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Disability & society – Pre-course reading assignment

(Summer course within the Sciences PO – UBC B.A. Dual Degree Program – Summer 2016)

1) Aim of the reading assignment

The first aim of the online portion of the course is to prepare you for the course by taking the time to read 5 core course-related texts. For each text, you are asked 1-3 simple questions to which you are expected to provide short answers (the expected length will be specified for each question. It is approximate: do not hesitate to provide shorter answers, but avoid longer ones). The questions do not require any further reading apart from the associated text. Their only aim is to make sure the text is read and understood.

2) General presentation of the texts

The texts should be read in the order in which they are introduced.

Text 1 presents you with the life stories of disabled people from three different generations in the UK. The aim of this reading assignment is to introduce you to the social experience of disability, its variations and the role public policies play in disability lives. By reading life stories, you will get a sense of how the different dimensions of this experience relate to one another in individual lives, before we examine each dimension separately in August (ex. schooling, employment, care, etc.).

Texts 2 and 3 deal with the social model of disability, which is the cornerstone of debates around disability in the social sciences (2 sessions of the class will be devoted to this question in August). The two texts are theoretical discussions around this model as it emerged within the context of the disability movement in the UK. Text 2 is a defense of the social model, and text 3 points to the limits of this conception. Therefore they should be read together, and the questions will relate to both texts.

Text 4 is a presentation of the disability rights movement in the US, its implications on legal and policy change, and the way it diffused worldwide. It offers more of a political science perspective on the subject, and sheds light on the US context of the disability rights movement.

Text 5 is an example of a sociological study of the experience of disability, based on the case of disabled mothers in Canada. It aims at preparing you for the in-class discussions on gender and care in relation to disability.

3) List of texts and related questions

Text 1: Shah, S., & Priestley, M. (2011), « Telling stories », p. 23-45 in *Disability and social change. Private lives and public policies*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Questions on text 1:

- 1- List 3 major changes in the experience of disability accross generations (150 words)
- 2- What types of public policies/policy domains affect the experience of disability?

(100 words)

Text 2 : Oliver, M., & Barnes, C. (2012), « The importance of definitions in the disability debate », p.11-31 in *The new politics of disablement*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Text 3 : Shakespeare, T. (2013), « Materialist approaches to disability », p. 11-47 in *Disability rights and wrongs revisited*. London: Routledge.

Questions on texts 2 and 3:

- 3- What is the social model ? (try to rephrase the idea in your own terms) (100 words)
- 4- What are the main assets of this conception of disability according to its promoters ? (150 words)
- 5- What main criticisms are addressed to it ? (150 words)

Text 4 : Heyer, K. (2015), « The disability revolution : from welfare to rights », p.15-50 in *Rights enabled: the disability revolution, from the US, to Germany and Japan, to the United Nations*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Questions on text 4:

- 6- How does the ADA illustrate the « rights model » in disability policy? (100 words)
- 7- What questions does the text level regarding the relation between rights and welfare ? (150 words)

Text 5 : Malacrida, C. (2007). « Negotiating the Dependency/Nurturance Tightrope: Dilemmas of Motherhood and Disability ». *Canadian Review of Sociology*, 44(4), 469–493.

Questions on text 5:

- 8- List examples of obstacles mothers with disabilities are faced with (100 words)
- 9- Give two examples of strategies developed by these mothers to overcome these obstacles (150 words)