**Depathologising the University**

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**Abstract**

It could be argued that we are in the midst of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) cultural turn, where universities, funders and researchers have begun to recognise that university cultures are exclusionary. And yet, disabled people, as students, researchers, professional services colleagues and in other roles, have yet to experience the benefits of this EDI revolution. One reason for this is the stubborn presence and impact of ableism: the ideology that idealised able-bodied-and-mindedness.

In this paper I reflect on the early days of a research project funded by the Wellcome Trust *WAARC* (Wellcome Anti-ableist Research Culture). *WAARC* (2024 - 2026) is one of 24 institutions funded by the Wellcome Trust to research, develop and enhance research culture within their universities ([see Lewis-Wilson et al, 2023](https://wellcomeopenresearch.org/articles/8-525)).

With reference to a live project I lay out some provisional ideas for addressing a much needed systemic revolution; the *depathologisation of the university* (Goodley, 2024). I argue that we can collectively depathologise the university if and when disability is embraced as the driving subject of change and universities work in collaboration with disabled people’s organisations.

**References**

[Goodley, D. (2024) Depathologising the university, *Pedagogy, Culture & Society,* DOI: 10.1080/14681366.2024.2316007](https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2024.2316007)

[Lewis-Wilson S, Towers S and Wykeham H. (2023). The Luck of the Draw: Wellcome’s Institutional Fund for Research Culture [version 2; peer review: 1 approved with reservations]. Wellcome Open Res 2023, 8:525](https://wellcomeopenresearch.org/articles/8-525)

la paperson. (2017). *A third university is possible.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

**Links and further reading**

Wellcome Anti-ableist Research Culture
A Wellcome Trust Institutional Funding for Research Culture Award
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ihuman/wellcome-anti-ableist-research-culture-waarc>