

# Disability and Intersectionality

This resource has been created using the training content delivered by StopGap Dance Company alongside some additional information from various sources that can be found at the end. If you are interested in understanding more about what is covered here, please reach out to Stopgap for further information and training, contacting Belinda Preston, Creative Learning Manager - [belinda@stopgapdance.com](mailto:belinda@stopgapdance.com)

## MODELS OF DISABILITY

There are various types of models of disability; most popular are the Medical Model and the Social Model.

The Medical Model suggests that people are disabled because of their illnesses, impairment or medical condition, and as such the barrier they experience to equal access is due to this. Responsibility is placed on the individual to change and adjust to the normative society, in order to fit in.

The Social Model, however, suggests that a person is disabled because of the ways in which society is arranged. It places responsibility on wider society to change and accommodate to the differences that exists, stating that societal attitudes and infrastructure ought to make the necessary shift for equal access.

There are other important models of disability to be considered and/or scrutinised:



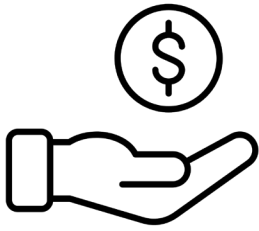
### **Charity Model**

This views the person with a disability as a victim or someone to be pitied, which places the individual as a passive participant in life that requires constant care. It implies they have limited independence, and as such is the community's responsibility to know and decide what is good for them.



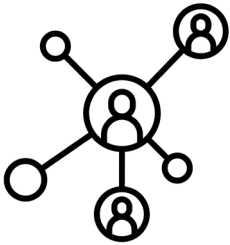
### **Eugenics Model**

This model rests on the theory of eugenics which places people as 'fit' or 'unfit'. Those who are categorised as 'unfit' are then viewed as genetically inferior. The theory of eugenics is rooted in racist, classist, ableist, queerphobic, and sexist ideology.



### **Economic Model**

This defines disability through the ability or inability to work and 'add' to the economy. It is focused on the productivity of an individual, and centres how much a disability prevents a person from working.



### **Biopsychosocial Model**

This model looks at the interaction between the biological, psychological, and social factors, and how that affects an individual's experience.



### **Cultural Affirmation & Identity Model**

This model stretches the Social Model of disability, and emphasises how the social and cultural factors shape disability. It rejects the victimhood and catastrophising of disability.



### **Radical Model**

This model views disability as a natural part of human diversity and as a result of oppression. It focuses on justice, utilising intersectionality as praxis.

## **DISABILITY BARRIERS**

There are 4 types of barriers to consider:

### **Environmental**

Lack of access

### **Communication**

How information is received and shared

### **Organisational**

Ways in which things are structured and arranged e.g., meetings, events

### **Attitudinal**

Individuals fear, ignorance and assumptions



# INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality is the acknowledgment that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression, and we must consider how identities (protected characteristics and not) interact with one another to make up the lived experience of the individual.

Intersectionality is theory from US scholar, Kimberle Crenshaw, who coined the term to help highlight the experiences of Black women. This theory joins the family of concepts and theories that have long looked at how systems of oppression interact with one another. For example, 'Triple Burden' was a term coined by Claudia Jones which spoke about the interconnections of race, gender and class.

In her seminal paper, *Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color*, Kimberle Crenshaw denotes 3 categories of intersectionality for the reader.

## **Structural intersectionality**

This looks at "...the ways in which the location of women of colour at the intersection of race and gender makes our actual experience of domestic violence ... qualitatively different than that of white women." (Crenshaw, 1991, p.1245)

## **Political intersectionality**

This looks at how feminist and anti-racists politics (as separate entities) can go on to further marginalise women of colour.

## **Representational intersectionality**

This looks the "cultural construction" of women of colour (Crenshaw, 1991, p.1245)1991, p.1245).

For further reading and understanding of Intersectionality, you can hear Kimberle Crenshaw speak more on this via her podcast Intersectionality Matters, and on her [TED talk](#).

# SUSTAINABLE CAREERS IN DANCE

Research into barriers to progression in dance for disabled people highlights that employers need to consider the **7 C's** to ensure sustainable dance careers:

- Chance
- Cost
- Community
- Competition
- Confidence
- Care
- Culture

You can find out more about this report [here](#).

## RESOURCES

### Disability focused:

- Economic Model of Disability - <https://www.purplegoatagency.com/insights/models-of-disability/#3-the-economic-model>
- Understanding Disability - <https://www.drakemusic.org/learning/resources-for-music-education/understanding-disability-blog-series/>
- Inclusive Language Guide - <https://www.onedanceuk.org/resources/inclusive-language-guide>
- Biopsychosocial Model of Disability - <https://www.insped.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Easing-the-Tension-between-Medical-and-Social-Models-of-Disability-The-Biopsychosocial-Model-of-Disability-Dec-23.pdf>
- Cultural Affirmation & Identity Model - <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/theoretical-models-part-6-understanding-social-model-yilmaz-cpacc>

### Intersectionality focused:

- Kimberle Crenshaw – Intersectionality & Gender Equality <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DW4HLgYPIA>
- Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence against Women of Color (1991) <https://blogs.law.columbia.edu/critique1313/files/2020/02/1229039.pdf>