



Disability inclusion

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She/her
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Definitions

“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.” - Equality Act (2010)

- Invisible or hidden disabilities:
 - Mental: schizophrenia or chronic depression
 - Cognitive: learning disabilities, autism, or dyslexia
 - Physical: sickle cell anaemia, diabetes, cancer, or HIV/AIDS

Ableism: practices and dominant attitudes in society that assume there is an ideal body and mind that is better than all others

Medical vs social models of disability

Medical model:

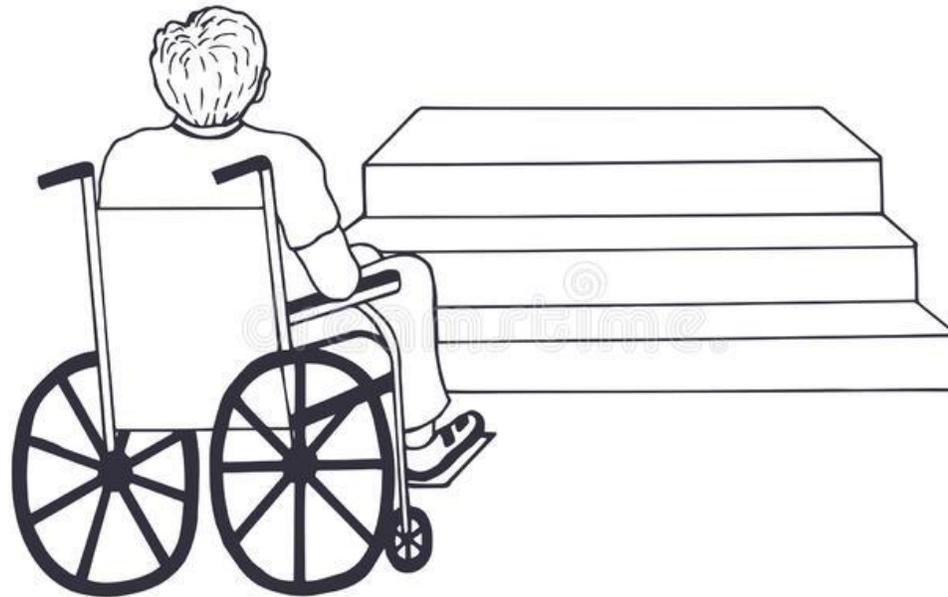
- Disability is caused by the health condition a person has
- The nature of this condition determines what they can and can't do
- Disability can be fixed or ameliorated with medical treatment

Social model:

- Distinguishes between an impairment and a disability
- Disability is not caused by a medical condition, but the structures and attitudes of society
- Disability can be fixed or ameliorated with changes to society

Medical vs social models of disability

The impairment is the problem. The person isn't able to walk up the stairs.



The stairs are the problem. Only certain people are able to use them.

Medical vs social models of disability

“Doing disability all day long can be an exhausting process. I don’t mean having an impairment, in my own case not being able to walk. Like most disabled people I can deal with this. I mean having to spend a significant part of each day dealing with a physical world which is historically designed to exclude me and, even more tiring, dealing with other people’s preconceptions and misconceptions about me.”

– Lois Keith, civil rights activist

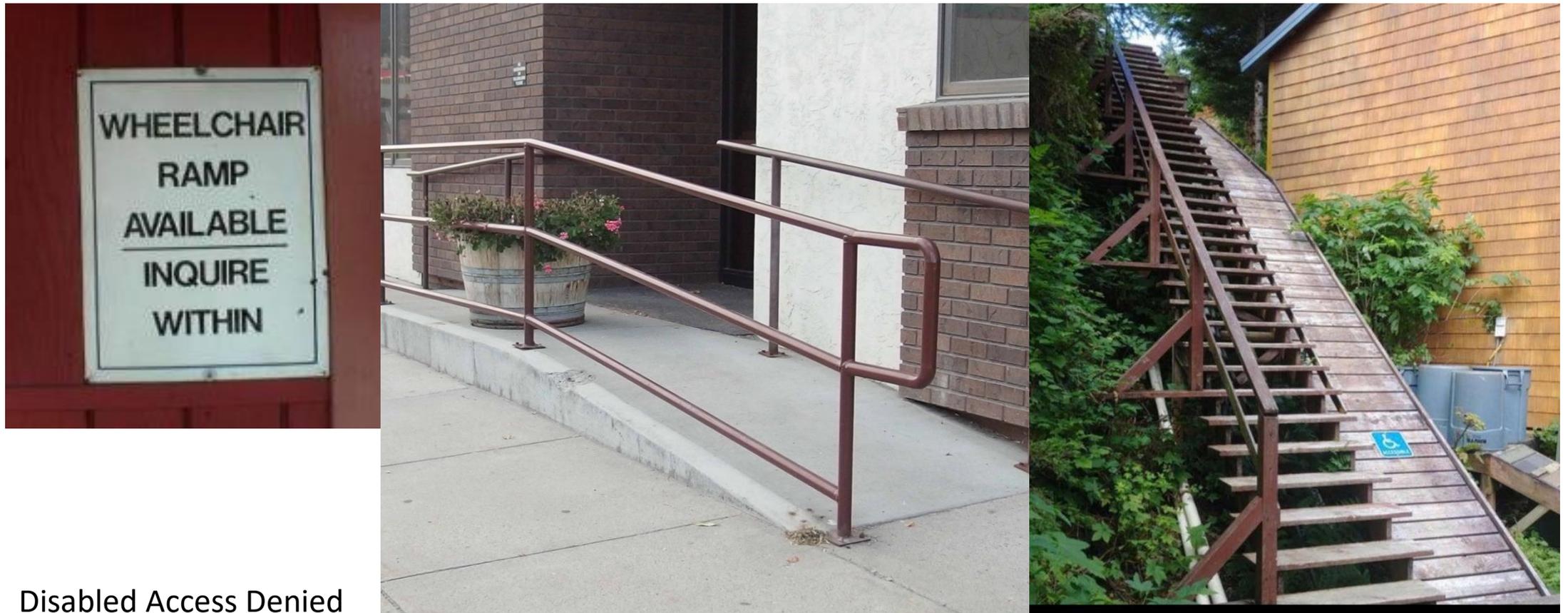
Definitions

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“The loss or limitation of opportunities for people with impairments to take part in society on an equal level with others due to social and environmental barriers.” – Disability Wales

Identifying barriers to accessibility

- **Environmental:** no lifts or ramps, no accessible toilets, poor lighting



Disabled Access Denied

Identifying barriers to accessibility

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- **Attitudinal:** stigma, discrimination, perceptions, assumptions

PERSONAL SPACE



SPECTATORS



Identifying barriers to accessibility

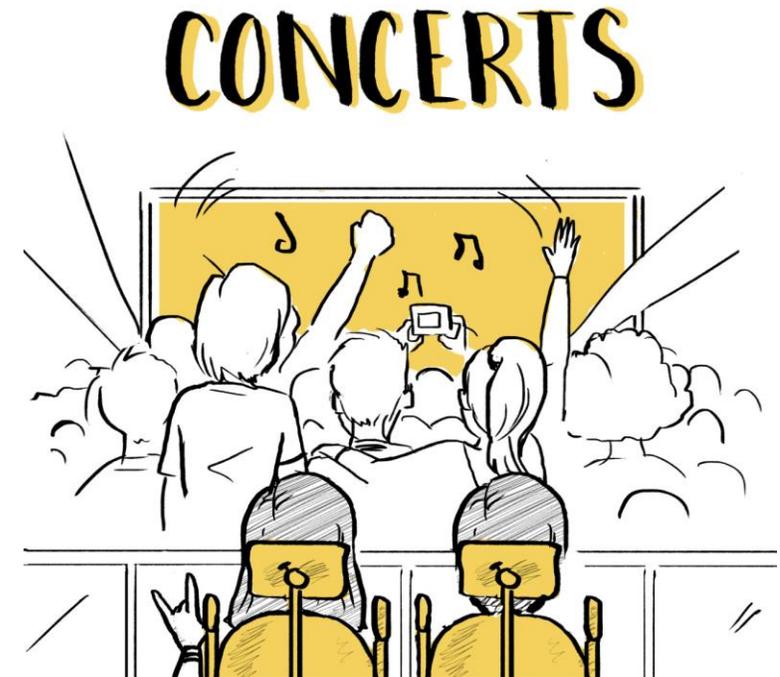
- **Environmental:** no lifts or ramps, no accessible toilets, poor lighting
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- **Communication:** complicated language or jargon, no 'alt text' description of images, lack of sign language interpreter



Marvel comics

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The Disabled Life

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None of these barriers are inevitable, so neither is exclusion.

Removing barriers

- **Environmental**

- Consider the accessibility of places you plan events.
- Think about adaptations, e.g. lighting or ramps.
- Advocate for accessible spaces.

- **Attitudinal**

- Do not make assumptions about what people with disabilities can or cannot do. Ask them.
- Don't touch a person's mobility aid or distract a service dog.
- Do not view people with disabilities as objects of pity, charity, or inspiration.

Removing barriers

- **Communication**

- Learn about accessible design, e.g. font choice, website design, graphic design.
- Use clear and uncomplicated language.
- Make sure electronic documents are accessible to people who use screen readers.

- **Organisational**

- Advocate for organisations to consider people with disabilities, e.g. review policies to ensure accessibility.
- Encourage conferences to have inclusive practices, like captioning on talks and a quiet space.

Inclusive language guidelines

- Say *people with disabilities* or *disabled people* as opposed to *the disabled*.
- Avoid phrases that suggest victimhood e.g. *afflicted by*, *victim of*, or *suffers from*. Instead, say *person with [condition]*.
- Avoid euphemisms like *differently abled* or *special needs*.
- Don't use phrases or terms that make light of disabilities like *blind/deaf to [something]*, *lame*, or *crazy*. Mental health diagnoses like bipolar or OCD are conditions with serious impacts so don't use them to describe everyday behaviours.

Any questions?

Links

- [Rethinking disability: the social model of disability and chronic disease](#)
- [Scope: Social model of disability](#)
- [Promoting Inclusion: A British Council guide to disability equality](#)
- [Disability Etiquette, part 1 – the basics](#)
- [Barriers and Solutions](#)
- [10 ways to make society more inclusive for people with disabilities](#)
- [Dos and don'ts on designing for accessibility](#)
- [Inclusive language and imagery](#)