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## 1. Disabled people, work and welfare

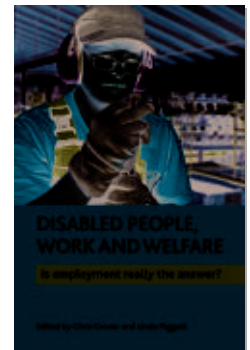
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# ONE

## Disabled people, work and welfare

*Chris Grover and Linda Piggott*

Encouraged by national and international pressures, there have been attempts in many countries in recent decades to increase the employment rates of disabled people. In Britain, for example, Labour governments between 1997 and 2010 developed several policies with such aims. These policies have been extended since 2010 by Britain's coalition government. The British example is instructive because it demonstrates the range of often contradictory considerations – economic, moral and social – that have framed various governments' desire to increase the participation of disabled people in wage work. These include:

- a concern with tackling the social exclusion – defined as exclusion from wage work – of disabled people;
- a concern with the human rights of disabled people – that facilitating access to paid employment is an important way in which commitments to human rights can be addressed;
- a concern with the numbers of people receiving out-of-work benefits, including disability benefits, because of the alleged effects that such benefits have on recipients' motivation for paid work and their wider attitudes (the so-called 'dependency culture');
- a concern with the intergenerational transmission of wage worklessness from disabled people to their offspring;
- the economic need to increase the number of people competing for wage work through what has been referred to as the 'effective labour supply' and the reserve army of labour to constrain wage inflation;
- economic redistribution – for example to tackle child and older people's poverty;
- a reorientation of welfare benefit support for disabled people that has emphasised a contractual, rather than rights-based, approach and which as a consequence has increased the expectation that in order to receive such support, individuals will have to act in a prosocial manner, most notably through attempts to (re)enter wage work at the earliest opportunity;

- a desire to save money, particularly but not exclusively after the financial crash of 2008 and the ensuing drive for austerity (see, for example, Secretary of State for Social Security and Minister for Welfare Reform, 1998; Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2010a, 2010b; for discussion, see Piggott and Grover, 2009; Bambra and Smith, 2010; Grover and Piggott, 2010, 2013; Houston and Lindsay, 2010; Deacon and Patrick, 2011; Garthwaite, 2011; Patrick et al, 2011; Lindsay and Houston, 2013).

Such issues, however, are not unique to Britain. In various configurations they have been demonstrated across the developed world – see, for example, Soldatic and Pini (2009, 2012) and Lantz and Marston (2012) on Australia; Caswell and Bendix Kleif (2013) on Denmark; Lunt and Horsfall (2013) on New Zealand; Ulmetsig (2013) on Sweden and van Berkel (2013) on the Netherlands. Furthermore, and encouraged through the work of supranational organisations (OECD, 2003, 2009; IMF, 2004, 2011a, 2011b), welfare benefit policies for disabled people have been problematised.

As Alan Roulstone highlights in Chapter Fourteen of this volume, the desire to increase the employment rate of disabled people produces a number of paradoxes. For example, Roulstone points to the fact that in recent years much effort has gone into incorporating disabled people into an economic system that they were ‘designed out’ of in earlier years (see, for instance, Chapters Four, Five and Eleven), and that while policies such as anti-discrimination legislation and reasonable adjustments might be welcomed, they are limited because they focus entirely on (and it could be argued they entrench) the belief that wage labour is an activity that all disabled people should engage with. There are other paradoxes that frame policy developments to increase the labour market participation of disabled people, most notably that their demands and those of the disabled people’s movement for their increased participation in paid employment have, at least in part, been used to justify the retrenching of out-of-work disability benefits (Piggott and Grover, 2009). This retrenching has included:

- making out-of-work (or income replacement) disability benefits more difficult to claim by developing new tests of incapacity to work, thereby diverting people to unemployment-related benefits (essentially redrawing what Stone, 1984, calls the disability category);
- eroding the absolute value of out-of-work disability benefits and their relative value to unemployment benefits;

- increasing conditionality so that all, except those deemed the most disabled (for example, in Britain those deemed to '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'; DWP, 2009, p 8), have to make efforts to hasten their (re)entry into wage work;
- increasing sanctioning, most notably the threat, and actual, withdrawal of income replacement benefits for those people who are adjudged not to have made suitable efforts to return to work.

Given the path dependency of welfare systems, it is not the case that all countries, even those that we focus on in *Disabled people, work and welfare*, have developed all these approaches, but, nevertheless, many have developed some (or all) of them over recent decades, or are currently discussing ways of doing so. In this context, while the detail of policy developments varies between countries, it is also the case that in many countries in recent years, it has become more difficult for disabled people to claim income replacement benefits when they are not in wage work. Indeed, in many countries it is disabled people who seem to be the main targets of welfare 'reform' and cost savings (see, for instance, Chapter Three of this volume on Australia). In Britain, for example, it has been estimated that between 2013/14 and 2017/18, disabled people will lose £28 billion of their collective benefit income (Demos, 2013). The consequence is that disabled people in many countries face an economically uncertain future and the consequences of this (for example, increased rates of poverty, greater levels of exclusion, increased isolation, and poorer physical and mental health).

### **The approach of *Disabled people, work and welfare***

The origins of *Disabled people, work and welfare* were in a symposium hosted by Lancaster University's Centre for Disability Research in 2012. The symposium was entitled 'Is work fit for disabled people?' and was intended to address some of the issues that the mainstream social administrative approaches at the time did not really engage with. Such approaches were particularly concerned with whether disabled people were fit for wage work and what needed to be done on the demand and supply sides to make labour markets fit to employ disabled people (see, for example, Beatty et al, 2009; Houston and Lindsay, 2010; Kemp and Davidson, 2010; Lindsay and Dutton, 2010). For the editors of *Disabled people, work and welfare*, such approaches left

unanswered important questions, for they lacked engagement with concerns raised by disability studies scholars who had been questioning the nature of wage work and its relationship to disabled people for a number of years (see, for example, Abberley, 1996a, 1996b; Oliver and Barnes, 1998; Roulstone, 2000, 2002; Taylor, 2004; Barnes and Mercer, 2005; Roulstone and Barnes, 2005).

While we appreciate the importance of social administrative-type analysis and arguments and, indeed, *Disabled people, work and welfare* engages with these, we also thought that there was a need to critically engage with the notion that wage work is an activity that disabled people (Piggott and Grover, 2009; Grover and Piggott, 2013) and non-disabled people (Grover and Piggott, 2013) should be forced to engage with on the threat of impoverishment. This concern was essentially driven by the social model of disability's emphasis on the social basis of disabled people's disadvantage and oppression, rather than their being located in the functional impairments of disabled people (for example, Finkelstein, 1980; Gleeson, 1999; Oliver, 2009). If the basis of disabled people's exclusion from wage work is misunderstood as merely being a consequence of their individual characteristics and capabilities, the result, at least in Britain, has been poorly administered and targeted welfare benefits (North Lancashire Citizens Advice Bureau, 2012; Pearlman et al, 2012) and the very poor treatment of disabled people in the process of determining the disability category for the purposes of out-of-work benefits (We Are Spartacus, 2012, 2013).<sup>1</sup> In this context, therefore, *Disabled people, work and welfare*:

- critically engages with dominant discourses and policy developments for disabled people that are focused on getting them into wage work;
- critically questions the institution of wage work through sociological and philosophical approaches which suggest that alternatives are available;
- develops the knowledge of social policy approaches taken in several countries to address wage worklessness among disabled people, the ideas that inform these approaches and the impacts of the policies.

## Understanding disabled people, work and welfare

*Disabled people, work and welfare* brings together a group of academics at various points in their careers, from various countries and various disciplines. While the book focuses predominantly on Britain, relationships between work, welfare and disabled people in other European nations are also examined (Poland in Chapter Six and

Denmark in Chapter Eight). Australia (Chapter Three) and North America (the United States [US]; in Chapter Seven and Canada in Chapter Twelve) are also represented in the book. Constituent countries of Britain are also focused on. Chapter Nine, for example, focuses on the experiences of young deaf and hard of hearing people in Scotland of accessing and doing wage work, while Chapter Eleven discusses an employment support programme in the North of England.

The academic disciplines of disability studies, public health, social policy and sociology are represented in a multidisciplinary approach to understanding employment and welfare benefit policies as they relate to disabled people. While each chapter could be read as an analysis of the relationships between work, welfare and disability in the country on which it focuses, we hope that the book will be read as a whole. This will help to demonstrate the similarities and differences between the countries examined in their attempts to address a range of issues related to disabled people, work and welfare that affects them all.

### *Work and disabled people*

Work occupies a substantial proportion of most people's lives and has often been taken as a symbol of personal value: work provides status, economic reward, a demonstration of religious faith and means to realize self-potential. But work also embodies the opposite evaluations: labour can be back-breaking and mentally incapacitating; labour camps are punishment centres; work is a punishment for original sin and something we would rather avoid. (Grint, 2005, p 1)

As Grint's comments suggest, defining what 'work' is is complex. For example, he criticises Arendt's (1958) distinction between 'labour' ('bodily activity designed to ensure survival in which the results are consumed immediately'; Grint, 2005, p 7) and 'work' ('activity undertaken with our hands which gives objectivity to the world'; Grint, 2005, p 7) as lacking relevance to both industrial and pre-industrial societies. 'Work' has also been seen as having transformative capacity, an activity that alters nature. In many ways, this approach is taken in radical political economy where work is recognised as an interaction between individuals and nature, and wage work is recognised as a commodified version of that activity (for a discussion in relation to disabled people, see Abberley, 1996a, 1996b). Such distinctions are problematic because, for example, it is not easy to delineate which activities might be considered as not helping to transform nature (Grint, 2005). Grint

(2005) argues that ‘work’ should be understood as a construct of often competing discourses. Those competing discourses, however, lead to different material expressions and consequences affecting those people who might be considered to be ‘workers’ or ‘workless’.

In *Disabled people, work and welfare*, we are concerned with what, at least in a party-political and policy sense, might be described as a hegemonic discourse that equates work with wage work and/or other kinds of paid employment (for example self-employment). It is not that all the authors in this volume agree with the prominence of wage work in policy terms (see, for example, Chapters Twelve to Fourteen), but in policy terms it is wage work that is *the* concern. Recent policy developments, for example – such as the introduction of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) in Britain, the shifting of disabled people from Disability Pension to Newstart in Australia (Chapter Three) and the increasing conditionality within the Danish welfare system (Chapter Eight), have all been aimed at ‘incentivising’ (according to economic liberals) or ‘forcing’ (according to social liberals) disabled people into paid employment.

It is not the case that wage work is unknown to disabled people. It was estimated in the United Kingdom (UK), that in 2012 just under a half (46.3%) of disabled people were in wage work, although some disabled people, for instance learning disabled people, are particularly disadvantaged in terms of employment (see Chapter Ten). What this means, however, is that the majority (53.7%) of disabled people were not in wage work. Moreover, the figures compare poorly with those for non-disabled people, of whom three quarters (76.4%) were in wage work.<sup>2</sup> In the UK there is, then, an ‘employment gap’ of 31.1 percentage points between disabled and non-disabled people. However, the UK is not unique in this regard. Across the countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, for instance, in the mid-2000s a little over half of disabled people were employed compared with over 70% of non-disabled people (OECD, 2010). In Britain, however, between 1998 and 2012 the proportion of disabled people in employment increased by 10 percentage points. The reasons for this relate to the economic expansion experienced in Britain between the late 1980s and the 2008 financial crash, supporting the evidence which suggests that disabled people are more likely to be employed when labour markets are tight (Beatty et al, 2000; Beatty and Fothergill, 2002, 2005, 2013).

The number of people in employment, however, is a crude measure of the success or otherwise of policies that are supposed to help address the disadvantages that disabled people face. Equally important are the

nature of employment that disabled people are in and, particularly relevant to contemporary debates about employment, whether it protects them from poverty and social exclusion. There are several reasons to assume that it does not.

First, disabled people in Britain are more likely to be in part-time employment compared with non-disabled people. In 2011, for example, a third (33.8%) of disabled people compared with a quarter (24.7%) of non-disabled people worked part time. This observation can be interpreted as being positive. As Jones (cited in Meager and Hill, 2005, p 16) notes: 'Evidence from the Labour Force Survey suggests that part-time employment provides an important way of accommodating a work-limiting disability rather than reflecting marginalisation of the disabled by employers.' However, part-time employment is also problematic because it is less well paid compared with full-time employment. For example, the median hourly wage for part-time employees in the UK is less than two thirds that of full-time employees (£8.29 compared with £13.03 in April 2013, respectively) (ONS, 2013, table 3). Moreover, wage data suggest that disabled people are, on average, likely to receive lower wages than non-disabled people. In 2005, for instance, people with a work-limiting disability earned 13.2% less per hour than non-disabled people (£9.55 compared with £10.81 per hour, respectively) (Meager and Hill, 2005, table 29, UK figures).

Second, evidence suggests that the 'low pay, no pay cycle', whereby people move between periods of no and poorly paid wage work, is exacerbated by poor health (Kemp and Davidson, 2010). It is known, for instance, that people who claim ESA in Britain tend to be disadvantaged in labour markets because they tend to be in non-standard or 'bad jobs' (for example, Davidson and Kemp, 2008; Kemp and Davidson, 2010). These are jobs denoted by poor terms and conditions, such as low pay, little access to occupational sick pay and pensions, and no recognised career or promotion ladder (Davidson and Kemp, 2008, p 225).

### *Productivity and barriers to wage work*

As we have noted, disabled people are disadvantaged in wage work in terms of the proportion in work, the proportion who work part time and the level of their wages compared with non-disabled people. There are various ways of explaining these observations, but for the purposes of *Disabled people, work and welfare* the focus is on social explanations of such disadvantage, even though in policy terms that disadvantage



is predominantly individualised as a supply-side problem (a problem of disabled people's attitudes, character, skills and potential economic contribution).

The issue relates to the social reaction to disabled people and the barriers – for instance, the physical environment, the rhythms and patterns of wage work and the attitudes of employers and co-workers to hiring and working with disabled people – that this creates for disabled people in accessing wage work. As we have noted, such arguments are drawn from the social model of disability and while a great deal has been written about the barriers to wage work faced by disabled people, it has recently been argued by Oliver (2013, p 1025) that the 'social model has ... barely made a dent in the employment system because, although it has identified many of the disabling barriers in the international labour market and with the behaviour of employers, the solutions offered have usually been based on an individual model of disability'. We see this in many social welfare systems where the focus is on functional capability to do wage work and on rehabilitating those disabled people whose capabilities are deemed to be outwith of labour markets. The focus on capability for wage work is often used, as noted below in our discussion of conditionality, to threaten the impoverishment of disabled people.

For the social model of disability, however, it is argued (although this is denied – see Oliver, 2009) that there are difficulties with dealing with the effects (for instance the pain and limitations) that particular impairments – 'variations in the structure, function and workings of bodies which, in Western culture, are medically defined as significant abnormalities or pathologies' (Thomas, 2007, p 8) – might bring. For *Disabled people, work and welfare* the relationship between disability and impairment is most important when the reasons for the disadvantaged labour market provision of disabled people are considered.

As we have noted, the thrust of the social model of disability is that disabled people are disadvantaged by socially embedded barriers. In employment terms, however, the explanation of why disabled people are disadvantaged is complex because of the individual attributes and social structures and processes that help to explain people's location in labour markets; in other words, how far the labour market position of disabled people reflects 'their skill, qualifications, work experience and any occupational or sectoral segregation which exists, and how far it reflects discriminatory behaviour on the part of employers' (Meager and Hill, 2005, p 27). Of course, many of the so-called individual characteristics (for example, skills, qualifications and work experience) are also socially embedded (see, for example, Chapter Nine). The

evidence suggests that the employment and wage disadvantage faced by disabled people is, at least in part, explained by employer discrimination.

That discrimination, however, is arguably located within the economic imperatives of capitalism. For instance, in a quantitative study of employer attitudes to disabled people, Davidson (2011) found that one of the concerns that brought ‘uncertainties’ to employing disabled people was potential risks to productivity and, therefore, profitability. In this sense, impairment can be understood in a social sense. This is a point that Abberley (1996a, 1996b) makes. For Abberley, there is little doubt that the oppression and disadvantage that disabled people face was, historically, located in a form of production that in Roulstone’s terms (Chapter Fourteen, this volume) ‘designed disabled people out’. However, locating concerns with wage work within the preventative and curing characteristics of mainstream medicine, Abberley argues that there will always be disabled people who are not as productive in an economic sense as non-disabled people (see also Barnes, 1999, 2000). While, as we have noted, Abberley does not deny that materialist understandings provide a useful explanation of the antecedents of disabled people’s disadvantage, he problematises the argument that the solution to this will be in greater access to wage work. This is because such a solution will only be ‘insofar as there is a happy conjunction between an individual’s impairment, technology and socially-valued activity’ (Abberley, 1996a, p 14). He therefore sees the need for an alternative that ‘rejects work as crucially definitional of social membership’ (Abberley, 1996a, p 14). While he does not reject the need for policies to support disabled people into paid work, he does not see such work as being the enabling activity that many do.

### *Conditionality: enforcing labour discipline*

As we have noted, in recent years more has been demanded of disabled people claiming income replacement benefits to hasten their (re)entry into wage work in Britain and other nations. In many senses, this has been part of a wider trend in welfare systems towards the re-commodification of paid employment (see Streeck, 2007). Conditionality has been central to this process (Grover, 2012). As Dwyer (2004, p 269) notes, a ‘principle of conditionality holds that eligibility to certain basic, publicly provided, welfare entitlements should be dependent on an individual first agreeing to meet particular compulsory duties or patterns of behaviour’.

In the case of developments in welfare and (wage) work policies for disabled people in Britain, such a view was reflected in the Green

Paper which announced the then Labour government's intention to introduce ESA. It noted, for instance, that ESA would be:

paid to most people in return for undertaking work-related interviews, agreeing an action plan and, as resources allow, participating in some form of work-related activity. If benefit claimants do not fulfil these agreed responsibilities the ... benefit will be reduced in a series of slices ultimately to the level of Jobseeker's Allowance.<sup>3</sup> (Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, 2006, p 4)

An approach to welfare policy premised upon the enforcement of conditionality, according to Deacon (2002, 2004a, 2004b; see also Chapter Two, this volume), can be justified through at least three broad approaches:

- the contractualist;
- the paternalistic;
- the mutualist.

Deacon (2004b, p 915) argues that the *contractualist* justification for welfare conditionality was the most visible during the years of New Labour governments in the 1990s and 2000s in Britain and 'rests upon the argument that it is reasonable to use welfare to enforce obligations where this is part of a broader contract between government and claimants. If the government keeps its part of the bargain, then the claimants should keep theirs'. In the case of income replacement benefits for disabled people, the provision of the benefit and 'support' services to help them (re)enter paid work are considered by the state to be its side of the contract and, hence, it expects disabled people to engage with the services provided as their side of the welfare contract.

The basic premise of the *paternalistic* justification is that conditionality is in the interests of the recipients of state benefits or services and is most closely associated with the American political scientist, Lawrence Mead (1992; Patrick et al, 2011). We can see this in regard to the increasing conditionality being applied to the income replacement benefits for disabled people. The argument, at least in part, is that long-term benefit 'dependency' erodes either the self-confidence or aspiration, or both, of disabled people not in wage work so that they are unable to take on a job. As a consequence, and like any other wage workless person, they require a combination of "help and hassle", reinforced

by sanctions for those who do not co-operate' in order to get them into work (Deacon, 1997, p xiv).

The *mutualist* justification for conditionality is associated with communitarians and is premised upon the idea that responsibilities 'arise from social involvements or commitments. Our lives touch others in many ways, for good or ill, and we are accountable for the consequences' (Selznick, 1998, p 62). In terms of applying conditions to benefits for disabled people, we can point to welfare policies as being one of many arenas in which the lives of individuals affect others because, for example, they have to be paid through collectivised forms of revenue (taxation). Because of this, for example, it should be expected that disabled people should make efforts to reduce the financial cost they present to taxpayers. Generally speaking, this takes the form of the expectation that such people prepare themselves for wage work. Any arguments that they should not do so because of the barriers that they face in attempting to secure paid work, would not be countenanced in the mutualist approach. This is because the responsibility to prepare for, and eventually seek, paid work is held to exist independently of their likely success in securing paid work.

There are, however, also powerful arguments that critique the idea that the responsibilities conferred upon individuals needing access to state-sponsored welfare policies should be enforced through conditionality. Deacon (2004, p 913) points to two of these: first, that conditionality 'rests upon a false analysis of the problems it seeks to remedy' and, second, that 'the effect of imposing behavioural conditions will be to worsen rather than eliminate the problem'. In the first instance, it could be argued, for example, that the imposition of conditionality in ESA is premised upon the mistaken assumption that people are disabled by their impairment, rather than the structures of capitalism that privilege the non-disabled over the disabled body (Oliver, 1990; Thomas, 2007). In the second instance, we might point to arguments which suggest that the imposition of conditionality in benefits for disabled people, rather than encouraging a return to work, will have the opposite effect, for example by exacerbating impairments related to mental health (see Mitchell and Woodfield, 2008; Hudson et al, 2009; NACAB, 2009).

A third set of issues is essentially pragmatic in nature and relates to the effectiveness of conditionality in helping wage workless people compete for, and take, wage work. The evidence for increased conditionality having a substantial impact on bettering the employment position of disabled people is not particularly convincing (see Chapters Four and Five, this volume). So, for example, in their review of evidence from

around the world, Griggs and Evans (2010, p 5) found that sanctions linked to employment-related conditionality 'strongly reduce benefit use and raise exits from benefits'. However, they also note that exits from benefit receipt are not the only measure of the success of conditionality and sanctions. In contrast, on other measures, there are worrying trends. In particular, conditionality and sanctions have 'generally unfavourable effects on longer-term outcomes (earnings over time, child welfare, job quality) and spill-over effects (i.e. crime rates)' (Griggs and Evans, 2010, p 5). In other words, the use of conditionality and sanctions may encourage people to leave benefits, but at the expense of the longevity and quality of jobs they are able to access. These findings are consistent with what we have seen described as the 'low pay, no pay cycle'.

## **Outline of the book**

Chapters Two and Three (Part One) focus on the ways in which disability benefit receipt in Britain and Australia has reflected and helped to constitute the shift in both countries to make disabled people do more to enter wage work. They demonstrate the increasingly work-related conditional nature of disability benefits, and discuss political and intellectual ways of understanding the application of conditionality to out-of-work benefits for disabled people. In Chapter Two, for example, Ruth Patrick and Deborah Fenney discuss the relationships between welfare conditionality and disabled people in Britain. The chapter examines a small-scale study by the authors into attitudes towards conditionality of both disabled and non-disabled people. Their research suggests that disabled and non-disabled participants did not agree on the appropriateness of sanctions for disability benefit recipients, with the latter, for example, pointing to the potential of conditionality to exacerbate impairment while ignoring the barriers that disabled people face in accessing paid work. Drawing on the work of White (2003), Patrick and Fenney conclude that welfare conditionality in Britain is currently incompatible with social justice.

Chapter Three sees Alan Morris, Shaun Wilson and Karen Soldatic focus on the tightening of eligibility rules for disability benefits in Australia over recent years. They examine the political and policy basis for these changes and highlight how they are designed to shift people onto Newstart (Australia's unemployment benefit). The chapter then goes on to consider a qualitative research project carried out by the authors which focused on the lived experience of Newstart recipients experiences which the authors argue are denoted by a life of 'hard

yakka'. The effect of disability benefits policy in Australia has involved, the authors suggest, a subversion of the disability movement's claims for decent work through a policy framework mainly interested in 'jobs' and 'partial ability to work' as mechanisms to reduce benefit levels and availability for disabled people.

Chapters Four to Eight (Part Two) focus on aspects of policies in various countries that are supposed to support disabled people in accessing paid employment. The chapters take a critical approach to those policies, highlighting issues that arise because of economic, ideological, political and policy problems in designing work and welfare policies for disabled people. For instance, in Chapter Four, Bruce Stafford examines market-based programmes that seek to assist disabled people in receipt of income replacement benefits to move towards or into paid work in Britain. He provides an overview of past wage work-related (the New Deal for Disabled People and Pathways to Work) and, by drawing on the ideas of adverse selection and moral hazard, he argues that disabled people are among the least well served by marketised employment service programmes. In Chapter Five, Dan Heap extends this theme in his focus on the Work Programme in Britain. Using data from interviews with current and former government officials, he finds that the current system of employment support is often unable to meet the needs of disabled claimants. He concludes that the justification – that more employment support for disabled people would be provided – for the more controversial aspects of welfare reform has not been met because of the failure of previous specialist employment services, changed labour market conditions and the inability of the Work Programme to provide the specialist and sustained support that disabled claimants require in accessing wage work.

In Chapter Six, Monika Struck-Peregończyk examines changes in disability employment policy in Poland since 1991. She suggests that, despite these changes, employers are reluctant to take on disabled workers, fearing lower productivity and higher costs. Many disabled people in Poland, therefore, endure low-paid, low-skill and low-status employment. This puts families with a disabled member at higher risk of poverty because, Struck-Peregończyk argues, employment policies for disabled people in Poland remain ineffective.

Chapter Seven focuses on the US. Randall Owen, Robert Gould and Sarah Parker Harris indicate in this chapter that in the US, market-based solutions are preferred to publicly funded systems of welfare, so that individuals have responsibility for their own welfare. The chapter uses competing discourses – neoliberalism and rights – to understand how

recent reforms (the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act 1999 and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act 2010) relate to disabled people. They argue that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act 2010 in particular has added a complex layer to welfare eligibility, but also provides the possibility of expanding the employment of disabled people who traditionally had to choose between holding out for wage work that either had employer-sponsored healthcare or was so poorly paid that it allowed access to Medicaid.

In Chapter Eight, David Etherington and Jo Ingold examine active labour market policies in Denmark over the last 15 or so years. In particular, they focus on the influence of social dialogue and suggest that in the Danish model it has been important in supporting disabled people to enter and remain in paid work. However, Etherington and Ingold argue that social dialogue has been compromised by the shift towards workfarist policies in Denmark. They conclude that while the move towards co-production is important in incorporating the voice of disabled people, the availability of quality, sustainable jobs for disabled people in difficult labour market conditions remains a challenge.

Chapters Nine to Eleven (Part Three) focus on various issues related to disabled people accessing and keeping paid employment. In Chapter Nine, Mariela Fordyce and Sheila Riddell examine their research with young deaf and hard of hearing people in Scotland. Their research found that experience of discrimination in recruitment made some young people fearful of disclosing their impairment, while success in employment could depend on finding work through family, friends and wider social networks. Jobseekers with high socioeconomic status often depended on this to facilitate entry into professions via internships and work experience, meaning that young people from less privileged backgrounds were doubly disadvantaged by disabling barriers and less advantaged social networks.

In Chapter Ten, Sarah Woodin indicates that in Britain learning disabled people value the opportunity to work, but that they risk exploitation and increased competition for satisfying work. Learning disabled people tend to have an employment rate that is lower than disabled people generally and, in the main, the work they do tends to be relatively low skilled. Current working practices, such as zero hours contracts, may have further disadvantaged learning disabled employees. Woodin argues that where workplaces do manage to offer the conditions needed by learning disabled people, there is evidence that they hold down challenging and interesting jobs.

In Chapter Eleven, Jon Warren, Kayleigh Garthwaite and Clare Bamba examine what happens to people in England after they enter

employment and what challenges they can face in retaining it. They examine these issues through an evaluation of an in-work support service in the North of England and demonstrate the intertwined issues that disabled people face in maintaining their employment status. The authors suggest that the almost exclusive focus on employability in employment support programmes is misplaced and that it would be helpful if they assisted with job retention by tackling health and debt issues, low levels of confidence and working arrangements.

Chapters Twelve to Fourteen (Part Four) examine empirical and theoretical work in order to question whether wage work in the open market is the only way that the contribution and social inclusion of disabled people should be understood. In Chapter Twelve, Edward Hall and Robert Wilton consider the hardening of attitudes in relation to welfare payments and the perceived inactivity of disabled people. Drawing on research from Canada and Britain, they examine whether there are potential alternatives for disabled people to working in the open market. In the case of Canada, they focus on the potential of social enterprises to offer flexible and accommodating conditions of employment and, in the case of Britain, participation in volunteering and the creative arts as a means of enabling disabled people to challenge dominant assumptions about their place in society.

Chapter Thirteen sees Chris Grover and Linda Piggott explore the ideas of the right to work and the right not to work. They argue that by its nature, wage work is exploitative and disabling, and that the current thrust of policies to oblige disabled people to work is problematic because not only do the policies privilege one activity (wage work) over other activities that people might choose to do, they also remove one of the central demands – for control and choice over their lives – of the disabled people's movement. In this context, and following Taylor (2004), Grover and Piggott argue that a right not to work is as defensible as a right to work.

In Chapter Fourteen, Alan Roulstone explores current developments in work and welfare policies for disabled people by focusing on longer-run developments in the ways that work has been defined. He argues that with industrialisation, work became associated with wage work, a narrowly defined parameter for productive capacity that only values certain forms of work and productivity. In contrast, Roulstone suggests that a humane society has to acknowledge diversity in all its forms and foster a critique of narrowly defined systems that value only certain forms of work and productivity.



Chris Grover and Linda Piggott draw together themes from Parts One to Four of *Disabled people, work and welfare* in the conclusion to the book – Part Five (Chapter Fifteen). This chapter focuses on three issues:

- the nature of wage work as a social process;
- the difficulties for disabled people that come from the policy push to commodify their labour power;
- the difficulties there are in the claim that wage work provides for disabled people a secure income that is above the poverty level.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> For example, the number of appeals against ESA decisions increased by 67% (from 279,000 to 465,500) between 2009/10 and 2012/13, while the number of disposals (that is, the number of appeals that actually got to a tribunal) increased by 280% (from 70,535 to 268,157) over the same period ([www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130717/text/130717w0002.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130717/text/130717w0002.htm)). Furthermore, a substantial proportion (43% in the quarter from July to September 2013) of appeals against ESA decisions was found in favour of the applicant (Ministry of Justice, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Figures on employment rates are from <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disability-statistics-and-research/disability-facts-and-figures.php#imp>

<sup>3</sup> Jobseeker's Allowance is the main out-of-work benefit for people administratively defined as unemployed in Britain.

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