- and post human contexts. With disABILITY MUNDUS we mean to create a unifying disciplinary perspective, but one that is comparative and intercultural.

‘disABILITY MUNDUS’ is a phrase that appeared as part of an engagement in disability relating to culture, and indeed to disability culture. In this phrase, we recognize ‘ability’ as a unifying force in the world. To explore/explain further, we look to history, critical theory, and plurality. The simple response to the question ‘what is disABILITY MUNDUS’ is to say that the phrase considers disability differently, because we have come to an understanding that this is a necessity in the global mobile societies as they are found throughout the world today. Disability is by now understood as ‘Ability not Disability’, a global human rights condition that requires ‘Nothing About Us Without Us’, and ‘Equality’ as in the slogan ‘Homme comme Toi’ (A person like yourself), thus requiring Disability World Studies. Such an endeavor not only sees disability as part of humanity, it reclaims humanity. It becomes transmodern in the recognition of the modern as omnipresent—albeit in alternative ways—and not only the province of the West,
unavoidable, and exchangeable. It also extends the human in the transhuman, and engages seriously with the non-human, thus considering the posthuman as a possible future avenue.

With Disability World Studies, we would like to suggest a unifying effort that puts disability squarely in the contemporary transmodern world, as a universal discussion that requires a question to its origins and evolution, considering the dissemination of its discourses throughout the world, and takes into account its material base. In order to do that we need to take a little tour de monde to seek for the origins of disability including its mobility and its ability.

We have come to an understanding that over the last 100 years, ‘disability’ has been coming to terms with the modern world, and that disabled people have slowly obtained voices and developed a small culture of their own, which allows for exchanging across very different regions in the world. We have also observed the coming together of a (relatively?) unifying scholarly field of disability studies, one that was founded by social scientists and is now shared with many scholars, with a focus that has tilted to the humanities, and is now reengaging the natural sciences, including medicine and engineering.

Historically, when the term handicap was ‘invented’ and introduced in the United States around the turn of the nineteenth-century, and later introduced to the world, it was to test the possibility of an ideology of equal chances in the context of the modern industrial society (Devlieger 1999; Stiker 2000). The term handicap and its discourse only reached Europe after World War II, and much later (in the 1970s) in the English-speaking world in the South, such as in Zimbabwe. In some parts of the world the idea of equality, as a thorough characteristic of modern life in Africa, showed up by the end of the 1960s, as through the work of social worker and author Zamenga Batukezanga in the DR Congo (Devlieger 2011). In many other parts of the world, the word handicap remains in existence in the names of some international NGOs, such as in Handicap International, as it stands for technical assistance to ensure disabled people’s independence and inclusion in society.

In an effort to do away with the negative connotations that had become associated with being ‘handicapped’, the term handicapped/handicap was replaced in the public discourse of the United States with disabled/disability in the mid-1970s. This created a second wave of influence and suggested that the relations between such individuals and their society had thoroughly changed. This shift of terminology had the intention to bring a different identity to a diverse group of people while conveying a more positive message around ability. While activists promoted the new terms in an effort to move beyond the limitations of the “handicap” label, the term ‘disability’ also became a negative expression rather than the positive one that activists hoped to instill. As such, ‘dis’ ability expressed implicitly lesser abilities and greater efforts from the individual rather than focusing on inherent abilities and social protection. As such, the label of disabled/disability holds a contradictory message and one that remains vague. Most prominently in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the term disability remains without a clear definition, and is qualified as ‘evolving’, although the discourse of human rights with its emphasis on voice, empowerment, and access is clear, but not necessarily clearly understood in various parts of the world (see also Campos Pinto 2016).

To further express our perspective, we compare the hybrid nature of disABILITY MUNDUS to world music and more broadly to world art and world art studies (Van Damme 2008). Music is a strong metaphor for disability, because like music, disability communicates. Music also requires performance, and even in its most basic forms, as in singing, it is materially grounded. Moreover, musicology might stand as a good model for the scholarly study of disability, as it is, despite all of its inherent differences, a coherent discipline. DisABILITY MUNDUS and world
music each have folk and indigenous backgrounds ready to be consumed by world audiences as alternatives that connect local with global and the local bringing forward an intermingling and hybridity that paradoxically also claims authenticity. It is through research from the perspective of disABILITY MUNDUS—as living with a disability itself is both science and art—that we see contemplations that are grounded in cultures from around the world, that resist hegemony, that demonstrate resilience, and that are critically modern, connecting past-present-future.

As such, the use of the phrase disABILITY MUNDUS in this book is a means of acknowledging and expressing the perspectives herein; and it is the provocation and questioning of disABILITY that acknowledges that it is inherently hybrid, entwined, and of a complex nature. This book consists of perspectives about the past, the present and the future while recognizing that modernity has come along about in many alternative ways around the world from modern to postmodern and now transmodern. Consequently, this book is intended to begin the ambitious goal of critically exploring disABILITY MUNDUS, which is an ever evolving and continuing story.

This book is intended for multiple audiences including those who are learned and learning. Readers will be those who have complex stories, wear multiple hats and cannot be pigeonholed into one category. These readers will have various (limited and extensive) exposures and experiences to abilities, and may include academic audiences who are novices, experts, students, and teachers, and champions for disability who are advocates, inventors, and policy writers. In short, this book is intended for all audiences who wish to explore, interrogate, probe, examine disability situated in various cultural contexts, critique, and question and be inspired by disability culture. Perhaps this is sufficient to lay out the structure of this book, and the way it can be used to inspire and train researchers.

Interlude

disABILITY MUNDUS research creates a particular type of knowledge. This is knowledge that is created through science and art that is more integrated and considers how the individual, social, cultural, and material are entwined. It is about mobility and displacement, banal and extraordinary aspects of life, identity and place, all through transmodern possibilities. It results in a knowledge that goes beyond postmodern and post-colonial perspectives. We consider how the twentieth-century with its advances and atrocities has brought the people of the world to where we are now. It is about liminality or ‘everything that lies in between’, charity, medicalization, modernity and social and critical engagement. Thus, it is about where we are situated now including cultural formulations and expressions, material experiences and interventions, and more.

Disability, in the context of normative social life, has typically been approached with the Vetruvian man of Leonardo Da Vinci in the background (Braidotti 2013). It has led to a kind of social science that focused on disability as stigmatizing and approached it through the sociology of deviance. Such approaches have long since been rejected as insufficient and ineffective in the creation of the voices of people with disabilities. In the postmodern era, significant scholarly literature has been brought forward in which people with disabilities rely on their own experiences, develop their own voices, and operate in public arenas (Couser 1997; Michalko 2002). Disability studies followed (and in some instances, encouraged and led the way for) the movement and
engagement in the research of experiences and expressions such as autobiographies, auto-
ethnographies, and artistic endeavors (Murphy 1990; Mairs 1996).

Throughout the world, an increase in the consciousness of the importance of equality,
independence and diversity in society was prompted by increased mobility, and emphasis on
human rights, thus impacting societies in political, economic, and cultural ways. Global efforts
such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the
World Report on Disability have created platforms that enabled countries and entire regions to
begin discourses on human rights, to move onward. Even more important is the realization that
 disability can no longer be considered as an addendum, but rather it is at the center of cultural
dynamics in sectors such as tourism, the arts, sports, and media, and as such the innovative
impact from societal interactions with disability have been substantial.

The knowledge developed from a disABILITY MUNDUS perspective is not without
practical impact. This practical impact may be in the form of policies, innovations, and
other material things related to private and public places around the world. Research in this
book illustrates the beginnings of work focused on the creation of things within society that
represents, questions and drives disability spaces and objects. Even so, disABILITY MUNDUS
challenges policy writers, architects, product designers, engineers and others to consider abilities
as a making of the future. This kind of grounding in practice, means that we understand the
'making and material sides of disability'. Disability is indeed something 'made', but is understood
differently from the social constructivist stand that characterized symbolic interactionism, with
its emphasis on the self that lead into the widespread development of work into identity, which
is the hallmark of postmodernism. The practical also naturally includes the theoretical; it does
not deny development of the symbolic, nor of the language and discourse that ensues from it.
However, studying 'ability' requires research beyond discursive dimensions, in which the authors
of this book are well engaged.

An Evolving Anthropology of Disability

The development of disABILITY MUNDUS situates ability and disability studies within a
global dynamic that has many regional and thematic centers, identifying a situatedness that is
plural (Albrecht, Van Hove and Devlieger 2008). These centers, with multiple sets of normative
standards, are inspired by modern life including local cosmopolitanism with foci that favor the
materiality of things and skills. We acknowledge that disability generates new and alternative
forms of life that are driven by a necessity and possibility of opening up of wider horizons and
improvements of current situations and environments. By generating new and alternative forms
of life and widening horizons—what is now called the transmodern—there is a kind of liberation
that occurs, liberation from narrow-center peripheries that are characterized by colonization
(Dussel 2013).

Disability studies, as noted earlier, cannot be claimed by any one academic discipline. Rather,
disability studies is positioned, sometimes in multiples, in the humanities and social sciences:
education; sports; rehabilitation; arts and technology; and other sciences as well. An example
in the United States is STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), which currently
has an emphasis on including persons with disabilities, and in some cases developing work with
persons with disabilities in mind. Each of these fields carries a different rhetoric and a different
agenda with practical applications, advocacy and inclusion, to mention a few. These fields of study are impacted by global dynamics in which the development of knowledge is multi-centered and regionally independent. Disability therefore unfolds at universal, regional, and local levels, which are observed through policies that differ when crossing invisible borders and with different responses to the United Nations Convention. As such, the material and immaterial representations of disability are the result of and require multi-faceted actions to an engagement with universal and local settings.

The existence and study of the ‘handicapped’ in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century were lodged in a global dynamic of new and renewed nations through the United Nations after World War II. The context of this era was characterized through the multiple lenses of a diverging general population, namely communities of migrants who took up new lives and engaged in the open economies and politics of the Americas. Simultaneously, people migrated around Europe and rebuilt economies that suffered from the impact of war. The logic of ‘disability’ came later when the concept of ‘handicapped’ was already outlived and replaced with conservative economic politics and the emergence of human rights. It is not surprising that the UNCRPD is the extension of such historical developments on a world scale, favoring human rights as the means to safeguard the participation of people with disabilities.

In many places, the world is understood as makeable, changeable, and thriving with innovation, plurality, and mobility. Global dynamics would suggest that in such countries the dialectic of and with disability is more easily constituted. For innovation and supple encounters with the difference of disability, it would therefore be advised to look at emergent countries such as Brazil, Russia, China, India, Mexico and South Africa. While North America and Western Europe will continue to play roles as referees and references, and their historical role will remain significant, and while they will continue to influence and to mediate, they will no longer play the game solo (if they have ever done so in the first place). The anthropology of disability, through various discourses and studies into material cultures, now belong to countries around the world.

Ingstad and Whyte (1995; 2007) in their two consecutive works on the interrelationships on disability and culture have explored the theoretical tensions that would allow for an anthropology of disability. In the first volume, the theoretical tension was situated between experience and discourse and was a derivative of a phenomenological and historical discursive approach. The second volume took up the tension between local and global settings that now situated disabled people also in urban settings and modern worlds, and moved away from both religious and medicalized understandings of disability. In this book, we add to these developments the unique participation of disabled people as citizens who are often uniquely situated within technologically enhanced bodies, and who work out alternative ways of being in the world, in a world that is on the move, and in local environments that are aware of human rights and its violations. Disabled people and non-disabled people exercise roles as experts and as apprentices in such a world; they are attuned to its secular and religious developments, and aware of the ongoing challenges of an ever-progressing modernity.

Disability gives unique opportunities to express the in-between position of global and local circumstances, and thus makes a contribution to local cosmopolitanism. Again the postmodern, (but perhaps an older approach as well) phenomenological approach provides useful stepping-stones. John Hull (1997) is a unique example of a religious scholar who transitioned, over a long period of time, to a person who is blind; he then became a scholar who invested in questioning his discipline from a disability perspective. Hull’s starting point is the phenomenological experience, an understanding that comes from attentive understanding of his body, social relations and
reactions, and his worldview. He moves from understanding disability as a mere limitation, a nuisance, to one that impacts his positioning in time and space, his family and his broader relations. He comes to understand disability as a world in its own right that is informative and provides him the critical space to engage with the worldview that is offered in the ultimate source of his religion: the Christian Bible. He concludes that the Christian Bible was not written for blind people, yet he looks for an alternative way to engage with it.

In such a view, an anthropology of disability should also account for the liberating potential that it holds. Hence the perspective of the transmodernists for they are critical of western philosophy with its favoring of modern life for itself, for its comfort in relating to modernity as part and parcel of its own development, as well as for its success to present the contradictory position of vulnerability as strength (Dussel 2013).

The materiality of disability can be explored in a three-pronged way through human bodies, objects, and infrastructures, and opens multiple ways to create research avenues with renewed attention to techniques, technologies, skills, and apprenticeship (Ingold 2013). It moves away from the intensive study of language and identities, and shifts towards diversity in society as informed by the particularities of disability. This renewed interest in body techniques, first introduced by Marcel Mauss (2010), points to the ways that walking, dancing, eating, sleeping, and any other body techniques are cultural. This opens new directions that have the potential to explore disability through cultural diversity and other means. The same can be said with regard to objects, particularly those of daily use. Tool use has long been recognized as fundamental to living beings, and the argument has been made to extend tool-use to life and to ‘being alive’, beyond human life. A disability perspective is perhaps uniquely tuned to provide a critique on normative ways in which body techniques are expressed and creatively positioned in opening up alternatives. A similar argument applies to objects. Beginning with these objects that are close to the body, such as clothing and utensils, and then moving to objects that mediate in the making of spaces, such as doors and windows, handles, and switches and remote controls. Finally, a disability perspective on infrastructure appears to be promising (Ginsburg 2015). Fascinating progress in the area of the accessible design of objects and infrastructures has already been initiated and encourages further interdisciplinary collaboration, involving disciplines that are into the study of ‘making’, including anthropology, archaeology, art, architecture, and engineering. Perhaps in such a material orientation we can start thinking of ‘disability recruitment’, the engagement of people who have the ability to (re)think disability to (re)make the world.

Towards a New World of Disability Research

In the first edition of this book titled Rethinking Disability: The Emergence of New Definitions, Concepts and Communities semiotics and the cultural model of disability were emphasized. Semiotics expresses the idea that important phenomena are noticed and given meaning. Disability was seen as an ambiguous phenomenon, same and different, where significance plays out in different cultural and social settings, and in different historical eras (Devlieger, Rusch and Pfeiffer 2003). After considerable critical analysis, we concluded that the semiotic approach is a mere starting point that can be corrected and supplemented along the way. It remains however important to see how the interstitial positions of people with disabilities—who are fundamentally situated in-between—play out in concrete settings. In globalized and late-modernity the settings that people with disability act within are often peripheral (yet important) sectors of society, such as tourism,
arts, media, sports and religion. It is important to note that people with disabilities sometimes play important roles in prime sectors of modern operational societies such as in politics, business, medicine or education; however, to a great extent this is less frequent. Moreover, disability is at its best in borderlands, and the sidewalk in many cities has been the place par excellence, where advocates claimed urban participation, through walking, access to transportation, and being part of the public scene. The cultural model of disability is presented as a logical continuation of the social model but encompasses the moral and medical models. Additionally, the cultural model centered on language as information, trusting that since disability was constructed it could also be deconstructed. Through the process of constructing and deconstructing disability, it was believed that disability had the potential to be a resource for creativity and empowerment. Consequently, the cultural model was in tune with postmodern approaches, favoring the experiences, narratives, and discursive analysis of disability. It recognized disability as a potential for developing its very own kind of culture—a disability culture—where an analysis of its cultural dynamics could be presented. The cultural model approach, as it stands, remains an unfinished project that requires continued updates, largely because when considering the heterogeneity of disability and ability it is clear that a single disability culture is not viable, nor is a construction that is easily modeled. Indeed, disability construction is often a no-thing (Titchkosky 2009). Furthermore, the cultural model is built on the semiotics of disability as found in words and images spread throughout postmodern societies where individuals’ identities are not given but made, and where individuals are predisposed to participate in social movements.

As we move from the first edition of this book to the second edition, we recognize that disability is positioned beyond semiotics and the postmodern. Disability has the potential to create transformations. Yet, while in the social model the political and ecological are keys, the cultural model proposes a critical engagement, in which the construction and deconstruction of information, identities, and social movements takes precedence. In such an engagement, the cultural model was presented as a continuation of and incorporation of the social model, as well as, on a pragmatic level also incorporated the moral and medical models. But perhaps the culture model is not a model at all (Sternman 2002). Perhaps it is more of a system of thinking that considers the values of disability and places them within a heterogeneous network of differences and similarities. In this edition, the radical presentation of disability as a resource, and a creative source of culture, that moves disability out of the realm of victimized people, or as an insurmountable barrier, remains as central to our current exploration of disABILITY MUNDUS. We remain firm in our belief that the experience of disability provides the opportunity to enter into networks that recognize strengths of different abilities and that include considering resilience, survival, vulnerability, body knowledge and performativity as resources.

Postlude

This edition *Rethinking Disability: World Perspectives in Culture and Society* is divided into five parts highlighting themes that bring together aspects of history, theory, criticality and plurality through the lens of disability culture.

Part 1, Disability Histories and Sociocultural Foundations, comprises chapters that address fundamental issues and some of the basic theoretical gains made in disability studies. The selected
chapters hint at ways that disability studies can move forward through several significant and core discussions around disability. Through part 1 we begin to suggest ways to revise and renew the field of study through a more decentered and plural exploration. Part 1 also considers the further development of disability culture and cultural approaches to disability. Could we then see in these fundamental issues a way of enhancing diversity through disability?

Part 2 (Re)presenting and Performing Disability further builds upon a cultural approach. The selected chapters point out that disability is to be presented and performed, and that it is indeed ‘ability’ that ought to be the focus of research and scholarship; as such, it requires a focus on bridging science with art. Seeing, accepting, and dialoguing with the ‘misfit’ is the challenge. In all of this, it is the possibility of dialoguing across difference, showing what is, and expressing ability—not disability that counts. Would this be possible to achieve in scholarship that redeems Ability in disAbility?

Part 3 Global Meets Local, Local Meets Global takes stock of our contemporary globalized world, and the interstitial positions of disabled people. It provides for new ways of engaging in the tensions of the local and global, summarized in local cosmopolitan citizenship, and in multiple centers of expression, thus foreshadowing a transmodern approach to disability. Is it in addressing exchanges between the local and the global that perhaps new social science scholarship can be formulated?

In Part 4 Constructing and Transitioning through Pedagogy we renew an engagement with teaching and learning. We have come to an understanding that disability cannot—and need not—be fixed, indeed it is an evolving notion. In some cases it can even be a teacher. How can disability, as something that is in a state of becoming, then become its own teacher? How can education and pedagogy then be the motor of the transitional and transforming potential that disability holds?

Part 5 Transmodern, Transhuman and Posthuman Explorations opens up and proposes evolving theoretical perspectives that take disability culture a step further. On the ashes of the modern and the postmodern, the chapters in this section pose questions that emerge within this trans approach about the dynamic nature of the world: temporality; reflexivity; knowledge production; intra-actions; ethics; politics; and the relationships between the past and the present. But most of all, the central question of the transmodern is about how, as researchers and producers of knowledge, can we get at the complexity of disability?

References

Albrecht, Gary

Albrecht, Gary, Patrick Devlieger, and Geert Van Hove

Braidotti, Rosi
Campos Pinto, Paula  

Couser, G. Thomas  

Devlieger, Patrick  

Devlieger, Patrick, Frank Rusch and David Pfeiffer  

Devlieger, Patrick and Lambert Nieme, eds.  

Dussel, Enrique  

Eiesland, Nancy L.  

Ginsburg, Faye  

Hull, John  

Ingold, Tim  

Ingstad, Benedicte and Susan Reynolds-Whyte, eds.  


Kudlick, Catherine J.  
2003 Disability History: Why We Need Another ‘Other’. American Historical Review 108: 763-93.

Mairs, Nancy  

Mauss, Marcel  

Michalko, Rod  

Murphy, Robert F.  

Sternman, John D.  

Stiker, Henri-Jacques  

Stone, Deborah A.  

Titchkosky, Tanya  

Van Damme, Wilfried  