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Book Review

Disability and Social Media: Global Perspectives

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Disability and Social Media: Global Perspectives is an advanced and interdisciplinary text that offers the importance of social media for communication, advocacy, and activism for people with disabilities across cultures. Social media serves as an innovative, technological sharing network that fosters community and communicative influence. Ellis and Kent argue that social media can be extraordinarily beneficial to increasing "employment and leisure opportunities" (p. 1) for the population yet it can continue to perpetuate inaccessible and discriminatory attitudes that hinder social inclusion in society. This book is significant to adult education because of the rising influence of social media as a learning and information sharing mechanism and the limited number of professionals, including educators, knowledgeable in effective methods of advocacy and teaching for the disability community across nations.

The book consists of six parts with each part containing multiple global contributions providing support for the argument of social media as means of communication utilizing various theories and approaches from a multicultural standpoint. Each part contains three to four chapters that provides a high level of understanding about the lives of people with disabilities, discusses the technological support needed, and presents the challenges of discrimination and misconceptions through these same tools. Parts 1, "Advocacy" and 2, "Access", provide overviews of advocacy and social justice movements through social media outlets for individuals with disabilities. There is an emphasis on increasing accessibility in a global society that focuses on the social needs of non-disabled individuals and dominant, normative ideologies.

Part 3, "Communications", provides analyses of the impact of assistive technology and collaborative media environments that enable the voices of individuals to enter the conversation of disability inclusion globally. This section includes the use of the social model of disability, which "maintains that disability is the result of decisions made by society and their impact on an individual with a specific impairment" (p.3), that draws on the feminist care of ethics and

dependency theory and supports the argument for embracing and encouraging individual autonomy. Part 4, "Education" discusses exploration of learning through avenues of Facebook, Blackboard, wearable cameras and online platforms to increase accessibility and delivery to students with disabilities. Revealed is the potential of social inclusion through social media as well as the unavailability and high expenses that are felt throughout the population and global society that hinder the goal of accessibility.

 Part 5, "Community", explores the dynamic use of blogging for creating online spaces to connect with others across the world, to increase the self-representation of people with disabilities and engage in self-expression across social and cultural contexts. The text ends with a compelling section, "New Directions", that offers other highlighted topics that are under-represented such as the highly specialized field of Augmentative and Alternative Communication, religious discourse in the Middle East, and digital technology in China. The combination of these topics adds to the encouragement of diversity and promotion of inclusion that aim to deconstruct mainstream culture.

The future of technology and social media in adult education is becoming increasingly impactful to understanding and highlighting the needs of adult learners with disabilities in providing equitable access to education throughout the world. The collective use of narratives, case studies, and scholarly contributions allows readers to understand the pivotal and multi-dimensional need for social inclusion and accessibility through social media for the disability community. It is noteworthy that while there are changing social attitudes towards disabilities, the social position and self-representation of people with disabilities and disabilities studies continues to be under-researched and lacking the strong support of society. This book is designed to provide new, global perspectives on the view of disabilities and the relationship that links social justice, technology, community, and design to the lives of individuals with disabilities and social inclusion.

Chandra Dunn is a second-year doctoral student at the University of Memphis' College of Education, majoring in Higher and Adult Education. Her research interests include trauma and lifelong learning, the impact historical trauma and systematic racism, restorative justice and race and learning.