

## Call for papers - Italian Journal of Disability Studies

June 2012

The Italian Journal of Disability Studies is an independent peer reviewed journal that is issued every year. The journal, currently at its second issue, is run by an independent group of researchers ([www.gridsitaly.net](http://www.gridsitaly.net)) who have created the first Italian space for discussion and debate about Disability Studies within the Italian context. The journal is interested in both national and international perspectives about Disability Studies and for this reason it welcomes contributions written both in Italian and in English language.

Each issue is devoted to a single theme, which is identified jointly by the Scientific Committee of the journal. This issue will address the topic of **human rights approach to disability**, and how such topic is being discussed in different fields of study and in different geographical areas.

Within education, for example, the notion of inclusive education as a human rights issue is now widely accepted by national and international organizations and governments and often referred to as the principle to fight discrimination against disabled people. For many experts and activists supporting the human rights approach to disability, such as approach is considered as one of the most important principles to combat discrimination in education and society. The concept of human rights and their approach to disability have become even more important following the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006) and the various attempts to implement it in different countries (UNICEF/UNESCO 2007). The notion of human rights is very important because it has allowed the recognition of rights for disabled people in various domains of their life and has established itself as a model for promoting social change.

At the same time, it is necessary to acknowledge that although the human rights approach to disability is widely accepted in societies nowadays, it is still unexplored. Similarly, disabled activists have often indicated that human rights continue to be breached. While recognizing the importance of a universal principle, some scholars have started to acknowledge that this gap in the research is likely to confine the issue of human rights within humanitarian rhetoric rather than into a framework leveraging change. There are still few studies that indicate how human rights can be effectively implemented in different domains and cultures dominated by different values with different interpretations of the concept of disability and of 'human right'. In addition, the non-existence of forms of sanctioning has often left the enforcement of human rights at the level of intent rather than concrete action.

The new issue of the journal therefore will address the issue of human rights, or more specifically that of the human rights approach to disability and its operationalization in different areas of study. Contributions that address the

following topics will be particularly welcomed:

1. *Theoretical works*: theoretical premises of the human rights approach to disability; the historical development of the human rights model to interpret disability, the comparison between the human rights approach to disability with the social model of disability and/or with the Capability Approach.

2. *The human rights approach to disability through the lenses of the United Nations Convention*: the differences between signing and ratification of the Convention and the Optional Protocol; processes of change related to the Convention; examples of codification of the principles of the Convention in legislative procedures, international documents, national policies and practices

3. *The application of the principle of human rights and its benefits in different areas of study*. In the research area we will appreciate contributions that discuss emancipatory research, and/or participatory research; in education we will appreciate contributions that deal with inclusive education and disability studies in education and their impact on teaching and learning and the education system in general; in the social context we will welcome articles that outline the situation of support services and how to build inclusive communities and promote independent living. We will also accept contributions that focus on the human rights approach to disability in relation to culture, the impact on language and the organization of leisure time (e.g. theatre, cinema). In the legislative field special attention will be given to contributions that deal with presenting a picture of the role played by international organizations including non-governmental organizations for the operationalisation of human rights principles. This issue will also accept contributions that discuss human rights approach in terms of new technologies (e.g. accessibility and new forms of communication and networking).

4. *The problems and possible limits of the human rights approach to disability*. Contributions can include: human rights as a new form of intellectual construct of Western imperialism and the absence of a cross-cultural perspective on human rights that takes into account the realities of the countries defined as "developing" countries, differences between human rights and humanitarian approaches; human rights as a new form of positive discrimination (active participation versus representational participation) and its consequences.

Abstracts can be written in Italian or in English language for a maximum of 400 words and should be sent to [simonadalessio@yahoo.it](mailto:simonadalessio@yahoo.it) by the end of **August 2012**

The articles will be selected by the end of **September 2012**. Articles must be completed and submitted by **December 2012** and they will be made available online for downloading at [www.gridssitaly.net](http://www.gridssitaly.net) by the end of **February 2013**

We believe that your participation in this first issue is crucial for our journal and we hope to receive your contribution soon.

*Simona D'Alessio, PhD*  
*Co-founder and Editor of the IJDS*