



**Jolanta Rzeźnicka-Krupa**

Uniwersytet Gdański

ORCID 0000-0002-3793-3870

## **Social Ontologies of Disability - Towards the Discursive Interpretations of Embodied Difference**

**Spółeczne ontologie niepełnosprawności  
- w stronę dyskursywnych interpretacji ucieleśnionej różnicy**

**Abstract:** Within disability research philosophical issues are becoming increasingly important in line with the paradigmatic change connected with social model of disability. Socio-cultural approach to this phenomenon entails the necessary to reformulate the ontological status of the categories of the body, corporeality, materiality, the notion of biological impairment, as well as the notion of disability itself. The article presents a reconstruction of some theoretical approaches to disability, using epistemological tools derived from Ernesto Laclau's political theory of discourse. In the paper, I seek to answer the question of what kind of identities of subjects and what values attributed to the embodied differences are generated in the various social ontologies of disability (ontology of biological lack, ontology of social oppression and ontology of cultural resistance) and what results from these diverse modes of thinking?

**Keywords:** social ontology, disability, discourse, Laclau, identity.

### **Introduction**

We can think about disability both as a particular and the universal aspect of human life. It is an existential phenomenon inscribed into a subject's biography, everyday life experiences, activities, education, work, and relations

with other people. Disability is not only the biological aspect of functioning defined by medical status, but it is also shaped historically, socially, culturally, economically, and politically within the perpetual game between what is socially perceived as abled and what is not. During the last decades, along with the changes in the way of understanding disability and people with disabilities in the perspective of human rights, issues related to ontology are becoming increasingly important in disability research. The paradigmatic change which commenced together with the social model of disability has made it necessary to reformulate the ontological status of the categories of the body, corporeality, materiality, impairment, and the notion of disability itself (Pfeiffer, 2002; Hughes, 2007; Cluley, Fyson and Pilnick, 2019). Paul Hughes writes that „In disability studies the ontological has not received a great deal of explicit attention, but it is clearly manifest in some of its central debates and challenges” (2007, p. 674). According to P. Hughes, what is particularly is the critical social ontology of disability, which, problematizing issues related to non-disablement, would disclose mechanisms lying at the basis of the disabling culture (Hughes, 2007, p. 673). Sharing this opinion, in the article I focus on analysis of various approaches to the phenomenon of disability, described by Dan Goodley (2011) as theoretical models, referring them to the basic categories and assumptions of E. Laclau’s political theory of discourse which I am using as epistemological tools of analysis (Szkudlarek, 2008, 2012, 2017). The reconstruction of various ways of understanding disability, the underlying assumptions, as well as the resulting logic of action and the accompanying social practices, will enable a demonstration of the processes and mechanisms of the development of social ontologies of disability and the identities of the subjects. The general framework of the re-construction has been grounded in the cultural paradigm, treated as a certain model of scientific rationality, a key feature of which is a shift of interest from the traditionally understood object of research towards the transversal and intersectional categories of analysis (see Rzeźnicka-Krupa, 2019). A strong relation between disability studies and cultural studies shows a game of the asymmetrical relations of power, in which cultural categories and disability are mutually generated. These „contact zones”, as Anne Waldschmidt calls them (2017, p. 26), are simultaneously zones of conflicts and tensions generating new ways of looking and thinking. The perception of disability in the perspective of a cultural perspective allows one to notice and examine its footprints in contemporary discourses shaping both entire societies and small, local communities. In result, it makes possible not only to analyze the social dimension of discrimination and exclusion practices, but to reach

deeper structures and meanings creating specific conditions and the possibilities for the functioning of a community. David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder (2006) write that the cultural approach opens the field and possibilities for theorizing the political dimension of acts re-defining disability and presenting it in the categories of resistance and the source of cultural values which were previously oppressed. The involvement of the cultural perspective in disability studies enables not only the laying bare of oppression wherever we would not expect it, but above all the problematization of what seems natural and obvious. In result, it opens the space to change what Ch. Taylor names as „social imaginary” (2004), describing the socially constructed and shared ways of understanding and interpreting specific phenomena (disability) as well as foundations of legitimacy of the social organization which enables specific actions towards subjects and social groups (people with disabilities) by making them meaningful and rational.

### **Social ontology and theory of discourse as an epistemological framework of analysis**

The notion of social ontology originates from works by John Searle (1995, 2009), who – referring to John Austin’s (2009) theory of performative speech acts – understands it as the specific manners of existence of social beings, processes, and events. Language plays a special role in constituting the social world, as it allows the creation of representations stepping beyond the previously and independently existing reality. The performative function of language and the related power of creation of social beings and their status may be in place for a long time, also after the disappearance of the conditions and circumstances which generated them. In this sense, we can talk about the performative power of the words, utterances, and texts affecting and generating reality.

Social ontology constitutes a space of objectivity in the sense that the identity of subjects, and the meaning of objects and actions, are shaped as a part of the given discursive structures. Elements of discourse do not precede connections between them, they are generated by these relations, and for this reason, in E. Laclau’s concept, the category of relation becomes a synonym of objectivity, since it is relation which provides the meanings generated within a given discursive field with the status of objectivity, which is an ontological status (Laclau, 1996, 2005; see also Szkudlarek, 2008, 2012, 2017). Chains of articulations focus on nodal points – condensed meanings, which are the basis for the principle of the organization of social order. Such an articulatory nodal point enables the introduction of diverse particular content into the

chain of meanings generated in line with the logic of equivalence and the construction of a joint field of discourse until meanings undergo disintegration and disarticulation within the chain of equivalence, which breaks the totalizing whole of the hegemonic structure. In E. Laclau's theory, a social group is a product of the social relations that constitute it, as expressed in non-satisfied articulations. Hence, all the identities are constructed within the field of tension between the logic of difference and the logic of equivalence, which is the place of the establishment of the impossible but the necessary whole. This whole, which is unclosed and unreachable, is impossible since the tension between the equivalence and the difference cannot be overcome, even while being necessary, because the process of the signification and constitution of identity would not be possible without some sort of closing. The establishment of hegemony and the generation of a joint, universalizing identity is a condition for the emergence of the identity of a subject, while hegemonic relations establish the logic of the field of politics and positions of the particular subjects and social groups (Laclau, 1996). Therefore, in relation to the phenomenon of disability, various theoretical approaches constitute discourses, which can be perceived as the practices of speaking and acting which generate subjects. E. Laclau (1996) gives discourse an ontological status – in the sense of the building of space, as a part of a given discourse, in which the particular social beings acquire the status of objectivity, rather than in the sense of ontology discovering the nature and character of reality (see also Szkudlarek, 2008). Signification is therefore a certain manner of the being/existence of objects and phenomena, created as a part of a constant game of differences, while the signifier becomes objective through the relation of difference towards another element. Therefore, social ontologies of disability may be understood as socially objectivised structures of meanings and speaking practices, established within the areas of various discursive fields and materialized in institutions and action practices. They are hegemonic practices, within which particular identifications are provided with the status of universality.

The concept of disability (conceptualized discursively and politically as social phenomenon) can therefore be treated as an empty signifier, in the sense of the absence of a specific meaning, generated independently of the discourse which is filled with the closing and stabilizing (objectivising) contents within the field of a given system. Discursive practices (linguistic and material ones) significantly shape both the individual experience of the oppression of persons with disabilities, and the political fight for social transformation and the change of oppressive practices. But the roots of

social disablism reach much deeper – into the area of relations establishing society as such – and it is as important to understand them as to understand the issue of marginalization and exclusion some social groups (Thomas and Corker, 2002, p. 21). E. Laclau's theory of discourse shows the very processes and mechanisms of the shaping of social beings, their identities, and mutual relations. Both individual and collective identifications are based on the selection of specific signifiers in compliance with the principle of the logic of equivalence and the exclusion of others, making the way in which the identity of subjects is constructed varied. Each of the analyzed in this article ontologies of (dis)ability refers to the difference related to the subject's biological capital in a different way and develops different mechanisms of the establishment of borders of inclusion and exclusion.

### **The reconstruction of social ontologies of disability**

Assuming that disability is what E. Laclau (1996) considered as an empty signifier, we can analyze which particular signifiers fill chains of equivalence with content, and which close them in the area of a given social ontology constituting a product of a given discourse, and at the same time the basis of the social and cultural identification of persons with disabilities. The main questions and the key points of analysis are: How is the biological difference related to disability defined and in what way are the borders of a given discursive field and at the same time the borders of the subjects' exclusion built? (see Rzeźnicka-Krupa, 2019, s. 78-79).

### **Ontology of biological lack**

The approaches referred to in relevant literature as individual and medical models of disability, in which disability is related to non-normative biological and moral status and the experience of a personal tragedy, fit the area of ontology of lack (Rioux and Valentine, 2006; Barnes and Mercer, 2008; Goodley, 2011). Here, disability is marked by a biological problem located within the individual in the form of certain traits and/or functioning of the body/mind perceived as abnormal. It is here that the nodal point of the chain of equivalent signifiers, which shape the basic dichotomy between the body which is „normal”, healthy and fit, and the body, which is non-normative, in-complete and dis-abled, is created. Therefore, the subject's position resulting from biologically determined lack becomes the basic condition for signifying, and the negative identity of the persons who are not abled is constituted in opposition to the identity impersonating completeness, i.e. one having no lacks – a phantasmal identity of the fully abled. These two

identities remain in close, mutual relation, since to be fully abled means not to be disabled.

The entire chain of equivalence of signifiers is determined by the trajectory of actions, the key articulations of which include: the norm as the key point of reference, examination (diagnosis) of consistence with the norm and the level of deviation from it, as well as remedial actions, which can be interpreted, following Michel Foucault (1977), as techniques of the disciplining and shaping of docile bodies (see also Tremain, 2006; Mitchell and Snyder, 2015). Since they are rooted in the modernistic, post-Cartesian discourse concerning reality and the subjects which function within it, they seek to work out a certain true, unambiguous and objective knowledge – one that is objective in the sense of the independent, prior to the act of cognition, existence of facts and processes shaping the social reality and the possibilities for the creation of real representations of this reality. These various practices aim at adapting the individual to the requirements of the environment and structures of social life, since it is the individual in whom the biological lack generating the essence of identity is located who must adjust themselves, minimize to the maximum possible degree their difference, and become a slightly better Other, someone more similar to the same healthy, abled body/mind.

In the nodal point from which a sequence of articulations takes its beginning in consistence with the logic of equivalence, surplus meaning is generated, which determines and extends to other signifiers. Since an incompatibility with the biological norm is perceived as something negative, also other signifiers, taking on negative meanings, generate identity and enforce the social role of an excluded Other. If the absence of an organically understood norm is a sign of an absence of being „normal”, then the unavoidably appearing signifier of lack becomes a negative stigma to one’s identity (Goffman, 1963; see also the concept of *normate* by Garland-Thomson, 2017) and a kind of social deviation (Becker, 1963). Therefore, the place in which the normal and the abnormal is generated produces the primary distinction and the „hierarchical ontological dichotomy” (Hughes, 2007, p. 673), which leads to the „pathologisation” of the identity of the subject, since in the very way of its establishment, it generates a significant difference excluding the subject from the area of normality, and even humanity. The chain of articulations witnesses the appearance of something which we might refer to, following M. Foucault (1977; see also Tremain, 2006) as the objectification of the subject and their identity – a person with a disability becomes an object of various impacts, social hostility or concern, as expressed in the establishment of the formal procedures of the identification of traits and criteria determining who

is disabled. Action practices activated in the ontology of disability signified as a lack take on specific forms of relations within a community, which in the social sphere coexist with each other. They are practices of eradication and/or isolation, practices of mercy, practices of treatment, rehabilitation, and special needs education, which in view of the potential of the cultural, symbolic violence included in them can also be interpreted as a certain kind of hostility resulting from principles constructing aid discourses.

In the approach represented by the ontology of lack the field of discourse is generated as an expression of interests and demands of an external power representing the dominating majority, which as a part of the order it created, based on the category of norm, developed a system of interrelations locating subjects with disabilities outside the mainstream society. In compliance with E. Laclau's theory, the relation establishing the cohesion of articulation concerning disability within the field of the ontology of lack is at the same time a relation which generates social structures and hierarchies and their mutual references. The invention of the modern notion of the norm and anomaly constituted the group of persons with disabilities, and the needs of the intensely developing industrial society produced a chain of articulations which enabled a real and symbolic elimination of persons considered unnecessary and unproductive. What was a particular demand of the dominating group and its needs, became a principle of social dichotomy claiming the right to the universalizing completeness perceived as objective knowledge. Dispersed knowledge, permeating the social field of action practices, shaped the area of the generation of disability as a trait identifying a collective subject, whose identity was constructed on the split – anomaly, symbolizing the absent completeness. i.e. the condition of imagined non-disablement. Hence, being abled represents a phantasmal category of embodied normality.

### **Ontology of social oppression**

The theoretical approaches including the social model of disability, the economic model and the relational model (Goodley, 2011) constitute the space of what we can name ontology of social oppression. What they have in common is the relational nature of disability and its strong, structural connection with the social context and the discourse of human rights. Social functioning of people with disabilities are mainly the issues related to the organization of community, equal rights in all domains including education and work, accessibility and fulfilling various social roles (Oliver, 1990, 1996, 2004; Gleeson, 1997, 1999; Thomas, 2008; Rioux, 2008; Russel, 2001, 2019; Mladenov, 2015). The nodal point in which surplus meaning is generated

and the chain of equivalence starts being established, is the disabled people's awareness of being marginalized and the questioning of the hegemony of normative discourses and social practices – therefore, the nodal point is the act of emancipation. In the ontology of social oppression, disability is a socially constructed phenomenon, since the problem related to imitations does not directly result from biological „lack” but lies at the side of the disabling society and the material and mental barriers it generates, thus contributing to stigmatization, social isolation, and the difficult access to social resources.

As Tomasz Szkudlarek writes (2012, s. 13), in E. Laclau's theory social groups are constructed around articulations resulting from the sense of social non-existence based on various dichotomies and divisions. The identity of persons with a disability as a group is established in opposition to the symbolic Other – in the ontology of lack, the imagined Other is the identity of a person with a disability, in relation to which the abled, „normal” society confirms its cohesion and identification with a specific normative order. In contrast, in the ontology of social oppression, it is the hegemony of the disabling, oppressive society, and the barriers it generates, which is the platform in relation to which chains of signifiers of disability are shaped. In the ontology of social oppression, difference is not identified strictly as a biological dysfunction, but generated in social constructs and beliefs concerning disability, while borders of exclusion are determined by social narrations and manners in which biological impairment is treated. As much as the ontology of lack was generated in the discursive field shaped by articulations originating from outside persons with disabilities, the ontology of social oppression was generated in the discursive field shaped as a part of the process of the expression of articulations of the very group of persons with disabilities, the formation of social movements of people with disabilities and their active fight for their civil rights.<sup>1</sup> Hence, the discussion of difficult access, the removal of barriers, social support, institutional integration and social inclusion have become within the emerged discursive field.

The approaches referred to as the medical and social model of disability are usually perceived as contrasting structures marked by a paradigmatic nature in the sense of having a disciplinary matrix based on different

---

<sup>1</sup> See UPIAS - Fundamental Principles of Disability (the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation) 1974/1976. Also T. Shakespeare, 1993. In Poland the protests of people with disabilities and their caregivers took hold in 2014 and 2018, see Godlewska-Byliniak and Lipko-Konieczna, 2018; A. Woynarowska, 2019.



assumptions, and theoretical and epistemological foundations (Kuhn, 1977). However, one could challenge such approaches since their deconstruction shows that some assumptions and meanings generated in the discursive field that shapes them do not create an entirely new, distinct quality. Both in the biological and social approach, the basis for the establishment of a subject is the identification of an organic „deficit” in it. Actually, although the paradigmatic opponent of the individual/medical model does not undermine the nature and „gist” of disability, it places accents in a different way, stressing the role and significance of the social perception of the phenomenon of disability, attitudes to persons with various disabilities and actions undertaken in relation to them and towards social life organizations, which determine the daily functioning of people with disabilities. In line with E. Laclau’s theory (1996), it is possible to solve the problem of oppression, power and exclusion being the result of the closing of the system striving to achieve the totalizing whole either through a reversal, which generates a new closure, or via the negation of the very principle of closure, i.e. a universal dimension of the system. The social model is an attempt at a reversal of the social exclusion generated as a part of the structures and practices of the medical model. It can be perceived as producing „distinct concepts of impairment and disability (...) and two types of person: the disabled person and the non-disabled person” (Beckett and Campbell, 2015, p. 276). This basic social dichotomy is the source of negative attitudes towards disability and disadvantages experienced by people with disabilities in many social domains. For this reason, it was also criticised by persons with disabilities themselves (Finkelstein, 2001; Thomas and Corker, 2002; Thomas, 2008; Shakespeare, 2006).

Despite the fact that what lies at its origin is a very expressive emancipation gesture and the sense of common interest, the ontology of social oppression does not sufficiently create conditions for the construction of a positive identity of persons with disabilities and take into account the complex relations between discourse, the material body, the cultural context of corporeality and disability (Hughes and Paterson, 1997; Goodley, 2014; Gabel and Peters, 2004, Godle, 2014). Colin Barnes and Geof Mercer (2008, p. 99) write that the social model always skeptically treated the strength of discursive practices and failed to develop a satisfactory relation between the category of impairment and disability, which are generated discursively. Hence the considerable demand for deconstructing discourses concerning the body as a form of regulation, as well as a way of changing or redefining the life of people with disabilities. They appear when we activate in our thinking about disability, and primarily its bodily aspects, a cultural perspective

creating the ontology of cultural resistance which returns to the biological category of impairment, but in an entirely different way.

### **The ontology of cultural resistance**

This approach to disability includes the way of understanding which we can call as a cultural model and its variants in the form of the minority group model and the affirmative model (Goodley, 2011, 2014; Snyder and Mitchell, 2006; Thomas, 2008; Davis, 2006; Barnes and Mercer, 2008). The affirmative approach to disability (Swain and French, 2000), the key feature of which is the perception of impairment and/or disease as a positive foundation for the construction of individual and group identity, opposes the understanding of non-normative aspects of corporeality and disability as a personal tragedy and constitutes a specific answer to the limitations of the social model. It undermines social distinctions dividing people into abled and disabled, although this kind of differentiation seems to be so obvious from the perspective of the naturalized biological difference determining the personal, social and political aspects of reality. The critique of the ableist society and culture (Campbell, 2009) led to some very significant postulates of a redefinition of not only the very notion of disability, but also the categories of norm and impairment that determined it, which would allow to build the foundations of a positive identification of one's own identity. The ontology of cultural resistance, questioning biological foundations of the construction of the „disabled” subject in the context of the policy of identity, turns attention to the deeper sources of the social oppression of disability, connected with the meanings, values and ideologies shaping social structures, hierarchies and divisions. C. Barnes and G. Mercer (2008, p. 36) stress that the promotion of interests of the dominating values does not have to be based on power and enforcement, since there are mechanisms allowing to win a certain approval of subordinated groups with the help of the generation and consumption of cultural activity. The cultural perspective explores inter alia issues related to the manifestation of the materiality of the body and historically and culturally determined manners of its interpretation, as well as questions related to the interpretation of bodily and cognitive differences between people, since the dominating culture generates meanings, which most often negatively value disability and bodily impairments. As Carol Thomas writes (2008, p. 49), just like other social phenomena, disability is shaped by the cultural context and discursive practices, while persons with disabilities are attributed not only with differences in terms of appearance

and the manner of moving and speaking, but also differences in behavior, powerlessness, helplessness, and dependence.

The body does not exist independently of society and culture, it is not simply a material object, which can be presented regardless of the meanings given to it socially and culturally, and it is also a performatively generated discursive being. This is because bodies are filled with content and cultural meanings, which can empower or weaken the identity of subjects. In the ontology of cultural resistance, a shift took place - as D. Goodley points out (2011, p. 14) from viewing bodies as bad, broken, defective, other than should be, towards thinking about bodies in the categories of a deepened reflection on the processes of their cultural generation and valuation (see also Ware 2001). The cultural perspective is an approach allowing to examine ways in which disability appears in various cultural representations and discourses concerning „non-disabled” bodies and to show what values, ideas or expectations become significant for the shaping of the identity of disability and its place in society and culture.

Let us now try to have a look at the cultural approach from the perspective of E. Laclau's theory of discourse. In the approach presented by the ontology of resistance, disability is constituted through the negation of the foundations of the system that generates disability, in the sense of its generation of the dichotomy abled-disabled, i.e. the very category of impairment understood as a deviation from standard. Here, the nodal point of articulation is a reversal of meanings given to it – the corporeal/mental lack or dysfunction are not established as a non-fulfillment of the criteria of the norm tantamount to the absence of normativity, but, through positive valuation, they provide for its understanding as a variant of normality. The emerging chains of articulation are balanced around positivity and affirmative power, thus establishing an entirely different position of the subject, taking which, people with disabilities start to take a voice and, by doing so, not only show society what oppressive mechanisms it produces, but question the basis of the establishment/identification/definition of the identity of disability as such. The notion of the norm, and therefore also impairment, becomes emptied from its previous meaning (by questioning the contents, which filled it) and, as an empty signifier, begins to expand its borders. Articulations are focused on the empty place of what in universally adopted terminology is referred to as an impairment – it is here that the surplus meaning is generated, enabling a progressing process of a balancing of other elements of the chain of equivalence (different manners of perception, alternative motor activity, multi-variance of condition, neurodiversity, etc.).

The biological difference ceases to be significant, i.e. no longer is a difference which constitutes the basis for the distinction and constitution of identity in the perspective of ontology of lack, as well as the ontology of social oppression, but allows to move this significant lack into the sphere of positive valuation, i.e. make it a representative of a certain universal whole. The previous significant difference becomes, due to the dislocation of meanings, a structural feature of the condition of subjects, thus shifting the borders of exclusion generating subjects defined by the absence of the mythical full ability and health, towards the perspective of many possible variants of embodiment and becoming a subject. However, in the cultural approach, the very source of oppression and the principle on which the community is established, i.e. the values of a normative culture generating social divisions, are questioned. What is new in the cultural approach is the very fact of a specific empowerment, giving the power/strength to the signifier of the category of impairment, which makes disability a conscious foundation of positive self-identification and the building of individual and group identity rather than a feature of an external categorization given and attributed to a specific group. It opens our thinking about disability to searching for some lines of deterritorialisation (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013) which could have flow into a new territory of different human abilities continuum.

### **Conclusions: discursive hegemony and phantasm of the identity of disability**

The reconstruction of assumptions, ideas, and values constituting various social ontologies of disability shows different ways of understanding what disability is. In E Laclau's theory, discourse cannot however signify itself as the foundation, and therefore its existence as pure presence is impossible. It is also radically impossible for a true identity of any social group to exist, since its borders are determined by internal relations and are relational. Therefore, an objective and true identity of subjects referred to as persons with disabilities is impossible and none of the ontologies presented generates it. This is because ambivalence and a split of the subject identity of disability is a constitutive feature and is an indispensable element of any ontology. Persons with disabilities as a social group perceived in terms of homogeneous unity do not exist. No theoretical approaches and no model of disability are right or true as none of them embody the whole, as they are temporary and contingent. Various social ontologies of disability are the place of the establishment of a certain type of relations, hegemonic relationships, which significantly shape the logic of a given field of politics towards

disability. They are a possible horizon of identification of the position of social subjects/beings generated within hegemonic identities. The notion of disability is an empty signifier stretched between the particularity of the articulated pursuits, assumptions, ideas and postulates and their claims to totalizing universality. Various social, cultural, political and economic forces hegemonize the contents of various signifiers, which specify and enclose the meanings of disability. Some of them are weaker, and other stronger in their rhetoric of persuasion and the ability to convince us what disability is and it means to be a person with a disability. But they show the process of the gradual political involvement of people with disabilities into the possibility of defining themselves and their identity, processes of increasing resistance to the dominating and stigmatizing discourses.

**References:**

- Austin, J. (2009). Wypowiedzi performatywne. W: L. Rasiński (red.), *Język, dyskurs, społeczeństwo* (188-201). Warszawa: Wyd. Naukowe PWN.
- Barnes, C., Mercer, G. (2008). *Niepelnosprawność*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sic! s.c.
- Becker, H. (1963). *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe.
- Beckett, A. E., Campbell, T. (2015). The social model of disability as an oppositional device. *Disability & Society*, 30, 2, 270-283, DOI: 10.1080/09687599.2014.999912
- Campbell, F. K. (2009). *Contours of Ableism. The production of disability and abledness*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cluley, V., Fyson, R. and Pilnick, A. (2020). Theorising disability: a practical and representative ontology of learning disability. *Disability and Society*, 35, 2, 235-257, DOI: 10.1080/09687599.2019.1632692
- Davis, L. J. (2006). Constructing Normalcy. The Bell Curve, the Novel, and the Intervention of the Disabled Body in the Nineteenth Century. In: L. J. Davis (Ed.), *The Disability Studies Reader* (3-16). London-New York: Routledge.
- Deleuze, G. Guattari, F. (2013). *A Thousand Plateaus*. London-New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Allen Lane.
- Finkelstein, V. (2001). *The Social Model of Disability Repossessed*. Retrived from [www.disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk](http://www.disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk) 2019 November 10.

- Gabel, S., Peters, S. (2004). Presage of a paradigm shift? Beyond the social model of disability toward resistance theories of disability. *Disability and Society*, 6, 19, 585-600, DOI: 10.1080/0968759042000252515).
- Garland-Thomson, R. E. (2017). *Extraordinary Bodies. Figuring Physical Disability American Culture and Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Gleeson, B. J. (1997). Disability studies: a historical materialist view. *Disability and Society*, 12, 2, 179-202.
- Gleeson, B. J. (1999). *Geographies of Disability*. London: Routledge.
- Godlewska-Byliniak, E., Lipko-Konieczna, J. (red.) (2018). *Niepęłnosprawność i społeczeństwo. Performatywna siła protestu*. Warszawa: Fundacja Teatr 21-Biennale Warszawa.
- Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma. Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. London: Penguin.
- Goodley, D. (2011). *Disability Studies. An Interdisciplinary Introduction*. Los Angeles-London: Sage.
- Goodley, D. (2014). *Dis/Ability Studies. Theorising disables and ableism*. London-New York: Routledge.
- Hughes, B., Paterson, K. (1997). The social model of disability and the disappearing body: towards a sociology of impairment. *Disability and Society*, 12, 3, 325-340, DOI: 10.1080/09687599727209
- Hughes, B. (2007). Being disabled: towards a critical social ontology for disability studies. *Disability and Society*, 22, 7, 673-684, DOI: 10.1080/09687590701659527
- Kuhn, T. S. (1977). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Laclau, E. (1996). *Emancipation(s)*. London-New York: Verso
- Laclau, E. (2004). *Emancypacje*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe DSW.
- Laclau, E. (2005). *On Populist Reason*. London-New York: Verso.
- Laclau, E. (2009). *Rozum populistyczny*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Naukowe DSW.
- Mitchell, D.T, Snyder, S.L. (2015). *The Biopolitics of disability: Neoliberalism, Ablenationalism, and Peripheral Embodiment*. AnnArbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Mladenov, T. (2015). Neoliberalism, postsocialism, disability. *Disability and Society*, 30, 3, 445-459, DOI: 10.1080/09687599.2015.1021758.
- Oliver, M. (1990). *The Politics of Disablement*. London: Macmillan.
- Oliver, M. (1996). *Understanding Disability. From Theory to Practice*. London: Macmillan.

- Oliver, M. (2004). The Social Model in Action: If I had a Hammer. In C. Barnes and G. Mercer (Eds.), *Implementing the Social Model of Disability. Theory and Research* (18-31). Leeds: The Disability Press.
- Pfeiffer, D., (2002). The Philosophical foundations of disability studies, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 22, 2, 3-23. Retrived from <https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/341/429%202018%20March%2017>, 2018 March 17.
- Rioux, M. H., Valentine, F. (2006). Does Theory Matter? Exploring the Nexus between Disability, Human Rights, and Public Policy. In D. Pothier and R. Devlin (Eds.), *Critical Disability Theory. Essays in Philosophy, Politics, Policy, and Law* (47-69). Vancouver - Toronto: UBC Press.
- Rioux, M.H. (2008). Disability, Citizenship and Rights in a Changing World. In C. Barnes, M. Oliver and L. Barton (Eds.), *Disability Studies Today* (210-227). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Russel, M. 2001. Disablement, Oppression, and Political Economy. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*. 12, 2, 87-95, DOI:10.1177/104420730101200205.
- Russel, M. (2019). *Capitalism and Disability*. Selected Writings by Marta Russel, edited by K. Rosenthal. Chicago: Haymarket Books.
- Rzeźnicka-Krupa, J. (2019). *Społeczne ontologie niepełnosprawności. Ciało, tożsamość, performatywność*. Kraków: Impuls.
- Searle, J.R. (1995). *The Construction of Social Reality*. New York: Free Press.
- Searle, J.R. (2009). Ontologia społeczna. Niektóre podstawowe zasady. W: L. Rasiński (red.), *Język, dyskurs, społeczeństwo* (202-223). Warszawa: Wyd. Naukowe PWN.
- Shakespeare, T. (1993). Disabled People's Self-organisation: a new social movement? *Disability, Handicap and Society*, 8, 3, 249-263.
- Shakespeare, T. (2006). The Social Model of Disability. In L. J. Davis (Ed.), *The Disability Studies Reader* (197-204). London-New York: Routledge.
- Snyder, S. L., Mitchell, D. T. (2006). *Cultural Locations of Disability*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Swain, J., French, S. (2000). Towards an affirmation model of disability. *Disability and Society*, 15, 4, 569-582, DOI: 10.1080/09687590050058189
- Szkudlarek, T. (2008). Dyskursywna konstrukcja podmiotowości („puste znaczące” a pedagogika kultury). *Forum Oświatowe*, numer specjalny: *Studia z posthumanistycznej filozofii podmiotu* pod red. M. Kruszelnicki, W. Kruszelnicki (125-139). Wrocław: PTP - DSW.
- Szkudlarek, T. (2012). Wstęp. W: M. Cackowska, Kopciewicz, L., Patalon, M., Stańczyk, P., Starego, K. i Szkudlarek, T. (red.), *Dyskursywna*

- konstrukcja podmiotu. *Przyczynek do rekonstrukcji pedagogiki kultury* (7-25). Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo UG.
- Szkudlarek, T. (2017). *On the Politics of Educational Theory. Rhetoric, theoretical ambiguity, and the construction of society*. London-New York: Routledge.
- Taylor, Ch. (2004). *Modern Social Imaginaries*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Thomas, C. (2008). Disability Theory: Key Ideas, Issues and Thinkers. In C. Barnes, M. Oliver, L. Barton (Eds.), *Disability Studies Today* (38-57). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Thomas, C., Corker, M. (2002). A Journey around the Social Model. In M. Corker and T. Shakespeare (Eds.), *Disability/Postmodernity. Embodying Disability Theory* (18-31). London-New York: Continuum.
- Tremain, S. (2006). On the Government of Disability: Foucault, Power, and the Subject of Impairment In: L. J. Davis (Ed.), *The Disability Studies Reader* (185-196). New York-London: Routledge.
- Ware, L. (2001). Writing, identity and the other: dare we do disability studies?, *Journal of Teacher Education*, 52, 2, 107-12, DOI: 10.1177/00224871010520002003
- UPIAS, *Fundamental Principles of Disability* (the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation) 1974/1976. Retrived from <https://disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/40/library/UPIAS-UPIAS.pdf> 2015 May 10.
- Waldschmidt, A. (2017). Disability Goes Cultural. The Cultural Model of Disability as an Analytical Tool. In: A. Waldschmidt, H. Berresem and M. Ingwersen (Eds.), *Culture, Theory, Disability. Encounters Between Disability Studies and Cultural Studies* (199-28). Retrived from <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/id/07da12fc-4c2d-44da-a2a5-d1c824f2508d/627653.pdf>. 2018 April 12.
- Wojnarowska, A. (2019). Aktywiści z niepełnosprawnością w walce o niezależne życie, równe szanse i prawa człowieka. O sile protestów, opresji władzy i społecznym oporze. *Niepełnosprawność. Dyskursy Pedagogiki Specjalnej*, 35, 127-143.