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Disability and Social (In)Security: Emotions, Contradictions of ‘Inclusion’ and Employment and Support Allowance

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The focus of this article is on the ways in which emotions are engaged in the discursive construction and treatment of disabled people in receipt of social security benefits. The article draws upon the literature related to the social importance of emotions and that concerned with moral boundary drawing. It argues that the evocation of emotional reactions is crucial in understanding the ways in which changes to out-of-work benefits for disabled people (the development of Employment and Support Allowance) have recently been effected and the ways in which this has reflected a desire to more closely denote those judged able and not able to work in a redrawing of the ‘disability category’. While this has been done in the name of ‘inclusion’, the article concludes that its consequences are, in various ways, the ‘exclusion’ and stigmatisation of disabled people.

Keywords: Disabled people, emotions, exclusion, inclusion, social security.

Introduction

Britain has had specific social security benefits for disabled people since invalidity benefit was introduced as part of the National Insurance Act 1971. However, in the past decade there have been concerted efforts to reign in the financial support that is expended on such people, particularly the monies expended upon those of working age. In many senses, this attempt to reduce expenditure on disabled people reflects what Drakeford (1998: 563) describes as a ‘deep perversity’ in British social security policy (that when the number of people receiving benefits increases governments attack the benefit system, rather than congratulating themselves). It also reflects, however, Eger’s (2010) observation that where ‘out groups’ are perceived to be increasing, the public is less likely to be in favour of financial support for them.

This article is not concerned with the detail of policy change. The facts, for example, that disabled people are being impoverished by recent changes, such as the replacement of Incapacity Benefit (IB) by Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), and that the latter’s Work Capability Assessment (WCA) is deeply problematic, are well established (see, for example, Messere and Stenger, 2007; Puttick, 2007; Grover and Piggott, 2010; Macmillan, 2010; Mind, 2010; NACAB, 2010; Beatty and Fothergill, 2011). In contrast, this article is concerned with broader issues related to how the process of developing ESA was framed through cultural understandings of chronic sickness and disability. The article’s approach is consistent with arguments that suggest language is important in

effecting social change and producing authority (Fairclough, 1992; Rose *et al.*, 2006) and with the literature concerned, to various degrees, with the representation of social policy and the recipients of its benefits and services, especially disabled recipients (for example, Ginsburg, 1979; Golding and Middleton, 1982; Golding, 1999; Kemp, 2000; Piggott and Grover, 2009; Soldatic and Pini, 2009; Garthwaite, 2011; Soldatic and Meekosha, 2012). In particular, drawing upon literature concerned with emotions and their place in the moral ordering of societies, we focus upon the way in which the boundaries of worklessness and their relationship to the 'disability category' (Stone, 1984) are being redrawn in late modern social security policy and the ways in which these relate to the 'exclusion' and 'inclusion' of disabled people.

Mediated discourses and benefits for disabled people

The tradition in social policy analyses, particularly in the Fabian tradition, has been to argue that change in policy comes from various economic and social factors, framed by political motives and concerns, and the institutional concerns of welfare state agencies. In this sense, social policy, while being linked to broad issues (for example, the nature of the economy, social change and so forth), has been regarded as a rather narrow technocratic area of concern, but one that is ultimately framed by (an albeit politically mediated) rationality: that, for example, the provision of evidence of economic and social harm will lead to change for the better. Even when there is retrenchment in policy, as Britain is facing at the moment, such an approach dominates, and is in many senses seen as being even more urgent.

Such an approach, however, limits the scope of analysis and denies what some have hinted at or have argued for a long time: that social policy is an emotive issue framed by emotional concerns and reactions. In other words, social policies are as much related to emotions, such as anger, contempt, disgust, shame and sympathy, as they are, for instance, to the state of the economy. Golding and Middleton's (1982) account of concerns with social security 'scrounging' in the 1970s and its role in managing unemployment, through to Kemp's (2000: 267) argument that the first 'new' Labour government 'found it difficult to construct a 'convincing story' to justify large-scale cuts in social security', to Piggott and Grover's (2009) location of the introduction of the ESA in 'scroungerphobia' – all suggest this. This is because, from the state's point of view, successful policy change in late modern society has to be located in the representational, the cultural, if it is to be successful.

Golding and Middleton (1982: 236) argue that the media are 'implicated in social policy on at least two levels'. First, 'they frame public debate, advancing priorities and a sense of issues in a way that media researchers have labelled "agenda setting"' and, second, 'the expectations, mythologies, stereotypes and elisions of media creation influence the day-to-day administration of policy' (*ibid.*). Hancock's (2004) focus upon the social construction of 'welfare queens' in the USA reflects these themes that connect the media to social policy. She argues that the public identity of social groups constructed through media imagery are reinforced by government policies, especially their social policies. Her work suggests a two-way process – that public identity affects policy and policy affects public identity. These can be mutually reinforcing and in an emotionally charged political context can create gross error in beliefs among citizens about people who receive state organised financial support. This is because the 'cueing of public

identity by political elites or the news media involves two distinct cognitive behaviours; the assignment of specific traits and behaviours to an individual, and moral judgements based on the explanations for said traits or behaviours' (Hancock, 2004: 16).

It is certainly the case that media representations of welfare issues appear in a number of guises. The media variously exposes government policies as an attack on welfare recipients, mounts its own attacks on such people and/or mirrors the arguments of government policy. However, in Britain recent news media reporting of disabled people has become increasingly vitriolic through what Garthwaite (2011: 369) describes as the 'language of shirkers and scroungers'. So, for example, Briant *et al.* (2011: 4) found that between 2004/05 and 2010/11 there had been a:

reduction in the proportion of articles [in *The Sun*, *The Mirror*, *The Express*, *The Mail* and *The Guardian*] which describe disabled people in sympathetic and deserving terms, and stories that document the 'real life' experiences of living as a disabled person [had] also decreased.

By the latter period, claims of 'undeservingness' in the news media were most likely to be attributed to journalists, followed by politicians and, particularly in the tabloids, the public. It would appear that in parts of the British media, welfare fraud has become 'welfare as fraud' (Chunn and Gavigan, 2004), particularly in relation to disabled people. Briant *et al.* (2011: 4), for example, found in their research that: 'When the focus groups were asked to describe a typical story in the newspapers on disability benefit, fraud was the most popular theme mentioned.'

Of course, the idea that the media should be any more sympathetic to disabled people than it is to able-bodied people needs to be avoided as it might result in equally problematic constructions of the former as being pitiable (cf. Barnes, 1992; Shakespeare, 1994). However, it is important to understand the ways in which the changing representation of disabled people can have material expressions and consequences. In the context of Briant *et al.*'s (2011) research, it would seem that there is little coincidence that a report commissioned by the voluntary sector organisation, SCOPE, in 2011 found that:

37% of people with disabilities claimed they were increasingly being abused on the streets, erroneously reported to the benefits fraud hotline and accosted when trying to use disabled parking spaces. Nearly two thirds thought others did not believe that they were disabled and half of respondents said they felt others presumed they did not work. (Reported in *The Guardian*, 15 May 2011)

There are a limited number of ways in which people gain the knowledge that informs such hostilities towards disabled people. It may come from experience. People may know (or, more likely, they think they know) first hand or through others, someone who is claiming benefits for disabled people when they appear well or able-bodied enough not to require those benefits. However, it may also be the case that such actions are the consequence of a powerful set of discourses that in recent years have come to stigmatise disabled people as receiving unwarranted, overly generous and easily exploited state organised financial support (see Briant *et al.*, 2011; Garthwaite, 2011). The parliamentary Work and Pensions Committee (2011: 3), for instance, recently blamed the media for

representing reforms of IB as an attack on disabled people, ‘as some sort of scheme to “weed out benefit cheats”’, rather than as a means of helping them back to work.

The Committee also warned the government not to use language that would support the belief that disabled claimants were workshy.¹ The government’s position was that it had in no way encouraged the media to use pejorative language in their descriptions of disabled people and disability benefits (see comments of Chris Grayling, then Minister for Employment, *ibid.*, question 254). However, the Work and Pensions Committee was not particularly convinced by this argument, noting that:

more care is needed in the way the Government engages with the media and in particular the way in which it releases and provides its commentary on official statistics on the IB reassessment ... the Government should take great care with the language itself uses and take all possible steps to ensure that context is provided when information about IB claimants found fit for work is released, so that unhelpful and inaccurate stories can be shown to have no basis. (2011: 15)

The fact that the government had to be told this is indicative of the nature of much media coverage afforded to disabled people. Indeed, the media coverage of benefit receipt among such people, and its alleged association with abuse and fraud, has recently become so pervasive and stigmatising that the voluntary organisation, Mind, has felt it necessary to launch *The Daily Stigma* ‘to fight back against benefits stigma and an unfair and ineffective welfare system for people with mental health problems’.²

In many senses, the concerns of the Work and Pensions Committee (2011) noted above point to the ways in which media and policy discourses conjoin in the condemnation of disabled people who depend on state-organised benefits. Discourses of ‘benefit dependency’ (Chancellor of the Exchequer, 2010: para. 1.100) and ‘welfare dependency’ (*ibid.*: para. 1.54), for example, have increasingly framed social security policy for disabled people (Garthwaite, 2011). Such discourses are ‘imbued with meaning of a cultural and particularly moral kind’ (Haylett, 2001: 361). As such, they have contributed to the juxtapositioning of binaries (in work/workless, independent/dependent, responsible/irresponsible) that have helped provide a moral case for changes to social security policy as both media and policy discourses suggest benefits for disabled people trap them in the negative of these binaries.

In this section, it has been argued that the representation of social security policy for out-of-work disabled people has been important in constructing the case for change. The next issue that we need to address is why this is the case. Our focus is upon the emotionality of such discourses, for, as Abu-Lughod and Lutz (1990) argue, emotions are social phenomena that are constituted through discourses.

Linking the emotional and material

Thornicroft *et al.* (2007: 194) argue that the rejection of a minority group by a majority group ‘usually involve[s] not just negative thoughts but also emotions such as anxiety, anger, resentment, hostility, distaste or disgust’. Emotions play an important role in the othering of people in a process of what Sayer (2005: 952–3) describes as ‘moral boundary drawing’, the ‘way in which social groups often distinguish themselves from others in terms of moral differences, claiming for themselves certain virtues which others are held to lack ... we are hard-working, they are lazy, and so on’. Moral boundary drawing is

important because of its role in constructing social order. Rozin *et al.* (1999: 574–5), for example, argue that the ‘self-conscious emotions’, shame, embarrassment and guilt, ‘involve ongoing assessments of the moral worth and fit of the individual self within a community. These emotions motivate the individual to want to fit in, to behave in a culturally acceptable fashion, and to avoid harming people.’ A ‘second cluster of moral emotions reflects a similar concern for the integrity of social order, but now turned outward to others. Contempt, anger and disgust . . . are . . . moral emotions, a cluster of related . . . emotional reactions to the moral violations of others’ (*ibid.*: 575). It is the latter cluster of emotions, what Izard (1977: 340) described as the ‘hostility triad’, that is of particular interest to us in this section, as it is arguably the case that political and media discourses often, as we have seen, elicit feelings of hostility towards disabled people (Briant *et al.*, 2011).

The idea of the ‘hostility triad’ demonstrates how difficult it is to disaggregate the emotions (see Rozin *et al.*, 1999). The disgusting, for example, is also likely to make one feel anger or contempt. So, for example, the newspaper headline ‘Anger As Disability Benefit Claimants Soar By One Million’, of an article that claimed ‘19,400 alcoholics and drug addicts claim the mobility component of DLA’ (*The Express*, 4 June 2011) is designed to cause an emotional response on various levels: for instance, disgust that such ‘undeserving’ people as illicit and licit substance misusers can claim benefits that are supposed to be for the ‘genuinely’ disabled, contempt for those people who are making such claims and anger that the benefit regime allows them to do so. Hence, while the disgust emotion is the one that is held to be ‘especially useful and necessary as a builder of moral and social community’ (Miller, 1997: 194), it is often accompanied by the other emotions, anger and contempt, in the ‘hostility triad’.

There is increasing interest in the socio-moral, interpersonal and clinical aspects of disgust (Olatunji and Sawchuk, 2005). Just as Sayer (2005) argues about shame, disgust responses have powerful effects on the social and personal identity of those judged to be less capable, less attractive and less disciplined than they are themselves. Vartanian (2010), for example, suggests that negative attitudes towards obese people are based on a disgust response to people who are seen as lacking in self control, while Hutcherson and Gross (2011) claim that disgust is related to judgements about the moral trustworthiness of individuals. However, to consider disgust just as an emotional response is problematic, because to do so would ignore its material consequences. Sherman and Haidt (2011), for instance, conclude that disgust can lead to dehumanisation, which, in turn, can give credence to a belief that individuals and groups can justifiably be treated differently. Hutcherson and Gross (2011), for example, argue that those adjudged through disgust emotions to be untrustworthy are avoided or excluded.

Such ideas reflect Nussbaum’s (2004) analysis that income poor people are shunned, shamed and treated as idle and of low worth. In this context, disgust is utilised as a normative pointer and as such has been used throughout history to exclude and marginalise groups or individual people. This is because an appearance of control is purchased by the creation of sub-groups, that come to exemplify various economic, moral and social threats, constructed through disgust. Nussbaum maintains that disgust is an emotion that is expressed through the subordination of both individuals and groups on the basis of features of their way of life and, therefore, is an emotion that should have no place in the administrative functions of liberal societies. The concern with moral threat is repeated in some readings of ‘underclass’ and communitarianism (for example,

Murray, 1990, 1994; Etzioni, 1995; for discussion, Deacon, 2002) that either explicitly or implicitly deal with the ways in which the 'respectable' may become contaminated by the 'irresponsible' and 'feckless', and in which social control is threatened by individuals and groups that are perceived as threatening, as able to contaminate moral and civil virtues.

What can be drawn from the foregoing discussion is that the ways in which societies are structured are closely linked to moral judgements about individuals and social groups. Privilege and power are defended through discursive, as well as economic, means. The evocation of hostile emotions, particularly disgust, attributes 'power and danger to the pollutant, then creates remedies to protect the social order from becoming polluted' (Lynch, 2002: 539). In other words, disgust as part of the 'hostility triad', can inform social classification and hierarchies (Miller, 1997; Hancock, 2004; Lawler, 2005; Nussbaum, 2004; Tyler, 2008). In the following section, these observations are related to the redrawing of the 'disability category' through the ESA and its role in reducing the number of people defined as being incapable of working.

Disgust, the 'disability category' and tensions of 'inclusion'

So far this article has argued that disabled people are represented in popular discourses in ways to evoke disgust, and we have seen that the state has been indicated as part of this problem through the relationships between the media and social policy. There is a tension, however, in that the official documents explaining the introduction and development of ESA firmly located it in a discourse related to social 'inclusion'. So, for example, for 'new' Labour ESA was said to be an approach aimed at 'achieving equality for disabled people' (Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, 2008: 7), while we are told by the Coalition government that it 'is absolutely committed to supporting disabled people to participate fully in society, including remaining in or returning to work whenever feasible' (Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, 2010: 18).

There is an obvious disjuncture here between the discourses related to 'inclusion' that frame the ESA in official documents and the broader discourses that this article has argued have evoked hostile emotions as part of the cultural basis for making out-of-work benefits for disabled people harder to claim. In brief, the latter discourses are not conducive to the 'inclusion' that the discourses of the former seem to want. If anything, they are exclusionary. As Soldatic and Pini (2009: 83) argue in the case of Australia:

Disgust symbolises disability exclusion, where bodies are spatialised to minimise biological, moral, cultural and social contamination. In a desire to minimise moral contagion, disability is separated, excluded and then bounded outside the public sphere . . . disgust has been central to the modern state and disability relations, particularly in regard to the way that states establish classes of disability, where rights and entitlements are 'attached' accordingly.

Soldatic and Pini's (2009) observations are important because they link notions of disgust to access to benefits and services, in their words, to 'where rights and entitlements are "attached" accordingly'. However, the implication of Soldatic and Pini's claim is that the state is seeking to 'separate' or 'exclude' disabled people. We have seen, though, that in Britain in official documents there seems to be concern with 'including', rather than 'excluding', disabled people, albeit it in a narrow sense related to paid employment (cf. Levitas, 1996, 1998). The tension here is that to effect change, such as the introduction

of the ESA, the recipient group must in cultural terms be defined as being problematic, as 'other' (cf. Kemp, 2000; Garthwaite, 2011). However, the consequence, from the state's point of view, of that labelling process is hoped to be more positive, to result in more people in paid work and, therefore, 'included'.

In its material expression, this tension means the ESA should be understood as a mechanism that acts to 'sort' disabled people into groups defined by their relationship to paid work (Grover and Piggott, 2010). It is tempting to conclude that this is something new, that what has been happening for many years to workless able-bodied people is now being done to disabled people. However, what is actually being witnessed in late modern society is a revisiting of what Stone (1984: 28) describes as the 'formation of disability as an administrative category' that has a long and ignoble tradition in Britain related in previous centuries to the operation of the poor laws. However, any approach that encourages the location of the development of ESA in understandings of poor relief carries the danger of encouraging an analysis that simply reproduces the arguably over-used 'deserving'/'undeserving' dichotomy.

The reason for getting away from this is that, at least at a discursive level, it is very difficult to maintain the 'deserving'/'undeserving' dichotomy in the case of ESA. In late modern society, and after 30 years of the individualisation of economic and social problems, it is possible, following Chunn and Gavigan (2004), to argue that the recipients of social security benefits, whether able-bodied or disabled, are never really considered as 'deserving'. To develop this point, it is arguably of more use to return to the basic principles of poor relief, most notably that people should support themselves and should not be disincentivised from doing so by collectivised interventions, particularly those provided by the state. For people of working age, paid employment has been central to this process and the purpose of the 'disability category' has been to distinguish between those who could be considered unable to work and, therefore, could legitimately be supported by the state and those who could be considered able to work and, therefore, could not claim to require state-organised financial support. As Stone (1984: 28) notes:

Disability ... even in its early incarnations as more specific conditions was seen to exist in both genuine and artificial forms. People could be truly injured or feign injury. In the modern understanding of disability, deception has become part and parcel of the concept itself, and the nature of this deception is tied to the particular form of validation used to detect it. The definition of disability and the means to determine it became critically linked.

It is the ability (or more precisely the alleged inability) of the state to distinguish between those people who have what might be considered legitimate (and medicalised) reasons for not working and those that do not that has framed disgust with disabled people in late modern society and which has linked disgust to policy change. The concern was that under the existing IB regime of income replacement benefits for disabled people, those people who could support themselves through paid work had been able to absent themselves from doing so through medical assessments that were too easy to pass (Grover and Piggott, 2007). Both political and public discourses were structured by the assumption that there were too many 'feigners' receiving such financial support.

In many senses, this focus upon the relationships between paid work, self sufficiency and social security benefit support for disabled people draws upon a Benthamite understanding of the role of collectivised versions of economic and social support. For

Bentham, the only distinction to be made was between the independent poor (all those who had to labour to secure their subsistence) and the indigent (those who were destitute because they were unable to labour or even if they could labour were still in want) (see Poynter, 1969). For Bentham, like recent governments in the UK, there were very few people who could be considered incapable of working.³ The point of poor relief was to prevent the independent poor from becoming indigent, to prevent the contamination of worklessness. It is this focus upon paid work that is central to contemporary concerns with disabled people. It is disgust with their worklessness that is the moral concern. However, it is also the case that moral ordering related to paid work is often, at least at a discursive level, related to disgust with disabled bodies. The disabled body is a screen on to which fears about 'dependency', worklessness and economic decline are projected. It is widely argued, for instance, that disability and disabled bodies have become metaphors for economic and social problems:

On the one hand civic beauty, political consensus, social harmony, and economic vitality summon images of the healthy body. On the other hand, whenever sickness, dirt, political disagreement, social chaos, or economic depression appears, society responds by generating images of the disabled or diseased body. (Siebers, 2003: 208)

As we have noted, such fears have material consequences. Nowhere is this more clear in the contemporary redrawing of the 'disability category'. This is because, rather than, as the social model of disability might suggest, the focus being upon how disabled people are prevented from working, the ESA (like IB before it) focuses upon the disabled body. Those people whose bodies are judged the least capable of functioning like the 'normal' body are those that are separated to avoid contaminating the wider social order (Soldatic and Meekosha, 2012). In terms of 'inclusion', this is problematic because those whose bodies are adjudged as being incapable of working are separated into the Support Group of ESA, where it is expected that they will have no contact with 'included', as denoted by paid work, society. In this sense, the Support Group⁴ is a means of 'excluding', of hiding away in the 'disability category' a need not to partake in the activity (paid work) that the 'respectable', the vast majority, are expected to do.

It is at this juncture that we see the difficulty in maintaining the 'deserving'/'undeserving' dichotomy, because ESA is concerned with sorting people presenting as disabled into groups that are related to a judgement, informed by the ESA's WCA (Grover and Piggott, 2010), about their functional capability to do paid employment. None of these groups can be considered to be 'deserving'. The Support Group, as we have noted above, is an administrative classification in which those people whose bodily functions are held to make them furthest from labour markets are legitimately excluded from the one activity (paid work) that policy elites suggest indicates 'inclusion' in society. Meanwhile, members of the other groups (the ESA's Work Related Activity Group and Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) recipients), sorted according to the WCA, are, as the imposition of conditionality on them demonstrates, viewed in policy with distrust. They are people who, in Stone's (1984) ideas, are thought to be feigning their inability to work by claiming they are disabled in the case of the ESA's Work Related Activity Group, or by claiming there is a lack of work in the case of JSA recipients.

The idea, therefore, that ESA is concerned with 'inclusion' is a fallacy. It is about ensuring that only those with what is judged at a particular moment to be a 'true' disability

receive out-of-work benefits for disabled people. In this sense, it is concerned with re-working the 'disability category' by making the qualifying criteria stricter and, therefore, defining more people as capable of working and of making efforts to become more capable of working. The aim has been 'inclusion', to make disabled people more like 'respectable' people: 'hardworking', 'independent' and 'responsible'. However, this process, which is better understood as the 'responsibilising' (see Rose, 1999) of disabled people, has involved the use of exclusionary discourses and practices. To 'include' disabled people, it would seem that their mediated stereotypes and the ways in which they are treated must be felt by them as 'exclusionary' (cf. Roulstone, 2000).

Conclusion

In this article we have been concerned with relationships between the emotional and material. We have examined the ways in which, through media and policy discourses related to social security, hostile emotions towards workless disabled people are brought to bear. This is having a real impact upon the ways in which such people are viewed in society, as the almost constant association in such discourses is between chronic ill-health and disability, and deviant attitudes and behaviours aimed at avoiding paid work in preference for a life of 'dependency'. In many senses, there is nothing new about such concerns. Capitalism in Britain has for many years demanded a cheap and expendable labour force and the able-bodied workless have suffered the consequences of this (Welshman, 2006). What is perhaps new is the extension of the vitriol and opprobrium that in the past was reserved for able-bodied unemployed people but which has been extended to workless disabled people. The material basis of this seems not to matter, as in contemporary society disabled people have become framed by hostile discourses in periods of both economic expansion and in periods of economic crisis.

The effect of such discourses is deeply problematic for those people who can be identified as disabled. As we have noted, there is a feeling among such people that the existence of hostile emotions has, perhaps unsurprisingly, been accompanied by the expression of hostility. The irony, however, is that the use of such emotions in discursive practice is not particularly to 'exclude' disabled people further, but is to 'include' them. The state does not want such people to be even more on the margins, where they are likely to be costly to the welfare state. It wants them to be more like the 'respectable' (in work, 'independent', 'responsible') while the discourses and practice that frame such concerns are actually felt as being exclusionary.

Notes

1 So, for example, in his speech to the 2010 Conservative Party conference, David Cameron argued that: 'Fairness means giving people what they deserve – and what people deserve depends on how they behave. If you really cannot work, we'll look after you. But if you can work, but refuse to work, we will not let you live off the hard work of others'. As Garthwaite (2011: 370) points out, 'it is the insertion of "really" that belies scepticism about the truth of whether people really can or cannot work', a scepticism that she argues is particularly associated with disabled people.

2 http://www.mind.org.uk/campaigns_and_issues/policy_and_issues/making_benefits_fairer-welfare_reform/the_daily_stigma [accessed 06.02.2012].

3 So, for example, Bentham (cited in Himmelfarb, 1970: 96) believed that: 'Not one in a hundred is absolutely incapable of all employment. Not the motion of a finger, not a step, not a wink, not a whisper,

but might be turned to account in the way of profit in a system of such a magnitude . . . A bedridden person if he can see and converse, may be fit for inspection; or though blind, if he can sit up in bed, may knit, spin, etc. Real inability is relative only – i.e., with reference to this or that species of employment, or this or that situation. In the situation in question employment may be afforded to every fragment of ability, however minute. On the part of the deaf and dumb, and the blind, the situation is entire; requiring only to be directed into particular channels. So, on the part of most classes of the insane, requiring only particular means for the direction of it' (ibid.).

4 The Support Group is made up of those individuals who 'have a severe limitation which creates a significant disability in relation to the labour market, regardless of any adaptation they may make or support with which they may be provided' (Department for Work and Pensions, 2009: 8).

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