



The Disability, Sexuality, and Rights Online Institute

A 9-week Online Course for Practitioners and Activists on Sexuality, Disability, Social Justice, Public Health, Development, and Media

October 17 to December 17, 2011

About the Course

The Disability, Sexuality, and Rights Online Institute provides a study of theory and practice for disabled and non-disabled people working in areas such as development, health, sexuality, media, and rights. The aim is to create awareness about the intersection of disability and sexuality, and build a political perspective on disabled people's sexual rights. Participants develop their ability to work in inclusive and holistic ways that further health and social justice. CREA coordinated the first Disability, Sexuality, and Rights Online Institute in 2010.

Deadline for applications has been extended to September 25, 2011

To apply online, visit <http://apps3.creaworld.org/creaforms/node/5>. If you experience difficulty with the online method, download the application form from CREA's website (www.creaworld.org) and email the completed form to Debika Chatterjee at dchatterjee@creaworld.org. You may also write to her for any queries.

Why take this course?

- Disabled people are often excluded or discriminated against in relation to their sexuality by health, development, and rights organizations because they are not considered to be sexual or they are thought to be sexually vulnerable or uncontrolled .
- Disability rights activists and service providers often disregard sexuality issues and rights in favor of issues that are considered more pressing and appropriate like employment and physical access.
- People with disabilities are commonly represented as asexual or as perverse in their sexuality. The media often builds 'freak' stories about their sexual lives.
- However, sexuality is an important part of the life, identity, society, and culture of all people, including people with disabilities. It can be a source of pleasure and pain, empowerment and oppression.

Key Questions and Content

- Why sexual and disability justices matter to us all, with or without disabilities: Evolving theories of sexuality, disability, and human rights
- Naming and shaming: Analysing the sexualized power of stigma and discrimination against

disabled people

- How to put rights into practice, from local to global: UN Conventions, national laws, and community action
- ‘You’re having sex?!’ Challenge the prejudice that affects adolescence, relationships and sex education for people with disabilities
- Ekaete Umoh from Nigeria addresses the barriers and potential in providing reproductive healthcare for women with disabilities
- Anita Ghai from India looks at responses to the sexual abuse experienced by disabled people: from denial to action
- HIV/AIDS and disability: practitioners discuss their inter-relations and activists’ role in reducing the risk
- Embodiment in sexuality and disability: Janet Price looks at attitudes to bodily difference, at prejudice, identity, intersectionality, and at challenging discrimination
- What is the role of the media?: Differing representations of disability and sexuality across the globe

Organizer

CREA empowers women and girls to articulate, demand and access their human rights by enhancing women's leadership, strengthening civil society organizations, influencing social movements and creating networks for social change. A global feminist organization based in India, CREA works to make human rights an effective tool for social change, and to integrate human rights mechanisms, awareness, and principles into the fabric of the society.

Participants

The Disability, Sexuality, and Rights Institute is an introductory level course on the intersections of these issues. Independent activists and practitioners in development, sexuality, health, media, and rights NGOs and GOs worldwide are encouraged to apply. Twenty-five participants will be selected based on demonstrated interest in disability and sexuality, and concrete ideas of relevance to their work. Practitioners will be given preference over students, researchers, and academics. Although the course is introductory, the work will be challenging, including reading and discussion of complex theory, which will be discussed and related to real life situations and social change work.

Accessibility

People with disabilities are encouraged to apply for the Institute. The course has been designed and tested to be accessible to disabled people and those with slower Internet connection speed. We will work with participants to modify the course as necessary to meet all needs and ensure full participation.

Costs and Funding

This Institute is made possible by the support of the MDG3 Fund from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Participants are required to pay a USD 50 registration fee to contribute towards course expenses. Fee waiver available on request (please refer to the application form).

Format and Workload

The course will be conducted entirely online in English, with presentations, reading, discussion, research, activities, and a final project. No special technology is required, except a computer that can read Microsoft Word and Power Point documents and has Adobe Reader. Also required is

Internet access to download/upload documents and comments for 20 to 30 minutes, 2 to 3 times a week throughout the course. The Institute will not be done in real time, although we will encourage participants in similar time zones to meet online for direct discussion; participants can complete the requirements at their convenience within the time parameters. There will be 2 to 4 readings per week, many will be challenging and theoretical. Course participation will take 6 hours per week on average. Participants are expected to participate in the entire course and complete all assignments. Guided by clear learning objectives, the course will be adapted to the unique interests, experiences, and needs of the participants. The participants will learn from each other's ideas and experiences through active involvement and sharing.

Resource People

The Institute is designed and taught by an international group of academics and activists in the disability rights field, who specialize in sexual and reproductive rights and health from a global South perspective.

Anita Ghai, Ph.D., is Senior Reader in Psychology, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi and a disability activist who works in the areas of education, health, sexuality, and gender. Her second book was *(Dis)Embodied Form: Issues of Disabled Women* (2003). She is on the editorial board of *Disability and Society*, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, and *Scandinavian Journal of Disability*.

Ekaete Judith Umoh is a disability rights advocate and Consultant, Founder and Executive Director of Family Centered Initiative for Challenged Persons (FACICP). FACICP works to mainstream the issues of women with disabilities in gender and development programs. She is the National Women's Coordinator, Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities, Nigeria and was advisor: Health Handbook for Women with Disabilities by Hesperian, California, USA. She is on the Board of Nigerian Women Trust Fund- representing women with disabilities in Nigeria political space.

Janet Price is a member of the Gender and Health Group and an Honorary Research Fellow at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. Working in the UK and India, her focus is feminist/post-modernist approaches to disability, postcolonialism, health, and the body. She is on the Board of DaDa (Disability and Deaf Arts) based in Liverpool, UK. She co-edited *Feminist Theory and the Body: A Reader* (1999).

Additional input from activists working on HIV/AIDS, media representation, UN conventions and more!

For more information, contact Debika Chatterjee (dchatterjee@creaworld.org; 91-11-24377707, 24378700/10)

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