

Guest Editor's Note

Thanks to federal civil rights legislation and a growing societal commitment to equality of opportunity and inclusion, people with disabilities have become more active participants in American society than ever before over the past 10 years. On the heels of this movement toward social integration, the interdisciplinary disability studies enterprise has endeavored to track the progress that people with disabilities are making in areas such as education, employment, independent living, recreation, health maintenance, and civic participation. Representing diverse disciplines such as art, the humanities, sociology, cultural anthropology, psychology, political science, law, medicine, allied health, rehabilitation counseling, education, and business – disability studies scholars have contributed greatly to the understanding of the experiences, attitudes, and values of people with disabilities. Moreover, the aggregate body of knowledge in this dynamic area of inquiry reflects the status of people with all kinds of disabling conditions and at all developmental stages in the life cycle. From infancy through retirement, and from arthritis to mental retardation, the multi-faceted subject matter of disability studies has enlightened professionals and laypersons alike concerning what it means to be a person with a disability here on the edge of the New Millennium.

In that spirit, my purpose in pulling together this special issue was to highlight important topics in disability studies that cut across the educational, rehabilitation, and allied health professions. These topics include the rehabilitation needs of people with HIV/AIDS, the concerns of people with borderline personality disorder and other mental illnesses, the professional

identity of rehabilitation counselors, research in special education, occupational stress, proprietary rehabilitation services, transition services for youth with sensory disabilities, and assessment strategies for children with disabilities. With contributions from experts in special education, school psychology, community counseling, social work, and rehabilitation – this issue brings together a wide range of perspectives that could be valuable for any practitioner who works with people with disabilities in any capacity.

As readers examine the breadth and depth of topics that are addressed in the excellent articles presented herein, they will be repeatedly reminded of the need for holistic, interdisciplinary services to meet the educational, health care, independent living, and career development needs of people with disabilities in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. As these articles cross a wide gamut of developmental stages, service delivery settings, and client populations, so too must rehabilitation professionals be attuned to the ever-emerging challenges that face their respective professions as world society enters the 21st Century.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Karen Jacobs, Editor of *Work*, for the opportunity to complete this challenging and rewarding project. Special thanks go to contributing authors Kathy McNamara, Cathy Telzrow, Mary Hennessey, Connie McReynolds, Gregory Garske, Pamela Luft, Jennifer Snyder, Patrick Dunn, Mary Ann Merz, John Bricout, Lynn Koch, and Bryan Cook.

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