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Ableism, Accommodation, Access

Music and Disability and Music Pedagogy Study Groups of the American Musicological Society

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To begin with, I want to talk about how we have traditionally framed disability in higher education and to do that I will use the metaphor and the reality of the steep steps.

At U of Toronto, every year students participate in an annual Great Barrier Hunt. The event aims to raise awareness of accessibility issues on campus. Using the format of a scavenger hunt, participants perform an accessibility audit of U of T buildings. Such activities highlight the ways that traditional campuses are designed only for a certain range of bodies, and this is certainly the case at U of T or on my own campus at Waterloo. When stairs are also central to traditions on campus, they can also exclude students with disabilities from the key aesthetic, cultural, artistic, and intellectual centers and messages of university life.

This image, from the movie *Monster's University*, shows how such steep stairs have become part of the central mythos of University life. Campuses are seen as, in a way, beautiful, elaborate obstacle courses. The obstacles are steeped in history and tradition, but they also, every day, exact a toll on bodies that don't fit these traditions.

Not only have people with disabilities been traditionally seen as objects of study in higher education, rather than as teachers or students; not only has disability been a rhetorically-produced stigma which could be applied to other marginalized groups to keep them out of the university, but the University is seen as performing the societal and cultural function of pulling some people slowly up the stairs, and it arranges others at the bottom of this steep incline. I want you to think about how this "steep steps" mentality has shaped your own education. Who and what has helped you up the stairs? Where were they steepest, most difficult, for you? What pushed you back? Where did you start on the stairs, based on your own privilege or lack of privilege?

Of course, the reality is that disability is always present—there is no perfect body or mind.

There is no normal body or mind. More literally, the US is a country within which, the CDC tells

us, 25% of the population is affected by disability. We live in an age when, despite physical/medical efforts to avoid it and psychological/medical efforts to disavow and pathologize it, we will all become disabled at some point in our lives. Therefore, we all need to care about disability, now. In the United States, according to the most recent data, 19.5% of students have a disability (NCES 2019). For 40% of these students, the disability is mental illness or depression. For 26.4% of these students the disability (or one of the disabilities) is ADD/ADHD. The university sorts the population by a medicalized and legalistic definition of “ability” as effectively now as it ever has. Universities continue to function to keep certain groups of individuals out of the work force and away from status positions, and away from knowledge and dialogue and power, and not just through admissions. Thirteen percent of U.S. citizens 25 and older with a disability have a bachelor’s degree or higher. This compares with 31 percent for those with no disability (Census). While, recently, more students with disabilities are enrolling than in previous eras in the United States, just 41 percent of students with learning disabilities complete their postsecondary education, compared to 52 percent of the U.S. general population (Cortiella and Horowitz; Walpole and Chaskes). Using a six-year graduation metric at four-year schools, only 49.5% of students with disabilities completed their University degrees (Welding, 2023).

Disabled students are also likely to have up to 60 percent more student debt by the time they graduate (lawsuit in Canada right now). These statistics are skewed because they only account for the students who receive accommodations. In the United States, some studies show that two-thirds of disabled college students “don’t receive accommodations simply because their colleges don’t know about their disabilities” (Grasgreen, n.p.). Those who do seek accommodations are likely to do so only in their third or fourth year of school. We have a generation of students who are much more likely to experience higher education as disabling, and much less likely to seek help (NCHA 2018). In the United States, while 94 percent of learning-disabled high school students get assistance, only 17 percent of college students with learning disabilities do (Krupnick, n.p.). What is telling these students not to seek the simple resources that helped them before? It is very common for students to experience greater barriers in university than they experienced in high school. Still, thousands and thousands of students don’t seek help. We have a crisis of help-seeking around disability.

Nancy Fraser has identified a “crisis of care” in higher education, linked to notions of “time poverty, ‘family–work balance’, and ‘social depletion,’” and resulting from pressures that “squeeze social capacities” for caring, connection, and community. Over time, “carelessness” in higher education has been exacerbated by the ways we value competitive individualism and

entrepreneurialism (Lynch). Although the economy relies on “activities of provisioning, care-giving and interaction that produce and maintain social bonds,” care work in higher education is usually a site of struggle, partly because it is time consuming, invisible, and inequitably distributed (Fraser; Lynch; Hughes et al.). However, with the onset of the pandemic, we paid more attention to the need for care. That does not mean that our workplaces have become any less “careless” – especially when we have a generation of young people who are experiencing disability differently and more intensely than in the past, and yet also asking for help less?

Something is happening when students confront the metaphorical “steep steps” of higher education across North America. The message that they get is that it is not OK to ask for help, that they might even be cheating the system by asking for help. Outright discrimination towards students with disabilities due to accusations of cheating have been reported widely in higher education research (e.g. Nieminen and Eaton; Nieminen; Pfeifer et al.). This has reportedly led to students deciding not to disclose their disability or apply for adjustments for fear of discrimination (Ashcroft et. al.; Mullins and Preyde; Aubrecht and La Monica). I know that disability services professionals are trying hard to get help to students, but I think we can expect to continue to see this trend, in part because the culture of higher education works against the ethic of help-seeking.

In 2012 the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) conducted a national survey of college students living with mental health conditions to learn about their experiences in school. NAMI designed the survey to hear directly from students about whether schools are meeting their needs and what improvements are needed to support their academic experience (2012). More than 45 percent of those who stopped attending college because of mental health related reasons did not receive accommodations. Additionally, 50 percent of them did not access mental health services and supports. Students living with mental health conditions can request accommodations that allow them to participate equally in their education. When asked if they know how to access accommodations for their mental health condition, most survey respondents said “yes.” But 57 percent of survey respondents did not request accommodations from their school. And an increasing number of students with mental health conditions attend colleges and universities across the country, so we need to take these issues seriously. We see that students are reticent to seek help in high school, then even more reticent to seek help in an undergrad degree, even if they got help in high school. Finally, they are even less likely to seek help in a post-graduate program, again even if they got help in undergrad.

Of course, there are many reasons students won't seek help. The economics of accommodation might tell us that universities get the outcomes they pay for. A relatively dated Association of Higher Education and Disability (2008) survey of U.S. disability services offices revealed that "the average annual DS office budget was \$257,289 (SD=\$306,471)" (Harbour, 41). That's the entire office budget. That is the very lowest end for what a Division I assistant football coach at a large American university makes – a little more in a year than the average school spends on all students with disabilities. Football coaches are also seeing their salaries climb. The same can't be said for these office budgets. The ratio at these offices in the US was one staff member per 80 students with disabilities (Harbour, 52). Offices of disability services are thus clearly overworked and underfunded. Thus we shouldn't really be surprised that the number of college and university students identified as having disabilities is drastically below the average within the general population. These offices are already working above capacity, and may have restraints that minimize the supports they can offer and the ways that students might be able to access assistance. This underfunding also tells the rest of the university that disability doesn't matter. The truth is, for most faculty, their engagement with disability begins and ends with the statement in their syllabus referring students to this office. And that tells them, and their students, that disability is someone else's concern. The result, then, is that the steps are particularly steep for students with disabilities.

Further, in a world in which the prevalence of overt and systemic racism needs to be foregrounded in all that we do, we must understand that these steep steps disproportionately impact students of color. Many of us have been working hard to address racism on campus, and I know that this has been a widespread issue at schools across North America. There have been specific incidents, but there are also systemic issues. For example, we know that "African American males are disproportionately placed into categories of special education that are associated with extremely poor outcomes" at the K-12 level (Losen and Gillespie). Yet education researcher Joy Banks has shown that "African American students with disabilities experience difficulty accessing disability support services and appropriate accommodations" at colleges and universities (28). So how can it be that for the same group of students, a disability diagnosis at the K-12 level can be hastily applied, and will speed them into the school-to-prison pipeline, and at the postsecondary level is so much more difficult to get, and then there are such large barriers to getting help? As Keith A. Mayes' excellent new book *The Unteachables* shows, educators have "carv[ed] out privileged white spaces" in every disability classification we have seen over the last 5 decades (5). "White student protection and advancement" inflects every

disability diagnosis a student might see from kindergarten to grade 12, and therefore these forms of “resegregation” overwrite disability on our campuses as well (Mayes 5).

Think as well about the current context for international students in North America: this world is changing, a lot. These students are now inextricably looped into immigration and work via processes that are deeply medicalized and often discriminatory. International students are also dealing with new financial requirements within a declining economy. Acting like the accommodation processes we have in place could possibly be serving them adequately would be extremely naïve.

Next, I am going to introduce the concept of the retrofit.

To **retrofit** is to add a component or accessory to something that has been already manufactured or built. This **retrofit** does not necessarily *make* the product function, does not necessarily fix a faulty product, but it acts as a sort of correction—it adds a modernized part in place of, or in addition to, an older part. Often, the retrofit allows a product to measure up to new regulations. Automobiles or factories are consistently retrofitted with new parts so that they can pass new emissions guidelines.

We all became much more aware of retro-fitting in the Covid-19 era. Our restaurants and businesses had plexiglass walls built, tables and chairs were placed a measured distance apart. There were new laws and regulations designed to both make spaces safer, but also to allow them to remain open. Perhaps rightly so, these retrofits were criticized. Some were wise and well-thought-out, others seem simply performative, like a mask over one’s mouth, but not over one’s nose. On University campuses, retrofits can include ramps that are placed around the back of a building, or buildings in which the only elevator is also a freight elevator. On the syllabus and within the curriculum, we similarly create access, but only in minimal ways, and often in ways that can actually further stigmatize students.

One way to think about this might be to look at a Tweet posted by a student named Sarah-Marie Da Silva from the University of Hull. She posted the picture on Twitter, showing how she is forced to take in her Zoology lectures. When she arrives at the lecture, there is only one place for her to sit, in the doorway at the back of the room. That doorway has a push-button entrance and an automatic door, allowing her to get into the room. But when she gets in, there is nowhere to go. This is what so many of the physical but also curricular and cultural layouts within higher education actually look like: disabled students may be there, may be able to get into the room, but their access is so clearly an afterthought, their participation is already minimized. No wonder we are losing so many disabled students. In this example, the University

has paid thousands of dollars to install a push-button door, maybe even to label this as an accessible room. But in practice, the room is anything but accessible to Sarah-Marie.

This is a powerful example of how retrofits work. The fix may not even make life easier or increase access, and changes are made only when they are forced. Of course, retrofits like this are never value-neutral: with steps so steeped in tradition, so connotative of the North American upward climb of elitism (especially on campus), ramps and elevators threaten the very idea of higher education. Also, despite the fact that equal access could be achieved relatively simply, the expense and labour of access marks accessibility out as difficult, elaborate and costly when it needn't be. This reinforces the idea that access for most people is free, and somehow the access needs of disabled people are extensive and expensive.

And accessible entrances are often hidden around the backs of buildings, leading into freight entrances and they are just the first step of a complicated dance through physical spaces to find the hidden but accessible ways to get into them and move through them, while the stairs are central to the architecture, the sociality, and the flow through a space and its most important areas. The funny thing about ramps is that they rarely ever replace stairs. We have ramps, most usually in academic architecture, *so that we can keep the stairs*. And I think that is actually a powerful metaphor about accessibility and higher education. So much of the access we create doesn't replace the old, inaccessible way of doing things. It just creates a longer path alongside the old one. The retrofitted ramp allows the old, exclusive space – or practice – to continue to be dominant and central.

Too often, we *react* to diversity instead of planning for it. We acknowledge that our students come from different places, and that they are headed in different directions, yet this does little to alter the vectors of our own pedagogy. Most often, the only time disability is spoken or written about in class is in the final line of the syllabus, when students are referred to the Office of Disability Services should they desire assistance. The message to students is that disability is a supplementary concern—and then that it is not the teachers' concern, not really a part of the course; it's at the back door of the syllabus. Having that statement there allows us to *not* change the dominant way of doing things, regardless how inaccessible that dominant way is.

We know it has traditionally been difficult to access documentation of disability. How do undocumented students, or international students, access diagnoses? What about stigmatized diagnoses?

Students have a right to retrofitted accommodations in our classes. But I am here today to say that's not enough. In the history of disability in higher education, a rights-based approach has

often meant that disabled students are invited in the door, they are counted and added to diversity statistics, but then the culture of the university makes no changes, no lasting adjustments to account for their presence, participation, and thriving.

Many times, retrofits are rhetorically and concretely constructed in ways that actually enhance and *rationalize* exclusion. To begin with there are such a limited range of accommodations offered. More than three quarters of the accommodations offered are the same exact accommodation: extended time on tests and exams (NEADS). And these extensions of time for testing have become their own academic industries. At the University of Victoria – a mid-sized University in Canada – for example, there were 18,000 timed testing accommodations administered last year. 18,000. Because of the sheer scope of time extensions, disability is primarily understood in higher education through the framework of timed testing. Point blank. And this framework is already framed by and filtered through anxiety around fairness and cheating, which as Ann Gagne shows is a culture that has dramatically eroded trust between schools, teachers, and students. It's a culture of isolation. It's a culture of competition. It is a culture of scarcity.

Testing in higher education is also a significant creator of barriers, in particular for people with learning disabilities and mental-health related disabilities. And it doesn't make sense to think that these students will experience anything like these barriers in the environment outside of school, where high stakes testing-like experiences are extremely rare. There will be other barriers. But nothing like the barrier imposed by a timed test.

Testing, especially timed testing, is causing harm to students, is not an empirically sound method of assessing or understanding what students have learned or know, and it is a vacuum sucking up all of the energy and resources we have devoted to disability. It's a vacuum sucking up resources through a widening black hole of petitions and grievances. So we should start with harm-reduction: commit to *test less*.

Truly, the accommodations that these students will need in a professional capacity are unlikely to look anything like the accommodations they get in testing-heavy classrooms. And that is a huge problem, and a huge, wasted opportunity.

Nobody walks into an engineering firm...

Students should be learning, and applying, accommodations that look like those they will need in the "real world." That's how we learn how to learn, for life.

Look at the college home page. Seems to me that there are many other people here who notice, as I do, that our work needs to match up with the college home page, that college or university of the future, but we find ourselves stuck in the past. How do we match the

experience for disabled students with the biggest goals we have for what learning will look like for our specific students?

Many teachers don't offer tests or exams very often or at all, and never in a timed way – and that is good. But if these teachers keep working with disability services and they keep offering this accommodation, then they are short-fusing the process. This ramp leads students nowhere. We need a much broader repertoire of accommodations. In writing classrooms, like the one I work in, where I rarely give tests and I rarely lecture, I know I must work to expand the range of accommodations that can be offered to students. Many other teachers argue for innovative teaching methods that move beyond lecturing, testing and rote learning. I bet a lot of you do. But continuing to work with a very narrow range of accommodations, while at the same time advocating for a broader range of learning experiences, that's really problematic. The accommodations stay stuck in a Fordist educational regime, where rigidity and uniformity – and above all else – timing reigns supreme. That brings us closer to what we might call malicious compliance, where following the letter of the accommodation law will hurt the student in an innovative classroom. Or it is like a defeat device, where we can make our classroom look like it is up to specifications, but only because we are fooling the system.

We know that we need to offer accommodations. But we should consider every temporary, one-time accommodation as **an argument for a permanent change**. What are some ways we do this, already? What are some ways that in higher education we have taken “accommodations” that were made over time, and turned them into mainstream pedagogical techniques? How could we do more of this?

For example, as we were forced to pivot online, we learned how to caption video maybe, or how to provide transcripts, or how to share these things so that students could access them any time. Well, in a pre-2020 study of engineering students with disabilities at the University of Illinois, results from 303 responses from 49 different courses showed that students with disabilities have always, well before the pandemic, been asking for recorded lectures as videos, transcripts for these videos and for lectures, as well as course textbook and instructor notes/slides that they could engage with offline (Amos et. al.) These are all things we began to offer quite broadly during COVID. Let's keep doing this, even when we move back into the physical classroom! That's just a small place to start. But it is a place to start. What has changed about teaching on your campus since the pandemic that instructors could keep doing in order to increase accessibility?

We have had an opportunity, over the four years, to redesign higher education in ways we never have before. Yet nobody was talking about accessibility as part of this process. We spent much

more time investing in surveillant test-proctoring software than we spent developing alternatives to outdated teaching models that rely on testing.

There is some irony that the ableist demands for physical attendance and participation that teachers used to cling to so tightly were so easily left behind, and then all of a sudden have reappeared again as though we aren't still living in a pandemic. Asking to have a grade converted to CR rather than a numerical grade, asking for an extended deadline, getting extra time on a research grant or a tenure deadline, back in 2020 all of a sudden anyone who wanted these things could have them. Disabled people can hardly count the number of times they were denied these things and stigmatized for even asking about them.

My challenge to you is to think again about the barriers students might be facing right now and also to explore how they get accommodated. Let's think about the barriers disabled students face, but also that first-generation students face, or English language-learners – invariably, these categories are going to overlap and we need to plan for that as well. How do we make temporary, retrofitted accommodations a permanent feature? How do we welcome the diversity of the students to come?

I want to pause and say something really important here, and I want to make sure it is understood.

Disabled students and staff and faculty are killing it. In the history of academia, disabled people have done incredible things! Dorothy Hodgkin won the Nobel Prize in chemistry for determining the chemical structures of penicillin and vitamin B12. Disabled scientists were responsible for discovering at least 22 elements of the periodic table, including helium, oxygen, sodium, radium and hafnium. But these scientists faced huge barriers to their participation, and most of those barriers remain. Despite the emphasis in this talk on the struggle disabled students often face, and the loss of students, lots of disabled people are thriving in academia. Those who are thriving are doing so despite ableism. If we can change higher education to make it more accessible, we will retain thousands of students and give them a chance at a better life, and a chance to help us create a better world. But we will also help the people already doing amazing work, people we interact with every day.

Three, Universal Design.

How do we build the University of the future, the one that schools advertise through images of dynamic, engaged learning on their home page? As you can guess, I want us to transition to thinking about what accessible teaching might look like if we were to gradually move away from only the legal minimums. The truth is that educational practices that seem like they have simply

always existed, such as letter grades, started hardly more than a century ago; they paralleled a system imposed on the American Meat Packers Association (Davidson). At first the meatpackers objected because, they argued, meat is too complex to be judged by letter grades. The factory assembly line provided inspiration for the standardized bubble test, which was adopted as a means of sorting students for admission to college. Such practices helped to make education seem efficient, measurable, and meritocratic. Somehow, we have held onto them for a long time, and held tight. This despite the fact that they have not always been around, and despite the fact the becoming a teacher, a scientist, a doctor, a lawyer, a poet, or an engineer is nothing like becoming a meat packer – and nothing like becoming packaged meat. The meat packers fought back, but we have not. We generally accept almost the entirety of academic culture because it just seems like how things have always been done. Change becomes more and more difficult.

Let me give an example, during forced online learning, we came to understand things like “zoom fatigue.” But I want to challenge us to expand this: do we really think that students are *only* fatigued and unexcited by hours on-screen? There are other ways we need to reconceptualize the amount of attention we can ask for from students. I believe that the idea of the “credit hour,” originally conceived as a way to measure a Professor’s work in order to make them eligible for a Carnegie pension, has gone through massive inflation over the last couple of decades. We ask students to do more work than we ever have before, even as we know that students have to work outside of school much more than any other generation has. In 1960, 25 percent of full-time college students between the ages of 16-24 worked while enrolled. Five decades later, national statistics show that over 70% of undergraduates are working (Goldrick-Rabb 103). And yet we never examine the gap that might be growing between classroom demands and student energy and attention. Especially when we know that what students need to be successful on campus is connection, not content; applications and experiences, not assessment.

How can we pull back on testing and increase teaching? How can we assess less and connect with our students more? How can we prioritize engagement and connection over content, especially given the fact that students can have ready access to content any time?

We know that there are accommodations that can really help students in the classroom, including help with note-taking and record-keeping, and technological solutions around communication and memory. Alternatives to tests, or just the opportunity to learn from (and gain credit for) correcting their tests and exams and learning from their mistakes, rather than just being tested.

And I also want to suggest that if we planned for more disabled students in our classrooms, we could really change the shape of higher education. This is an innocuous but a revolutionary question: what if we allocated all of the energy we spend on adapting to an old educational regime into building a new one, one in which disabled students don't always need to ask for accommodations but instead their needs are expected?

Like in the fairy tales of the Three Little Pigs or Goldilocks and the Three Bears, “universal design” becomes our third image or metaphor – instead of stairs that only some people can climb, and the message that sends, the center of the space and its central message is about accessibility for all bodies. That should matter at an institution of higher learning. To do this I also have a third spatial metaphor to share, and that is the architectural concept of Universal Design.

As Ronald Mace wrote, “universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.” The UD movement was first an architectural movement that worked against the exclusion of people with disabilities, and argued that instead of temporarily accommodating difference, physical structures should be designed with a wide range of citizens in mind, planning for the active involvement of all. To do so, disability and diversity needed to be central and not marginal in the design process.

Of course, changing physical structures was always also seen as a way to challenge ideological ones. Universal Design for Learning was then a philosophy of teaching adapted from these architectural roots—advocating the use of multiple and flexible strategies, to address the needs of all students. Universal Design for Learning calls for the redesign of ideological, social, cultural, as well as pedagogical practices. We are asked to develop teaching strategies that plan for students' multiple literacies, their valuable bodily and cultural differences, and the variety of discourse communities they are a part of, and that they will be asked to enter. UDL asks for:

- *Multiple means of representation*, to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge,
- *Multiple means of expression*, to provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know,
- *Multiple means of engagement*, to tap into learners' interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation.

The belief has been that a critical re-inscription and re-mapping of social and educational space was necessary—that disability is in part socially and environmentally constructed. Another push behind this movement was the idea that ignoring the centrality of disability perpetuates an injustice against more than just a small group of people—it disallows the possibility of recognizing the complexity of everyone's needs and abilities and stunts the natural growth of diversity in the spaces in which we teach (and in each body within these spaces).

How do we design the future of the College and University so that we are led by decisions to create a more accessible future for everyone, rather than the types of decisions that are made to allow steep stairs to remain?

Importantly, I think that Universal Design allows us to understand disability from a justice and cultural perspective, rather than a legal and medical one. This asks us to foreground intersectionality (Sins Invalid). This means we understand that disablement disproportionately impacts people of color – it means we never forget that. It also means we listen to disabled students, and allow them to shape their own education, rather than privileging only service professionals. It means that the goal is not a better university for disabled people. It means the goal is truly a better university of everyone.

For the last decade, I've been working on creating a long, long list of Universal Design ideas. I call this "Places To Start" because that's how I want fellow teachers to approach them – as things to try, to experiment with, in their own teaching. In this way, Universal Design can begin for all of us, as early as now.

And, as I near the end of the presentation, I want to offer two specific challenges. I think that the rapid but largely temporary changes we made within higher education over the last three years are worthy of our reflection. Acknowledging first of all that we can change, might allow us to redesign and rethink several key components of our teaching and learning that, for whatever reason, our conservatism and orthodoxy previously made it impossible for us to touch. I think if we make some noise around these things right now, and take an active role in reshaping our future, we can design a better university.

The first is help seeking. We need to acknowledge that students with disabilities are not seeking help. The vast majority of them are not seeking help. The majority of them have experienced very negative outcomes from COVID teaching. Student engagement and health surveys show us that this generation experiences poor mental health in general more than previous cohorts. The other notable characteristic of our current group of students? They seek help less. We know this impacts students of color even more than others. So we need to develop an entrance to help that is truly accessible rather than the steep steps currently in

place. We need to develop this entrance online as well as on campus, and we need to be creative. We need our services for disabled students to foreground disability justice, not just minimum accommodations, and that means asking disabled students to co-design these systems, develop them in ways that are focused not on legal minimum accommodations, but rather on the flourishing and success of disabled students, and an understanding that we need permanent systemic changes .

The second thing I want us to build on segues directly from the first. Micah Saviglio, writing in *Inside Higher Ed*, asked a question we should have been asking all along: “why not center students and faculty with disabilities by inviting them (and paying them) to help envision and design flexible courses that will survive the pandemics and unforeseen challenges to come? Then we can measure how adaptive and flexible a learning environment is, rather than how “intelligent” students are when they succeed, or fail, to adapt to a new normal as rigid as what it replaced.” Why not? It is important to remember the history of Universal Design as a process, a process that built in feedback from users, and centred the value of feedback from disabled people. We have disabled students on our campuses who are already leaders. How can we invite disabled students, staff and faculty to audit campus spaces, to avoid access embarrassments and disconnections like Sarah-Marie experienced. To also audit our programs and policies and processes? How can we authorize them to advocate for change? This would be the very opposite of the “unexpected” approach to disabled students that has existed for so long.

Thanks for your time today, and I hope we can talk more about how to continue to design an alternative future for higher education.