

# Introducing a New Section of JHR Dedicated to ‘Critical’ Rehabilitation Research and Scholarship

Section Editors: Dr. Barbara Gibson and Dr. Jenny Setchell

The *Journal of Humanities in Rehabilitation*'s new section, Critical Research and Perspectives, is dedicated to publishing papers and other works that employ *critical perspectives* on rehabilitation. Critical thinkers utilize theories from the social sciences and humanities to consider the underlying assumptions, understandings, and contexts behind rehabilitation practices. There are many different critical perspectives (including for example, post-modernism, feminism, critical disability theories, new materialism, and post-colonialism) that can be utilized to interrogate and inform rehabilitation practices. All share a consideration of the socio-political aspects and cultural contexts informing care, and work to illuminate the assumptions that underpin health practices and their hidden or less obvious effects on recipients of care.

Research and scholarship employing a critical approach works toward creating unanticipated opportunities to think and do rehabilitation differently. They offer ways to consider deeply why rehabilitation practitioners do what we do, and to highlight the intended and unintended effects of practice-as-usual. The aim of critical work is to build more ethical,

inclusive, and equitable healthcare practices. As such, they complement the humanities and the arts with their shared aims of challenging reductive, linear, and/or evidence-based modes of thinking that dominate the rehabilitation sciences.

For an expanded description of criticality as it applies to research, see [Rehabilitation: A Post-Critical Approach](#) in this issue.

The creation of this focused section of JHR presents an exciting opportunity to showcase rigorous critical rehabilitation research and scholarship.

We seek submissions that explore the application of critical, intersectional, post-structural, or post-modern theories (broadly defined) to advance understandings of rehabilitation—including original research, think pieces, and theoretical discussions of the philosophical basis of rehabilitation practices, education, and/or research. Submissions are welcome that experiment with form or content and/or include collaborators from diverse disciplines. All submissions should have a clear link to rehabilitation, including the implications

for education, practice, and/or research.

**Topics may include** but are not limited to:

- Rehabilitation's approaches to alterity and otherness, abnormality, deviance, difference, and disability
- Post-colonial, indigenous, feminist, queer, and/or other research and scholarship addressing power asymmetries inherent in rehabilitation practice, particularly where they marginalize some groups at the expense of others
- Critical explorations of the philosophical underpinnings of rehabilitation, its logics, and its core concepts and practices such as client-centered care, independence, and evidence-based practice
- Genealogies of rehabilitation practices
- Analyses of rehabilitation as a culturally situated practice
- Critical explorations of the body and embodiment in health and rehabilitation
- New materialist critiques of humanism and the implications for rehabilitation
- Critical pedagogies and their application to the education of rehabilitation professionals
- Investigations of stigma and other harmful but hidden effects of practice-as-usual

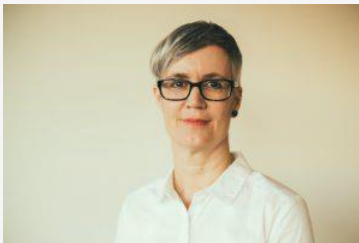
- Critical/postmodern approaches to rehabilitation ethics
- Inter- and trans-disciplinary perspectives on rehabilitation, particularly from diverse disciplines uncommon in mainstream rehabilitation scholarship/practice, including disability studies, anthropology, the arts, literary study, history, religion, cultural studies, critical theory, education, geography, historiography, linguistics, philosophy, politics, and sociology

We encourage contributors around the world to provide a critical perspective on current rehabilitation practices, policy, education and/or research and submit their work to *JHR*.

## Section Editors



**Barbara Gibson, BMR(PT), MSc, PhD**, is a physical therapist and bioethicist whose work investigates how disability is understood and addressed in rehabilitation practice and delivery. Her research examines the intersections of social, cultural, and institutional practices in producing health, inclusion/exclusion, and identity with disabled children and young people. Dr Gibson has examined key areas of health practices and policies including transitions to adulthood, independent living, and understanding relationships between mobility, identity, and social inclusion. Dr. Gibson is an Associate Professor at the University of Toronto where she also holds the Bloorview Children's Hospital Foundation Chair in Childhood Disability Studies with the Bloorview Research Institute in Canada. She has led three books aimed at transforming rehabilitation practices, *Rethinking Rehabilitation Theory and Practice* (2015, co-editor), *Rehabilitation: A Post-critical Approach* (2016) and [Manipulating Practices: A Critical Physiotherapy Reader](#) (2018, lead editor). She is a co-founder of the international Critical Physiotherapy Network.



**Jenny Setchell, PhD, BScPT, Grad Cert (Clin PT)**, is a Research Fellow in international conjoint positions at the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, The University of Queensland (Australia); and the Bloorview Research Institute, Holland Bloorview Hospital, University of Toronto (Canada). Her research interests include critical perspectives on rehabilitation, and on physiotherapy specifically. She is particularly interested in post-modern and new-materialist theories. Dr. Setchell has been awarded 10+ fellowships and awards for her work and has presented and published extensively across disciplines. She has 20 years of diverse clinical physiotherapy experience in Australia and internationally, primarily in the musculoskeletal and sports sub-disciplines. Dr. Setchell is co-founder and co-chair of the executive committee of the [Critical Physiotherapy Network](#), an international network of more than 600 physiotherapists across 30+ countries working toward more critical, sociopolitical understandings of rehabilitation. She co-edited the first collection of critical physiotherapy work in book form, [Manipulating Practices: A Critical Physiotherapy Reader](#). Dr. Setchell has also been an acrobat and a human rights worker.

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