



**Virtual Ability, Inc.® presents the 6th Annual  
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Title: "Beyond accountability: Moving towards answerability for students with disabilities"  
Speaker: Mr. Louis Olander, Doctoral Candidate, Urban Education, CUNY Graduate Center

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[2017/12/01 07:57] LV (lorivonne.lustre): Hello everyone.  
Today's presentation is being transcribed so those without audio or who require text only can participate in real time.

A little explanation about this service.

Voice-to-text transcriptionists provide a translation of the key ideas discussed, NOT a word for word transcription.

Voice-to-text services provide an in-the-moment snapshot of ideas and concepts, so that those who are unable to hear or to understand the audio program are able to participate in real-time.

You will see the transcription in local chat.

Transcription is provided by Virtual Ability, Inc.

The transcriptionists are:

Elektra Panthar

LoriVonne Lustre

The following initials in the transcription record will identify the speakers:

LO: Louis Olander (VAIPresenter1)

[2017/12/01 08:01] PeacefulJames Resident: Louis Olander is a doctoral candidate in the Urban Education program at the CUNY Graduate Center, and teaches graduate and undergraduate students about inclusive education and assessment of students with dis/abilities in the Special Education department at Hunter College.

His research interests are in universal design, appreciative inquiry, and critical participatory action research.

Previously, he taught special education in New York City, and now lives in Yonkers with his wife and two kids.

His email address is louis.olander@gmail.com.

Presentation Description

Beyond accountability: Moving towards answerability for students with disabilities.

In the United States, accountability has broadly become the dominant paradigm for accommodating the needs of individuals with disabilities and for addressing equal education.

While those paradigms have been useful in the past in promoting a modicum of equality, they have often prevented any movement beyond mere compliance.

Moreover, accountability movements have elevated what Danforth (2014) calls technocracy, obscuring social justice arguments for meaningful inclusion.

In this presentation he will talk about his dissertation research, in which he hopes to help

teachers outgrow technocratic, compliance, or accountability frames through teacher inquiry that is appreciative of their existing strengths and critical of structures that sustain exclusion.

In so doing, he hopes to promote what Patel (2015) terms answerability, reframing questions of what exactly educators are responsible for.

[2017/12/01 08:04] LV (lorivonne.lustre): <<Transcription begins >>

[2017/12/01 08:04] LV (lorivonne.lustre): GH: Please do not type in text chat during the presentation.

[2017/12/01 08:04] LV (lorivonne.lustre): LO: thank you. I hope everyone can hear me or see the transcription

It is lovely to be presenting in my PJs, a first for me

Today I will talk a bit about the US policy context in special education -- which has certainly been problematic

Here are some photos of me.

Who am I in this work? I was a medic in the Iraq war (2004-05). I developed PTSD and used to think of myself as a disabled veteran

I have come to understand that there is more to disability than being disabled

Who I am is intimately connected to the work I do

The 2nd picture is my wife and I at our wedding -- we were 22 and I had just returned from Iraq

Her love and support has been so important. I feel loved and safe. This has helped me to feel this around the problematic areas in my life

I use the / between dis and ability -- dis/ability

The experience of mental illness can be very different for veterans than for the rest of the population

I am actually quite privileged

With this privilege comes responsibility

This drives much of what I believe about this work

[2017/12/01 08:10] Gentle Heron: From Charity to Confrontation:

<https://www.amazon.com/Disability-Rights-Movement-Charity-Confrontation/dp/1439907447>

[2017/12/01 08:11] LV (lorivonne.lustre): LO: I also approach this from the place of what I do not know. I have snapshots

A friend said take it easy... there is still a lot that you don't know

I am therefore speaking of my emerging work that I bring with humility. I appreciate your critique

We'll talk about this before the US legislation for people with disabilities

We can say that with discrimination against persons with disabilities, openly stigmatizing is not accepted.

It may still happen, but is not accepted

These acts are based on medicalized models. IEPs are written for children in schools and the children are "treated" -- very much as medical model

I was chosen to be a special education teacher due to my medical background

I was better placed to "treat" the children

However, there was also an emerging movement for social justice, to recognize the rights of persons with disabilities

The introduction of these legislations marks the change

In the early 2000's... 2 major US policies were enacted

No Child Left Behind. Student performance was tied to teacher accountability

Children who were struggling would not be allowed to be left behind

[2017/12/01 08:18] Gentle Heron: Overview of No Child Left Behind:  
<https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/no-child-left-behind-overview-definition-summary.html>

[2017/12/01 08:18] LV (lorivonne.lustre): LO: The education system was deemed to need accountability  
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act introduced mechanisms whereby teachers and schools could be punished if they did not meet a standard

[2017/12/01 08:19] Gentle Heron: IDEIA legislation:  
<http://idea.ed.gov/download/statute.html>

[2017/12/01 08:19] LV (lorivonne.lustre): LO: By 2007 it became clear that the managerial punishment paradigm was a problem.  
This is an industrial managerial model  
This may be OK when running a factory, but not for schools  
Although even for factories it is questionable  
So, we now include children with disabilities because it is the law,  
It is a reactive approach  
Reactive accountability  
Accountability is left after responsibility is subtracted  
Think about the rich curriculum of our childhoods  
The emphasis is now on what is measured -- English and Math

[2017/12/01 08:24] Gentle Heron: "In Finland, we believe standardization is the enemy of creativity and that accountability is what is left after responsibility has been taken away." <http://www.superintendentsforum.org/featured-briefings/archives/2013-2/october-meeting-education-in-europe>

[2017/12/01 08:24] LV (lorivonne.lustre): LO: Measurement and what we do for compliance is now a perfunctory task  
This is a function of my experience working in underfunded urban schools  
You would see gross violations of children's rights  
You might see an IEP copied and pasted for another child because it was a 'good' one and easier to comply  
The accountability paradigm requires failure to function  
To have accountability, someone must be failing  
The child, the teacher, the school  
Under the current administration the provisions that provided accountability have been mitigated.  
The President and Sec of Education see persons with disabilities as a problem for them  
Accountability is useful, but not always  
Putting people under pressure for what can be measured as accountable can be a real problem

NYC was found to be broadly using the system to exclude children with disabilities (in 2005 report).

By 2007, when LO became a teacher, nothing had changed

In 2010-11, increased accountability was implemented for children with disabilities -- they would attend their local schools

This led to a blossoming of co-taught classrooms and in theory led to more inclusion. However, there were design issues. The designer was not an educator -- he was a lawyer with an MBA.

Very much a managerial approach

One of the key features of "inclusion" in NYC was that school funding was tied with compliance

This leads to a big scramble to move kids into least restrictive environments. IEPs were rewritten.

The rights of the parents were ignored. They often did not want their child in a large "inclusive" classroom, rather than a smaller classroom.

These larger classes had ratios of 60% children without disabilities to 40% children with disabilities

Often the 60% included children who were naughty or had behavioural issues

This system is deeply flawed -- hollow inclusion

Integration and inclusion without consideration of the ethical or important reasons for doing this

We have made progress since the 1960s. But it is important to ask WHY we are changing the policies and structures

For me, how do we take the next step in NYC?

Critical in this is a shift away from legal compliance to ethical considerations

The rubrics cube image was used deliberately to express this

We need to embrace the complexity

Compliance implies punishment

We need to support teachers who enter the field with a strong ethical rationale

I am starting to blend 2 frameworks for change

1. Appreciative inquiry. Let's change our systems based on what we are doing well instead of looking for what is missing

There are things we do well, but there are also problems. Let's build on what is good

2. Critical participatory action research

The current system elevates the "expert". This expertise is limited. The expertise needs to be re-located

Another aspect is to look at the broader issues that promote exclusion

Where does the problem lie? Currently the approach is to blame the family, the teacher, or the child, especially for racially different families

Patel - From ownership to answerability

[2017/12/01 08:45] Gentle Heron: From Ownership to Answerability:  
<https://www.amazon.com/Decolonizing-Educational-Research-Ownership-Answerability/dp/1138998729>

[2017/12/01 08:45] LV (lorivonne.lustre): LO: Patel critiques the current system and promotes answerability

It is about being part of an exchange

A dialogue between communities, people who are underserved, and those who would like to change the system

Marginalization in America needs to address race

In answerability we are not longer talking about serving children

Rather is about stewardship of ideas and learning

Not delivery of service

Ending on a question... on slide

Can we imagine a future for educating kids with disabilities?

Questions?

[2017/12/01 08:48] millay Freschi: That was fantastic!

[2017/12/01 08:48] Franja Russell: Boards of Education need to buy into that last statement.

[2017/12/01 08:48] Dorie Bernstein nods in agreement

[2017/12/01 08:48] Buffy Beale: Cheering! Great presentation!

[2017/12/01 08:49] Slatan Dryke: Thank you Louis, as a Veteran with PTSD you have been inspirational to me!!

[2017/12/01 08:48] Gentle Heron: Thank you Louis. I'm a former special education teacher and I too struggled with figuring out what "least restrictive environment" means both for students with and without a wide variety of types of disabilities. You call this "hollow inclusion." Is there not also a concept of "hollow exclusion"?

[2017/12/01 08:49] Elektra Panthar: LO: Hollow inclusion is a way to define movements that were ONLY nominally inclusive

Exclusion is the wallpaper or disabled people, they always have to deal with it.

A fascinating thing is that we no longer explicitly advocate for exclusion of children of color, and yet it still happens. Same thing happens with children with disability

[2017/12/01 08:52] Dorie Bernstein: I'm a parent. At the outset, I was all for total inclusion. Until I saw how my son started behaving from it. Then I understood that not all kids should be mainstreamed

[2017/12/01 08:52] iSkye Silverweb taps the tip of her nose and nods at Dorie

[2017/12/01 08:52] LV (lorivonne.lustre): Dhira Giha: Telling a story about child who is having difficulties in the larger inclusive classroom

Communicating with the teach can be frustrating

How can you deal with the classroom teacher who will not work with the parent and the special education teacher?

[2017/12/01 08:53] MemberOfCPA: heard that throughout my childhood, "bad citizenship"

[2017/12/01 08:53] Franja Russell: THAT'S NOT TRUE.

[2017/12/01 08:54] Gentle Heron: Say more Fran?

[2017/12/01 08:54] MemberOfCPA: It is everyone's responsibility to be compassionate and caring toward everyone - segmentation is problematic

[2017/12/01 08:55] Franja Russell: Many, many Classroom Teachers want to dovetail standard education to the needs of the kids in her/his class. But the Board of Ed says you have to use only their books and programs.

[2017/12/01 08:55] MemberOfCPA nods at Fran's comment

It is often a procedural limitation, not individual intention...

[2017/12/01 08:56] Zombie doggie (tarquin.evermore): Fran: yeah that's sad. Not every kid excels to the same thing or the same way of teaching.

[2017/12/01 08:53] Elektra Panthar: LO: Thank you. It's a real problem of responsibility

General ed teachers don't think following 'special ed' children is their duty. There's a divide between gen ed and special ed

We are trying to do away with this divide, make sure that everybody is responsible for the education of all children

I'm working with co-teaching pairs, both teachers that can work in more constructive ways

[2017/12/01 08:55] Zombie doggie (tarquin.evermore): Inclusive is great on paper, but I've seen first hand the struggles not only I had with keeping up with chemistry and advanced mathematics, but also someone I knew with cerebral palsy. She needed to use a board with an alphabet to communicate. How can someone in this situation keep up with able bodied kids? It must be hard to do even one class assignment even with the assistance of her parents.

[2017/12/01 08:56] LV (lorivonne.lustre): [2017/12/01 08:50] Zombie doggie (tarquin.evermore): I am a former "Special" kid, who was in disability classes since I was in Middle School. I do have a question concerning IEPs

So I have a situation, with my IEP. I trusted a third party with the original copy of the IEP. They lost it. They claim they gave it back to me but I just got the front page back, Not the entire stack of years worth of IEP meetings. How do I go about this? How do I prove my learning disability, and history of it, when the school no longer have it, and the original is long gone, with no backup copies?

[2017/12/01 08:57] Elektra Panthar: LO: That's a tough one. It comes down to local policies I think

In NYC before computers things would get lost often

[2017/12/01 08:57] Zombie doggie (tarquin.evermore): I don't qualify for the developmental disability waiver in Kansas due to those shenanigans.

But I guess I dodged a bullet, I was trying to get housing with the same place, and I found out a few days ago from a friend with the same housing, that they keep raising the rent.

[2017/12/01 08:57] Elektra Panthar: LO: I wish I had an answer. Now with a computer system things are more durable but doesn't mean that the content of the IEP is more valuable

[2017/12/01 08:58] MemberOfCPA: Ugh! Federal Education Law will not change for the good at the moment :(

[2017/12/01 08:58] Elektra Panthar: LO: In K12 the burden of proof is very low

[2017/12/01 08:59] Dorie Bernstein: Transition from K-12 to adult is a tangled mess ... to put it nicely. I'm in the midst of it with my kid.

[2017/12/01 09:00] Elektra Panthar: LO: Part of the problem with transitioning people to the 'adult' bureaucracy is that every organization has different criteria, and it comes down to local policies. In this day and age there are many agencies rewriting their policies to make their policies even harder to get to. We are in a situation of political dysfunction

[2017/12/01 08:59] Franja Russell: I taught 38 years in a big city, with 35--39 kids in my class, between 6--11 different home languages each year, an Aide for an hour a day, plus inner-city and/or formerly homeless kids. I --on my own time-- developed additional materials and procedures for my kids who didn't fit the one-size-fits-all methods of my School District. Time and time again, Administrators blamed me for not having EVERY student at grade level.

And they insisted I use ONLY the School Dept texts.

[2017/12/01 08:59] Zombie doggie (tarquin.evermore): Franja I probably would of excelled better with your teaching methods.

[2017/12/01 09:00] Gentle Heron: I know how hard some classroom teachers work, Fran, to be inclusive

[2017/12/01 09:00] Zombie doggie (tarquin.evermore): Strangely I learned more math in SL than I ever did in a classroom

[2017/12/01 09:00] Franja Russell: :- ) It just makes sense.

[2017/12/01 08:59] MemberOfCPA: How do we, as "the people" stop the segmentation which is created by administrations in various entities (not just schools, but hospitals, etc.) who create procedures and policies which inherently discriminate and deny services while allowing institutions to shrug their shoulders as if there is nothing they can do? This is a problem, how do we solve it???

[2017/12/01 09:01] Elektra Panthar: LO: I think about it often

When I was discharged under the Bush Jr administration veteran issues were very disorganized

Under Obama administration things got better, but we need to look at the whole history, see what worked, try to introduce them in present days considering the present situation

Now things are bleak looking for whoever is not cis, white male. Part of it becomes building coalitions of different interests - LGBTQ+ rights with African or Native American etc

I wish I could be more helpful

[2017/12/01 09:03] Dorie Bernstein: heh...my optimism level is shrinking

[2017/12/01 09:04] Gentle Heron: (((Dorie)))



[2017/12/01 09:04] Dorie Bernstein: in my local meatspace area, a lady took it on herself to provide a service that wasn't available for those aging out....that helps, though

[2017/12/01 09:04] MemberOfCPA: I appreciate your honesty

[2017/12/01 09:04] Dorie Bernstein: LOL me too, but your honesty is better

[2017/12/01 09:04] MemberOfCPA: It doesn't take away hope, we will just keep looking for an answer(s)

[2017/12/01 09:04] Dorie Bernstein: (((Gentle)))

[2017/12/01 09:05] Gentle Heron: This links directly to Katie Tastrom's presentation tomorrow

[2017/12/01 09:05] Zombie doggie (tarquin.evermore): We need to get rid of No child left Behind.

[2017/12/01 09:05] Gentle Heron: This question is a little different from your presentation, but still about responsibility. Louis, please explain how "participatory research" works, because you've used it a lot. Would you say that participatory research is a particularly important research design for people with disabilities? If so, why? And how can we get involved?

[2017/12/01 09:06] Elektra Panthar: LO: It's a valuable way of thinking about knowledge

Ed research is very statistical, so it tends to flatten the experience of a large variety of people

[2017/12/01 09:07] Mook Wheeler: "flattening affect" -- exactly, and not only in the psychological sense

[2017/12/01 09:07] Elektra Panthar: LO: A lot of researchers look like me, so it becomes another way to maintain the status quo. Participatory research changes this

We actually try to consult with and include people directly affected by the problem  
Asking them by what questions should be asked

[2017/12/01 09:08] Gloriejoy (joycie.string): Glass half full versus glass half empty---re seeing what we have or what we are missing

[2017/12/01 09:08] Dorie Bernstein: I hope that model of research becomes more widespread

I've seen the mistakes researchers have made when I watch my son and see how he doesn't conform to much of the "expert" opinions

[2017/12/01 09:09] Mook Wheeler: participatory research is very important for the fact that it contemplates CONTEXT

[2017/12/01 09:10] Elektra Panthar: LO: The very definition of 'normal' needs to change, we want to see a growth of a new way of understanding the world

[2017/12/01 09:10] MemberOfCPA: I think one of the difficulties with participatory research for many of us is how to know the researcher sees us more as we see ourselves rather than the more ablest image of who we are - any tips on questions we could ask before participating in such research to differentiate between the two?

[2017/12/01 09:12] Elektra Panthar: LO: Researchers, including progressive ones, might still be biased in a way. It's fair to ask them to prove that they have the best interest of the 'subject' of their research in mind

Action research comes in many flavours  
It's fair to treat all researchers with suspicion  
The burden of proof is on the researchers

[2017/12/01 09:13] Dorie Bernstein: No more sticking a kid in a white clinical room and wondering why they aren't making jokes?

[2017/12/01 09:13] Pecos Kidd: Excellent presentation and discussion. Thanks very much!

[2017/12/01 09:14] YasminEliora: wonderful presentation ty

[2017/12/01 09:14] Dorie Bernstein: Thank you for presenting this morning!!! I'm glad you took the time to speak with us

[2017/12/01 09:14] James Heartsong (peacefuljames): I do remember how my first son (adopted when I married his mother) had been classified as having a very low IQ, by the school psychologist. I quickly realized this was not the case, and had him examined by a professional child psychiatrist, who came well recommended. She found that not only did he have ADHD, but he also had a very HIGH IQ. \*sighs\* I am so glad that there are folks like you helping kids today.

[2017/12/01 09:14] Dorie Bernstein: definitely!

[2017/12/01 09:14] Gloriejoy (joycie.string): thank you so much. Excellent info

[2017/12/01 09:14] Buffy Beale: thanks!

[2017/12/01 09:14] LV (lorivonne.lustre): GH: thank you so much. This was a perfect way to start our conference

I hope you will come back to tell us how your research is going

[2017/12/01 09:14] Slatan Dryke: thank you Sir !!!!

[2017/12/01 09:14] Eme Capalini: Great job!

[2017/12/01 09:14] Mook Wheeler: Thank you very much, Louis :)

[2017/12/01 09:15] Suellen Heartsong (suln.mahogany): thank you!

[2017/12/01 09:15] LV (lorivonne.lustre): <<transcription ends>>