



Disability and Qualitative Inquiry: Methods for Rethinking an Ableist World (Interdisciplinary Disability Studies)

By Ronald J. Berger, Laura S. Lorenz

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This groundbreaking text makes an intervention on behalf of disability studies into the broad field of qualitative inquiry. Ronald Berger and Laura Lorenz introduce readers to a range of issues involved in doing qualitative research on disabilities by bringing together a collection of scholarly work that supplements their own contributions and covers a variety of qualitative methods: participant observation, interviewing and interview coding, focus groups, autoethnography, life history, narrative analysis, content analysis, and participatory visual methods. The chapters are framed in terms of the relevant methodological issues involved in the research, bringing in substantive findings to illustrate the fruits of the methods. In doing so, the book covers a range of physical, sensory, and cognitive impairments. This work resonates with themes in disability studies such as emancipatory research, which views research as a collaborative effort with research subjects whose lives are enhanced by the process and results of the work. It is a methodological approach that requires researchers to be on guard against exploiting informants for the purpose of professional aggrandizement and to engage in a process of ongoing self-reflection to clear themselves of personal and professional biases that may interfere with their ability to hear and empathize with others.

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- Sales Rank: #2335504 in Books
- Published on: 2016-01-12
- Original language: English
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x 6.25" w x 1.00" l, 1.36 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 258 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

'This edited volume is a must read for anyone interested in the study of disability. It offers a variety of qualitative methodologies and methods, written in accessible language to a variety of disciplinary audiences, rendering it ideal for both undergraduate and graduate level programs. Readers will learn about interpretative ways to understand disability and the importance of exposing taken-for-granted ableist norms that inform our social practices, thus making visible the experience of social injustice as we re-think our relationships with each other.' Christina Papadimitriou, Northern Illinois University, USA 'This is an important book. It offers readers rich insights into the process of doing qualitative research. It opens up new research opportunities to work with disabled people and transfer knowledge in highly accessible ways. In so doing, how students, academics, and practitioners might do qualitative inquiry, understand disability, and challenge oppressive practices is expanded.' Brett Smith, Loughborough University, UK 'What a gem! This book by Berger and Lorenz not only engages deeply with disability scholarship, but it's also full of rigorous methodological insight. This book is crucial for anyone interested in researching topics in disability, but also for anyone wanting a greater understanding of a variety of qualitative research methods.' Laura Mauldin, University of Connecticut, USA

About the Author

Ronald J. Berger is Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. He has published more than 50 journal articles and book chapters, as well as 16 books, including *Introducing Disability Studies*; *Hoop Dreams on Wheels: Disability and the Dedicated Wheelchair Athlete*; *Wheelchair Warrior: Gangs, Disability, and Basketball* (with Melvin Juette); *Disability, Augmentative Communication, and the American Dream: A Qualitative Inquiry* (with Jon Feucht and Jennifer Flad); and *Storytelling Sociology: Narrative as Social Inquiry* (with Richard Quinney). Berger has received his university's highest awards for both teaching and research, as well as the Wisconsin Sociological Association's William H. Sewell Outstanding Scholarship Award. Laura S. Lorenz is a senior research associate and lecturer at the Institute for Behavioral Health of the Schneider Institutes for Health Policy at Brandeis University, USA. She is Program Director for the Supportive Living Inc Wellness Center for Brain Injury Rehabilitation and Research in Lexington, MA working with inter-disciplinary colleagues to implement a program of research to support the social, cognitive, and physical rehabilitation of individuals living with chronic brain injury. Before coming to Brandeis, Dr. Lorenz worked for more than 20 years in international development as a writer, editor, and educator, focused on identifying and disseminating research, management improvement, and program results for global audiences, for agencies such as UNICEF, World Food Program, and the US Agency for International Development. Her assignments often involved encouraging partnerships, project replication, and behavior change. She has published in peer review journals in the fields of sociology, health, and visual studies.

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