



Disponible en ligne sur www.sciencedirect.com

ScienceDirect

et également disponible sur www.em-consulte.com



Research paper

Disability art and culture: A model for imaginative ways to integrate the community

Pratiques artistiques et culturelles des personnes handicapées : un modèle imaginative pour intégrer la communauté

Carrie Sandahl*

University of Illinois, Chicago, USA



ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Available online 19 April 2018

Keywords:

Disability art
Disability culture
Physically integrated dance

Mots clés :

Pratiques artistiques des personnes handicapées
Culture des personnes handicapées
Danse intégrée

ABSTRACT

This article suggests a turn to disabled people's formations of disability culture, as expressed in the arts, for new ways to imagine community integration. As I look to the arts, I examine not only the representations disabled artists create, but the art-making and arts-presenting processes themselves. I illustrate this argument by analyzing innovations in the integration of people with disabilities in professional concert dance in two American companies: AXIS Dance Company and Kinetic Light.

© 2018 Association ALTER. Published by Elsevier Masson SAS. All rights reserved.

R É S U M É

Cet article rend compte d'un changement dans la formation des personnes handicapées à la « culture du handicap », telle qu'elle s'exprime dans les arts, pour mettre au jour de nouvelles façons d'imaginer l'« intégration communautaire ». Lorsque je regarde les arts, j'analyse non seulement les représentations que les artistes handicapés créent, mais également les processus d'élaboration/création artistique ainsi que les processus de présentation et de diffusion de leurs œuvres. J'illustre ensuite mon propos

* Correspondence. 1640 W. Roosevelt Rd (mc 626), Chicago, IL 60608-6904, USA.

E-mail address: csandahl@uic.edu

à partir de l'étude des innovations réalisées, en termes d'intégration des personnes handicapées, dans les spectacles professionnels de danse de deux compagnies américaines : AXIS Dance Company et Kinetic Light.

© 2018 Association ALTER. Publié par Elsevier Masson SAS. Tous droits réservés.

1. Introduction

For the 2017 ALTER conference at the University of Lausanne, I was invited to give a keynote lecture related to the conference theme, which was “Disability, Recognition and ‘Community living’: Diversity of practices and plurality of values.”¹ As a disabled scholar and artist who teaches disability studies courses at the University of Illinois at Chicago, I thought carefully about what, at this point in the development of our field, a disability art and culture perspective might add to our conversations about how people with and without disabilities live together. What the diverse international disability studies community shares is a profound commitment to social justice for people with disabilities. Though we share this commitment, how we enact change and what models we hold forth to guide our efforts are specific to our cultural contexts and academic home disciplines.² For the keynote and this expanded version, I took our shared commitment for social justice as a given, but I interrogated what we mean by community living. What does community living look like?

In this article, I suggest a turn to disabled people's formations of disability culture, as expressed in the arts, for new ways to imagine community living.³ As I look to the arts, I examine not only the representations disabled artists create, but the art-making and arts-presenting processes themselves. I illustrate this argument by analyzing innovations in the integration of people with disabilities in professional concert dance in two American companies: AXIS Dance Company and Kinetic Light.⁴

2. Background integration

In the United States, the term “community living” refers to people with and without disabilities inhabiting a shared community space, but the extent to which they are integrated or segregated varies. Community living includes domains such as employment, housing, recreation, and education. Consider the following scenarios. People with disabilities might be employed at a sheltered workshop in the larger community, but that workshop would be still be a segregated environment. Disabled people might be living in a small group home and taken on excursions by staff for shopping and recreation in the larger community, but more so as visitors than fully fledged members.⁵ Disabled children might attend their neighbourhood public school, but they may spend much of their day in “resource rooms” in which they have no interaction with their nondisabled peers. In each domain,

¹ I want to thank Patrick Devlieger, Anne Marcellini, and Laurent Paccaud, for their invitation on behalf of ALTER and their organization of my visit.

² The conference website provided this provocation that guided my understanding: “Today, many countries have signed the United Nation Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. They try as well, with varying success, to guide policy and practices, and to transform social perceptions and participation of people with special needs. However we can see that the models of ‘living together’ differ, depending on institutional contexts and communities. The 2017 conference of ALTER proposes a better understanding of the diversity of practices and experiences of disability in different areas (districts, counties, regions, nations) marked by contrasted socio-historical, political and cultural configurations (Alter, 2017).”

³ I define disability art and culture more fully in Section 4.

⁴ I purposely toggle between person-first language (e.g. people with disabilities) and identity-first language (e.g. disabled person) as an imperfect solution to the problem that there is no general agreement about preferred terminology. My choice to use both addresses the preferred nomenclature of different disability constituencies in the United States. Personally, I prefer identity-first language as do most disability activists and disability studies scholars in the humanities, which is why I use it most often. I use the term “impairment” to refer to a disabled person's primary physical, mental, or sensory difference. In the arts, our bodies are our means of expression, and I describe the configuration of people's bodies, which some may find uncomfortable, but doing so is necessary to describe and analyze aesthetic choices.

⁵ The characterization of disabled people as “visitors” in this context comes from Snow (2018).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7501722>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7501722>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)