



---

**title:** Handbook of Communication and People With Disabilities : Research and Application LEA's Communication Series

**author:** Braithwaite, Dawn O.

**publisher:** Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

**isbn10 | asin:** 0805830596

**print isbn13:** 9780805830590

**ebook isbn13:** 9780585180427

**language:** English

**subject:** Handicapped--Means of communication--United States, Sociology of disability--United States, Communication in services for the handicapped--United States, Communication devices for the disabled--United States.

**publication date:** 2000

**lcc:** HV1568.4.H35 2000eb

**ddc:** 362.4/048

**subject:** Handicapped--Means of communication--United States, Sociology of disability--United States, Communication in services for the handicapped--United States, Communication devices for the disabled--United States.

# Handbook of Communication and People with Disabilities

Research and Application

LEA's COMMUNICATION SERIES  
Jennings Bryant/Dolf Zillmann, General Editors

Selected titles in Applied Communications (Teresa L. Thompson, Advisory Editor) include:

Beck/Ragan/du Pre Partnership for Health: Building Relationships Between Women and Health Caregivers

Elwood Power in the Blood: A Handbook on AIDS, Politics, and Communication

Harris Health and the New Media: Technologies Transforming Personal and Public Health

Ray Communication and Disenfranchisement: Social Health Issues and Implications

Socha/Diggs Communication, Race, and Family: Exploring Communication in Black, White, and Biracial Families

Street/Gold/Manning Health Promotion and Interactive Technology: Theoretical Applications and Future Directions

Whaley Explaining Illness: Research, Theory, and Strategy

Williams/Nussbaum Intergenerational Communication Across the Life Span

For a complete list of other titles in LEA's Communication Series, please contact Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers

# Handbook of Communication and People with Disabilities

## Research and Application

Edited by  
Dawn O. Braithwaite

*University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

Teresa L. Thompson

*University of Dayton*



LAWRENCE ERLBAUM ASSOCIATES, PUBLISHERS  
Mahwah, New Jersey London

Copyright © 2000 by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. All right reserved.  
No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by photostat, microfilm,  
retrieval system, or any other means, without prior written permission of the  
publisher.

Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers  
10 Industrial Avenue  
Mahwah, NJ 07430

Cover design by Kathryn Houghtaling Lacey

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Handbook of communication and people with disabilities : research and  
application / edited by Dawn O. Braithwaite, Teresa L. Thompson.

p. cm.(LEA's communication series)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-8058-3059-6 (cloth : alk. paper)

1. Handicapped-Means of communication-United States.

2. Sociology of disability-United States. 3. Communication

in services for the handicapped-United States. 4. Communication

devices for the disabled-United States. I. Braithwaite, Dawn O.

II. Thompson, Teresa L. III. Series.

HV1568.4.H35 2000

362.4'048\$ndashdc21

99-29094

CIP

Books published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates are printed on acid-free  
paper, and their bindings are chosen for strength and durability.

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*To my cousin, Greg*

*D.O.B.*

*To my brother, Steve*

*T.L.T.*

*In Tribute to Irv Zola*

## CONTENTS

Preface	xi
Contributors	xv
Introduction: A History of Communication and Disability Research: The Way We Were <i>Teresa L. Thompson</i>	1
I	
Interpersonal and Relationship Issues	
1 Communication and the Management of Dialectical Tensions in the Personal Relationships of People with Disabilities <i>Dawn O. Braithwaite and Lynn M. Harter</i>	17
2 Society, Sexuality, and Disabled/Ablebodied Romantic Relationships <i>Sally A. Nemeth</i>	37
3 Embodiment and Dis-Embodiment: Identity Trans-Formation of Persons with Physical Disabilities <i>Thuy-Phuong Do and Patricia Geist</i>	49
4 Help between Persons with and without Disabilities from a Resource Theory Perspective <i>Kari P. Soule and Michael E. Roloff</i>	67
5 Opening Up Spaces for Difference Via a Feminist Phenomenological Approach to Disability <i>S. Marie Westhaver</i>	85
II	
People with Disabilities in Organizational Settings	

6	103
Effective Communication to Enhance Special Education	
<i>Ida Malian and Ann Nevin</i>	
7	125
Communication and Students with Disabilities on College Campuses	
<i>David W. Worley</i>	



8	141
What Is Reasonable? Workplace Communication and People Who Are Disabled	
<i>Audra L. Colvert and John W. Smith</i>	
9	159
Communication Strategies in Employment Interviews for Applicants with Disabilities	
<i>Kelly P. Herold</i>	
10	177
Disability and Culture: Effects on Multicultural Relations in Modern Organizations	
<i>Gary L. Kreps</i>	
III	
Disability and Culture	
11	193
Interability Communication: Theoretical Perspectives	
<i>Susan A. Fox, Howard Giles, Mark P. Orbe, and Richard Y. Bourhis</i>	
12	223
Negotiating Personal Identities among People with and without Identified Disabilities: The Role of Identity Management	
<i>Gerianne Merrigan</i>	
13	239
Intercultural Views of People with Disabilities in Asia and Africa	
<i>Miho Iwakuma and Jon F. Nussbaum</i>	
14	257
Deaf Activists in the Rhetorical Transformation of the Construct of Disability	
<i>Kara Shultz</i>	
IV	
Media and Technologies	
15	273
If They Limp, They Lead? News Representations and the Hierarchy	

of Disability Images <i>Beth Haller</i>	
16	289
Film Images of People with Disabilities <i>Kim Wolfson and Martin F. Norden</i>	
17	307
Invisible No More: Advertising and People with Disabilities <i>Olan Farnall</i>	
18	319
The Uses and Abuses of Computer-Mediated Communication for People with Disabilities <i>Susan Anne Fox</i>	
V	
Communication Issues as They Impact Specific Types of Disabilities	
19	339
Reducing Uncertainty through Communication during Adjustment to Disability: Living with Spinal Cord Injury <i>Roxanne Parrott, Tricia Stuart, and Adrian Bennett Cairns</i>	

20	353
When the Deaf and the Hearing Interact: Communication Features, Relationships, and Disability Issues	
<i>Anne McIntosh</i>	
21	369
Sighting Sound/Sounding Sight: The "Violence" of Deaf-Hearing Communication	
<i>Heidi M. Rose and Andrew R. Smith</i>	
22	389
Communication and the Blind or Visually Impaired	
<i>John W. Smith and Krishna P. Kandath</i>	
23	405
Invisible Disability	
<i>Cynthia K. Matthews and Nancy Grant Harrington</i>	
24	423
Communicating with Persons Who Stutter: Perceptions and Strategies	
<i>Bryan B. Whaley and Mindi Ann Golden</i>	
25	
Children and Adults Who Experience Difficulty with Speech	
<i>Mary Ann Ronski and Rose A. Sevcik</i>	439
26	451
Overcoming Loss of Voice	
<i>Al Weitzel</i>	
27	467
Interpersonal Roulette and HIV/AIDS as Disability: Stigma and Social Support in Tension	
<i>Rebecca J. Cline and Nelya J. McKenzie</i>	
28	485
The Margins of Communication: Coping with Adult Dementia	
<i>Joachim Knuf</i>	
VI	

Setting a Future Agenda for Communication and Disability Research	
29	507
Communication and Disability Research: A Productive Past and a Bright Future	
<i>Dawn O. Braithwaite and Teresa L. Thompson</i>	
Author Index	517
Subject Index	535

## PREFACE

Over the last 25 years the field of communication has seen an important proliferation of studies on how the presence of a physical disability affects communication among individuals. Much of this research has been prompted by personal experiences of scholars who are themselves disabled or who have a close family member who is disabled. Scholars have typically started their research efforts because of perceived concerns about difficult or awkward interaction between individuals with and without disabilities. Both disabled and able-bodied individuals often are affected by the discomfort, avoidance, and uncertainty characterizing such interactions. The goal of disability research in communication has been to illuminate these experiences and to ultimately improve communication in both personal and professional relationships.

Until recently, disability studies in communication had been scattered efforts conducted by a few individuals at various points in their academic careers. In the last few years, however, research in this area has begun to burgeon. This growth can be traced to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as evidenced by the launching of the Caucus on Communication and Disability of the National Communication Association (NCA).

Prior to the formation of the caucus, over 400 individuals at universities around the country signed petitions reflecting their interest in communication and disability research.

Although much more research is now being conducted in this area, to date there has been no vehicle for the dissemination of research findings outside of such broad journal outlets as *Disability and Society* and the *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*. The study of communication and disability does not fit neatly into any traditional academic subspecialization. Thus, most research has been haphazardly published in a myriad of outlets and has frequently been difficult for other scholars to find. The most consistent publication outlet has been *Disability Studies Quarterly*, a stapled, off-set produced, nonreferred publication that is notoriously difficult to find and presents few full-length articles. Therefore, the goal of the present volume has been to gather original essays and literature reviews on communication and disability to facilitate the efforts of future researchers and practitioners in this area. The chapters thoroughly summarize and critique past research, report new research findings, reconceptualize work within their respective domains, and provide policy recommendations. Each chapter features a central focus on the role of communication processes in constructing "disability." This book will be a helpful resource for communicators both with and without disabilities.

The target audience for the present volume extends far beyond the new NCA caucus or communication scholars. Interest in the social construction of disability is now reflected in all of the social sciences, with particularly notable appeal in such fields as psychology, social work, sociology, special education, anthropology, gerontology, nursing, and rehabilitation. It is hoped that this book will be useful to scholars with interests in disability in all of those areas.

### The Personal Side

We have been working on issues related to communication and disability independently since the 1970s. Although we have been on conference panels together, we have never collaborated on any research projects. Each of us came up with the idea for the present volume individually, as well. John Ferris' initiation of NCA's Caucus on Communication and Disability was one catalyst. Shortly after the development of a panel proposal that helped

inaugurate the caucus, Teri received an E-mail from Bryan Whaley suggesting a book such as this. This arrived at about the same time that she had been thinking that there might finally be enough work available in

the area to warrant such an effort. She E-mailed Dawn, who had already had the same idea. We decided to work together on the project and set about contacting potential authors. The problem, we found, was that there were too many good proposals to fit into a manageable-size book. There are many excellent scholars, both established and up-and-coming, who are now doing research on issues related to communication and disability. We were delighted with the number and quality of the proposals received; selecting among them was a difficult task. Although unable to include all of the chapters we would have liked, we finally settled on an excellent corpus of chapters, and are confident that the reader will find the volume helpful, informative, and insightful. The chapters are previewed in the introduction.

As with all books, there are many people who contributed to the development of the present volume and without whose efforts it would not have been possible. We would like to thank Dr. Anneliese Harper of Scottsdale Community College for her assistance and especially Nancy Eckstein, doctoral student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, for her invaluable research and editorial assistance on the final manuscript. Deep appreciation is also extended to Dr. Jennings Bryant, Ronald Reagan Chair of Communication at the University of Alabama, and Linda Bathgate of LEA for their incredible support, creativity, and flexibility. We also thank all of the authors for their hard work and fine scholarship.

Teri would like to thank Dawn for carrying the burden of most of the book through a very difficult time of transition for the Braithwaites, and her children Alyse and Tony for keeping her laughing and loving during the project. She would particularly like to thank her 11-year-old daughter Alyse for showing her how to use their new computer and helping her edit and her 7-year-old son Tony for always being a character. Her love and deep thanks are especially extended to Lou Cusella (her idea man!) for his passion, support, love, and sense of humor.

Dawn would like to thank all of the people with disabilities who have shared their experiences and wisdom with her over the years in research interviews and those who have read her work and given her their impressions of the findings. She would like to thank Teri for many years of collegiality and friendship. Most importantly, Dawn would like to thank Dr. Charles Braithwaite, her partner in life, her closest colleague, and her best friend.

D.O.B.



T.L.T.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Richard Y. Bourhis (PhD, University of Bristol, 1977) is professor of psychology at the Université du Québec à Montreal.

Dawn O. Braithwaite (PhD, University of Minnesota, 1988) is an associate professor of Communication Studies and an affiliate faculty member in the Family Research and Policy Initiative at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Adrian Bennett Cairns III (MA, University of Georgia, 1995) is a rehabilitation counselor in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Rebecca J. Cline (PhD, The Pennsylvania State University, 1975) is an associate professor in the Department of Health Sciences Education, University of Florida.

Audra L. Colvert (MA, Bowling Green State University, 1991) is an assistant professor of communication at Towson University.

Thuy-Phuong Do (MA, San Diego State University, 1997) is a lecturer in the School of Communication at San Diego State University.

Olan Farnall (PhD, University of Alabama, 1995) is an assistant professor in the School of Communication, California State University-Fullerton.

Susan Anne Fox (PhD, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1994) is an assistant professor of communication at Western Michigan University.

Patricia Geist (PhD, Purdue University, 1985) is a professor in the School of Communication, San Diego State University.

Howard Giles (PhD, University of Bristol, 1971) is a professor of communication at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Mindi Ann Golden (MA, San Jose State University, 1995) is a doctoral student in the Department of Communication, University of Utah.

Beth Haller (PhD, Temple University, 1995) is an assistant professor of journalism, Towson University.

Nancy Grant Harrington (PhD, University of Kentucky, 1992) is an associate professor of communication at the University of Kentucky.

Lynn M. Harter (PhD, University of Nebraska, 2000) is an assistant professor of speech communication at Moorhead State University.

Kelly P. Herold (PhD, University of Southern Mississippi, 1995) is an assistant professor of communication studies at Winona State University.

Miho Iwakuma (MA, University of Oklahoma, 1994) is a doctoral student in the Department of Communication, University of Oklahoma.

Krishna Prasad Kandath (MA, Bowling Green State University, 1997), is a doctoral student, School of Communication Studies, Ohio University.

Joachim Knuf (DPhil, Oxford University, 1986) is an associate professor of communication at the University of Kentucky.

Gary L. Kreps (PhD, University of Southern California, 1979) is chief of the Health Communications and Informatics Research Branch of the National Cancer Institute at the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD.

Ida Malian (PhD, The University of Michigan, 1977) is coordinator and associate professor of special education at Arizona State University West.

Cynthia K. Matthews (MA, New Mexico State, 1994) is a doctoral candidate

in communication, University of Kentucky.