

Theorizing Normalcy and the Mundane

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Embla Ágústsdóttir

Doing Gender – a Political Action

This paper is primarily a non-academic, personal reflection on gender, sexuality and disability, but touches on both gender and disability studies. Based on my personal experience as a young, disabled lesbian I will share how I experience and negotiate society's reflection on my existence. Being disabled is in many people's mind an 'asexual' state of affairs, and the presumed asexuality and lack of the being regarded as a sexual being is one of the challenges facing disabled people. Traditional approaches to disability believe it is inappropriate for disabled people to have sexual desires or to express their sexuality through fashion, attitudes and behaviour in the same way non-disabled people commonly do. This fact makes the discourse on sexuality and disability awkward, but this 'awkwardness' is socially constructed.

From a personal perspective, both my sexuality and my impairment are 'natural' facts and to experience tension or awkwardness between these two aspects of my life creates difficulties in negotiating my gender and disability identity in everyday life. Gender identity is a social construct and 'disabled identity' is just as much a social construct. This puts me as a disabled person in a difficult dilemma: How can an 'asexual being' have a proper gender identity? From my personal experience I will explain how this asexual understanding of disability impact my daily life and how I find myself in the need to provoke this stereotype all the time. I will discuss the importance for me to 'do gender' and 'sex up disability'.

Nadia Ahmed

Celebrating deviations from the norm: When deviances become the norm!

'We have little opportunity to portray our own experiences within the general culture, or within radical political movements. Our experience is isolated, individualised; the definitions which society places on us centre on judgements or individual capacities and personalities. This lack of a voice, of the representation of our subjective reality, means that it is difficult for non-disabled to incorporate our reality into their world. (Morris, 1993)

This quote suggests that society currently does not allow the experiences of anyone other than those considered 'normal' to be acknowledged and appreciated. But should this be so? Or maybe not?

Through my own personal experience of impairment i.e. being slow, I have endeavoured with great struggle to make the subject of disability more conventional and regular. In particular I have been using the technique of slow-motion in film, where it becomes an aesthetic and affirmative concept. I have found that it is an effective way for the audience to better understand the story line of the film and gives them time to think and relate to the story. However in 'real' life slow-motion is perceived as a disability in our society.

My disability is all about slow-movement; this will be optimistically exploited and discussed, in this paper, by using a variety of resources and theory of relativity provided by Albert Einstein, which

clearly shows that slow motion is an accepted scientific reality. Simultaneously, I will support this argument drawing upon work by Michael Foucault who critically disagreed with many of the concepts and idea of social living (implying identities and defining individuals) built up by society, in order to demonstrate that 'deviancy can become the norm'.

Julia Bahner, PhD candidate

On who's terms? Sexuality issues in personal assistance services in Sweden

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The impact of sexuality on our identity and general well-being is uncontested. However, for physically disabled people sexuality is still in many situations a taboo and it may therefore be harder to express sexuality and live your life as desired. Personal assistance services (PAS) are considered a right in Sweden since the [Support and Service for Persons with Functional Impairments Act](#) (LSS 1993:387) came into effect in 1994. The intention, based on independent living ideology, was to make it possible to be able to live in the community under good living conditions and on the same terms as non-disabled people according to the guiding terms of autonomy, integrity and self-determination. However, regarding sexuality there has been no consideration and there is a great lack of knowledge in how to deal with assistance users' sexuality. Hence, there is often insecurity about how to handle situations concerning sexuality, both among assistance users, assistants and assistance providers. This presentation draws on results from a study of the lived experiences regarding sexuality for physically disabled users of PAS, and preliminary results from an ongoing study on personal assistants' opinions on sexuality in relation to PAS. Focus is on how able-bodied sexual values restrict possibilities to sexual expression and how this is sometimes played out through the emotional and moral work that is part of PAS. Data were collected through interviews and through observations on online discussion forums. The main finding of the study concerns assistance users' wishes to be recognized as sexual beings in order to be able to live according to their desires. On the contrary, personal assistants expressed a wish to be able to do their job under adequate working conditions, in which sexuality was not always viewed as a part. The study will continue to research the opinions of PAS providers.

Dr. Andrea Beckmann

A critical exploration of public representations of 'normative bodies' and their relationship to formations of power

University of Lincoln

There are multiple possibilities to represent, understand and perceive one's and other 'bodies' which has important consequences for 'body'-experience and consequently one's relation to one's body.

This paper will engage in an analysis of the selective permissiveness of representations of 'bodies'

within the public sphere of the media and therefore reflect on both material and ideological 'conditions of domination' in current Western consumerist capitalist societies. Different forms and dimensions of embodiment are in the contemporary 'historical field' and its mainstream media either rendered absent or made 'spectacle', whereby predominantly so-called "... impairment is socially constructed as "deficit" rather than an alternate ontology."(Gordon/ Rosenblum, 2001: 12)

Bordo's observations in "Material Girl"(1998) portrayed 'plasticity' as the post-modern paradigm for consumer capitalist societies which positions 'bodies' that inhabit 'abject' spaces reserved for those deemed the ultimate in ontological disposition [e.g. 'disabled', 'aged', 'diseased' etc.] in next to absolute exclusion from the 'synoptic space' of contemporary media.

This 'historical field' is not 'progressive' but in essence only re-enforces modern fixations with humans' freedom from modes of bodily determination. While this papers' perspective lies within the social constructionist/queer tradition of critical thought and is thus not essentialist in terms of appreciating forms of embodiment, it is deeply concerned about the implications of the impact of capitalist and consumer societies' reinforced traditional modern images of 'body', purpose-fitted for the demands of an ever-increasing global market.

This paper seeks to celebrate diverse embodiments and to encourage the exploration of 'bodily' pleasure instead of the current embrace of simulation and 'the life-less' in terms of a holistic affective enjoyment of 'lived body'.

Kristín Björnsdóttir

Normal Sexuality?

University of Iceland

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognizes the full human rights and independence of disabled people including the right and freedom to make own choices and decisions. This paper discusses how women with intellectual disabilities describe and make meaning of their sexuality and how different social and cultural factors interact with their experiences. It draws on qualitative interviews and focus-groups carried out with thirteen Icelandic women aged 26–46. The findings of the research indicated a lack of self-determination and limited opportunities to make decisions in everyday life. The findings suggest that women with intellectual disabilities are able to make their own decisions and choices if they are given opportunities to do so. The women described limited access to adult roles and were often perceived as eternal children, as asexual beings, or as having an uncontrollable sexual drive. Some of the women had not been allowed to retain their fertility, and others had experienced forced abortions. Considerable changes regarding disability policy and support services are required in order for Iceland to comply with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Ciara Brennan

Capital, class and cohesion: An analysis of the misuse of EU structural funds to reinforce segregated living arrangements for disabled people in Europe.

This paper will explore the role of the disabling state, markets and capital as interconnected components in the reproduction of oppressive social orders concerning disability in Europe. It will do so by outlining the ways in which structural funds for European cohesion policy were misused to reinforce oppressive social relations and incarceration in Europe. The initial intention of the structural funds (2007-2011) was to generate job development and open markets, and by all appearances would seem to be a rather mundane and uncontroversial exercise in job creation. However, recent studies have found that the funds were used to refurbish and build new institutions (ECCL, 2009, Quinn, 2012). Rather than investing in policies that promote independent and community living, states used the funding to reinforce the social order (Burnham, 2009). This illustrates the powerful role of the state as a regulatory agency which reinforces social relations of oppression and incarceration of disabled people in Europe (Clarke, 1983).

The misuse of structural funds warrants a holistic examination of the processes that resulted in investment in institutions. Burnham (2009) warns of the dangers of ignoring the interconnectedness of politics, the economy and society. In the case of the structural funds, political forces (the state as a regulator), the market (investment in institutions) and deeply imbedded societal structures (power relations) and ideologies (controlling deviations from the norm) were at play. I will draw upon Marxist theories of class, capital and the regulatory role of the state to argue that states have used capital and manipulated markets to reinforce social relations of poverty and incarceration in segregated living arrangements.

I will conclude on a more positive note by outlining the potential role of states as enforcers of new social relations based on ideologies developed by civil society (the Independent living movement), policies developed in Nordic states and the fulfilment of obligations set forth by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

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Nili Broyer, Alin Beit Noam Institute for Disability Studies

Good Luck: Cultural Change and Crippling Design

Western culture views disability as an undesirable and inherently problematic phenomenon whose presence needs to be reduced as much as possible. Social values such as independent, self control and wholeness are esteemed and placed at the center of these societies, clashing with disability and constructing it as an inherent deficiency and lack.

For the purpose of this lecture we will examine and challenge the cultural context and hegemonic social values in which disability is shaped. In contrast to the standard hierarchy of values permeating the dominant society here we will conduct a reverse experiment and place disability in the center of society and its considerations.

Lack of social recognition of disability as a legitimate difference creates symbolic erasure, marginalization, oppression and discrimination. However, it seems that it can also be a source of advantage as the invalidation constitutes an alternative; by virtue of its construction as illegitimate, disability carries within it a treasure trove of stimuli, values, and ways of thought that are culturally marginalized, socially unworthy, and even identified and banned as contaminants. Thus, disability functions as an unfamiliar space that can become fertile ground for creativity, innovative design and cultural change.

In this lecture, disability will be presented as a radical concept that expresses a range of alternative values. To illustrate these diverse values, images of products will be utilized. It will be argued that these products provide concrete examples of alternative values similar to that of disability as they echo the lacking, demand dependence, arouse feelings of disgust and anxiety, summon trauma and pain, confuse understanding, destabilize the feeling of self-control, and contain within them images of seeming redundancy. Entry of these products into our everyday social life can undermine the status of fundamental social constructs such as foreign vs. familiar and disabled vs. normal.

Emmeline Burdett

The Expression of a Rational Moral Principle: Bioethics versus Disability Studies'

The conflict between bioethicists and disability studies scholars is essentially that between the medical and social models of disability. When discussing the case of Baby Jane Doe, a U.S. infant left untreated after she was born with spina bifida and various other medical problems, the bioethicist James Rachels declared that

'Any distinction between Baby Jane Doe's 'life' (or lack of it) expresses a rational moral principle, whereas Dr Himmler's prejudices do not'.

Anne Mclean's book *The Elimination of Morality: Reflections on Utilitarianism and Bioethics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993) shows the importance of rationality to bioethicists:

'the concept of *rational justification* in morality upon which the whole bioethical enterprise is founded'.(p.3).

Indeed, in a 2001 article entitled 'One Principle and Three Fallacies of Disability Studies', (*Journal of Medical Ethics*, p.387) the English bioethicist John Harris described disability as

'a condition that someone has a strong rational preference not to be in'.

Anne Mclean writes that a 'rational justification' means simply an 'answer supported by reasons', and some of the reasons given by impaired people to demonstrate the wrongness of bioethicists' ideas about impairment and disability have been summed up by Adrienne Asch:

'...denial of civil, social and economic rights and not one of biology and health ... Yet the attitudes to disability ... that abound in medicine and bioethics all compel scholars and activists to assert that the first right of people with disabilities is a claim to life itself, along with the social recognition of the value and validity of life of someone with a disability'. ('Disability, Bioethics and Human Rights', in Albrecht, Seelman and Bury *Handbook of Disability Studies*, 2001)

In this paper I will be taking an in-depth look at the problem, and asking whether a resolution is possible – or desirable.

Dr. Colin Cameron

The Affirmation Model: A New Tool for Making Sense of Everyday Life

In *The Politics of Difference* (1990) Iris Young argued that oppression is experienced in the flow of everyday life, encountered by the devalued in interactions with well-intentioned 'normal' folk going about their ordinary, respectable business. It is not, Young contends, that 'normal' folk think of themselves as oppressors, but that all the same these interactions involve something of benefit to them - a perceived pay-off to their own advantage in measuring themselves against those they identify as deficient. The affirmation model distinguishes between impairment, regarded as 'physical, sensory, emotional and cognitive difference to be expected and respected on its own terms in a diverse society' and disability, identified as 'a personal and social role that simultaneously invalidates the subject position of people with impairments and validates the subject position of those identified as normal' (Cameron, 2011). In this paper I want to suggest that while the social model has given us much, in that it has allowed us to understand disability as a restrictive relationship (it is about what disabled people are prevented from doing and being), the affirmation model provides us with another useful tool, revealing disability as a productive relationship (it is about what disabled people are required to do and be instead). While Fran Martin has observed that 'we are not trained to think of the repetitive activities and apparently banal objects that make up our experience in an intellectual way' (2003:1), it is precisely within these that relationships of normality/abnormality are constructed and normality is established as the ideal. The affirmation model, I propose, offers us a framework with which to problematise the assumptions underpinning

these relationships. Its value is that it allows us to make affirming sense of what is going on in disabling encounters, and to place our own transgressive meaning upon such encounters.

Dr. Anne Chappell

Reason, Risk and Citizenship: Disabled people and the UK New Labour and the Coalition Governments

Buckinghamshire New University

Citizenship in modernity was shaped by the contract between the state and individual based on models of acceptable parenthood, employment in the Fordist economy and soldiering. Disabled people were largely excluded from these patterns of citizenship as they were considered to be irrational and dangerous to social stability. In late modernity, the fragmentation of work in the globalised economy and the rise of the risk society have shaped new models and practices of citizenship. This paper will explore the shifting processes of citizenship in late modernity and discuss the ways in which they impact on disabled people. The paper will argue that disabled people in late modernity have become exposed to new forms of consumerisation and governance through interventions directed at the expansion of paid work, the growth of self-directed support and the micro-management of behaviour.

Citizenship in late modernity throws up contradictions for disabled people. It may offer social inclusion to those who demonstrate capacity as rational and reflexive consumers, but, in so doing, it may also draw them into exploitative relationships and the responsibility of individualised risk. Meanwhile, in a period of recession, disabled people are under growing pressure to participate in economic life as flexible worker-citizens. Those who do not or who are seen to fall outside the scope of rational citizenship are subject to increasing sanction and harassment.

Róisín Dermody

The objectification of marginalised bodies and its impact

It could be argued that the objectification of marginalised bodies has been taking place for over two thousand years. This paper examines two examples of how such objectification is flourishing in the 21st century. As a disabled feminist, I shall use feminist disability studies and critical disability theory to examine these issues.

Firstly, I shall examine how the objectification of marginalised bodies has served to disempower disabled sexuality and how online resources both relating to disabled sexuality and others, such as social networking and non-disability related sites, have been exploited by devotees due to the involvement of disabled people. It is one thing to engage in fetishism where the items used can be removed and put away, it is quite another when it is an impairment that is being objectified. As disabled people, we are more than the sum of our impairments.

Secondly, I shall critically review the huge level of documentaries about people with marginalised bodies, the numerous examples of which indicate the high levels of interest in “spectacle”. I will argue that these documentaries and reality shows have replaced the freak shows of the past. My primary interest is in the people who participate in these programmes and how their participation impacts on the wider community of people with marginalised bodies. While the participants don’t

seem to “feel” exploited, this does not negate the exploitation taking place. Such “spectacles” imply that marginalised bodies are public property and therefore can be objectified in everyday life. A critical reflection of these issues, I argue, is essential to problematize some of the fundamental ways disabled people are represented in society today and the implications of that.

Róisín Dermody has recently finished a research Masters at the School of Social Justice, University College Dublin. Her research examined Disabled Women’s access to sexual and reproductive health. A previous research project examined the arguments in favour and against aborting a foetus on the grounds of impairment detected during prenatal screening.

Sandra Ellis

Autism: Celebrating Neurodiversity

EdD Student, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

Building on Vygotsky’s theory of ‘positive differentiation’ (1993:30) this paper aims to show that being autistic does not have to be cause for concern, but can be an enlightening experience. Having a late diagnosis of autism has sent me back on a compelling trajectory through my life and by using an autoethnographic approach; I shall attempt to explore how this neurodiversity has impacted my educational and professional choices. This is just one aspect of my doctoral thesis. The ethnographic contributions of Carolyn Ellis (2009; 2004; 1996), have inspired my research and will undoubtedly shape future academic work. I may have a ‘diagnosed disability’ but I argue together with Vygotsky (Gindis, 2003:2002-3) that it is very much a socio-cultural phenomenon and that it is society that promotes a disability rather than the condition or diagnosis itself. Indeed I recognise and have experienced the very negative and often unbearable aspects of autism, and have found myself deep in uncertainty and frustration, but my narrative concentrates on the positive in an endeavour in part to increase public education of this more uplifting aspect of autism. This approach also resonates with renowned psychologist Bruner (1996:67) who sees the function of education ‘to enable...individual human beings, to operate at their fullest potential...to use their wits, skills and passions to the fullest’. In addition I perceive personal motivation as a major contributing factor in achievement and this again is supported by Bruner (1996) who argues that motivation is essential if a learner is going to benefit from what education offers. The paper aims to amalgamate these concepts and demonstrate that Vygotsky’s ‘positive differentiation’ really was a pioneering concept influencing special education and consequently me personally.

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Katherine Runswick-Cole*, Dan Goodley* and Cate Fisher**

***Manchester Metropolitan University, ** Scope**

Resilience? Bouncing back - with support!

This paper draws on an on-going research project *Resilience in the lives of disabled people across the life-course* which is being carried out in collaboration between Scope, the UK disability charity, and Manchester Metropolitan University. A key aim of the study is to understand what 'resilience' means in the lives of disabled people in order to inform policy and practice. Resilience has been traditionally been defined as 'a class of phenomena characterized by *good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation of development.*' (Masten, 2001: 228). In lay terms, resilience is perhaps most often conceived of, rather vaguely, as the ability to 'bounce back' after a bad experience (Young et al., 2008). Resilience is often discussed in relation to child development where it is usually seen as the ability to develop *normally* even when faced with extreme adversity. These are clearly problematic conceptions of resilience for disabled people who are often considered not to develop normally, nor to share personal characteristics with others without impairments. Indeed, at times, some disabled people have been considered to lack the bodies and minds needed for resilience to emerge.

Recent research (Ungar, 2007) has begun to challenge understandings of resilience that are tied to judgements about what is *normal* in specific nations and cultural contexts. However, scant attention has been paid to the context of *ableist cultures* that affirm normative modes of being and diminish lives that are judged to differ from the norm (Campbell, 2009). Our aim here is to explore the ableist assumptions underpinning resilience research and to offer alternative understandings of the concept of resilience. Our aim is to conceive of resilience in ways that respect diversity and interdependence and disabled people as active agents of change. We suggest that resilience is, perhaps, best understood as: "bouncing back – with support".

Dan Goodley

Reflections on Disability and Social Theory

In this paper I will reflect upon a forthcoming publication to explore emerging insights, tensions and debates within disability studies theory. Keeping in mind the conference theme around 'Crippling the norm' I will consider how contributors to the text queer, subvert, challenge and problematise some of the taken for granted ideas in disability studies and social theory. I will consider the ways in which crippling may or may not re-establish a critical disability studies frame of reference.

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Steve Graby

To "be" or not to "be disabled": autism, disablement and identity politics

In recent years, due to the work of autistic writers and activists (e.g. Singer (1999), Sinclair (1999; 2010), Baggs (2003), Meyerding (2003)), autism has moved from being solely a diagnosis to an identity positioned uncertainly as an impairment-based category of "disabled people" or as an axis of identification in itself, more akin to those of ethnic, sexual or gender minorities. This process has troubled binary distinctions between impairment and disability, highlighting tensions between identity-based conceptions of who is and is not "disabled" (such as that of Gabel (1999), or the membership criteria of many disabled people's organisations), in which self-identification is the primary or even only criterion for membership of the category "disabled people", and definitions of disability as material oppression, linked to impairment not by inherent necessity but by social construction, which are upheld by most exponents of the social model of disability.

In this paper I will draw on other autistic people's writing about autistic identity, as well as on the Disability Studies literature on (self-)identification of "disabled people" and on parallel critiques of concepts of (ethnic, sexual, gendered) identity from fields such as critical anthropology and queer theory (e.g. Gamson (1995), Leve (2011)), to examine what "being autistic" actually is, and whether the specific conditions of disablement experienced by people assigned to an ontological category which is often conceptualised as "social impairment" blur the distinction between impairment as a biological status and disability as a social relationship, in doing so producing a radical intervention into the sociology and politics of identity.

Anat Greenstein

Burning the blackboard: the important role of conflict and resistance in inclusive education

Manchester Metropolitan University

This paper is based on PhD research aimed at theorising democratic and inclusive education, connecting Marxist, feminist and anarchist critiques of mainstream education with the demand for inclusive education voiced by the disabled people's movement in Britain and across the world. Conducting research that is committed to social justice requires attention to three main aspects of social relations - mechanisms of oppression; forms of resistance; and desired alternatives to the current situation. Drawing on findings from research with disabled students in a 'special needs unit' of a secondary school and interviews with activists in the disabled people's movement and the

inclusive education movement, the paper will discuss these three aspects of social change theory , focusing particularly on theorising and engaging with resistance. The main argument is not only that conflict and resistance are important means of affecting change towards inclusive education, but also that they are just as central to the practice of democratic and inclusive education. Anger, disobedience and resistance are crucial components of democracy and social justice, which are too often feared, pacified and/or punished. Inclusive education research can play an important role in connecting 'disruptive behaviour' with the social contexts, histories and struggles in which it occurs, and challenging the 'smooth' and 'taken for granted' methods, roles and hierarchies of mainstream schooling.

Jonathan Harvey

The 'locked door' of neurological rehabilitation? The transformative power of space and time

The Open University

Within this paper I intend to utilise the explanatory qualities of critical social theory and 'put them to work' in explaining the neurological rehabilitation process from sudden onset neurological 'injuries'.

After giving a brief explanation of what I mean by 'sudden onset' neurological injuries, I use the Foucauldian theory of 'biopower' to demonstrate how the bodies of those within neurological rehabilitation are considered deviant. These bodies come under constant review and scrutiny from medical professionals (see Tremainn 2005). This positions those within neurological rehabilitation in a relatively subordinate location. I use the image of the 'locked door' (which are found frequently throughout neurological rehabilitation units to mark out spaces where only experts may frequent) to represent this power imbalance.

The work of the poststructural theorists Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2004) and Bradotti (1991; 2003; 2006; 2011) are explored; with particular reference to their potential to refer to the uncertainty of future capacity. The notion of future and of possibility, can provide an alternative focus which strays from the traditional, static focus on (in)capacity at a given time. The notion of future capacity is important within neurological rehabilitation not least as there is no fixed time-scale in which recovery occurs (Dalton et al. 2012; Playford et al. 2000; Turner-Stokes et al. 2005).

This research is very much in a developmental form and seeks to explore the answers to many important questions, including:

Are rehabilitation 'survivors' able to act with autonomy and can they (re)construct their lives and self-identities?

What role(s) can medical professionals play in this?

Ultimately:

Can the 'locked door' of neurological rehabilitation be unlocked?

Mark Haydon-Laurelut

Looped Patterns of Disablement: A coordinated management of meaning perspective on the makings of intellectual disability.

University of Portsmouth

This paper examines 'looped' patterns of disablement in the context of services for adults with Intellectual Disabilities. The concept of psycho-emotional disablement creates the space to explore what happens 'between disabled people and disabling society' (Goodley & Runswick-Cole, 2011: 6). Coordinated management of meaning theory (CMM) (Pearce, 2007), a social constructionist communication theory, provides conceptual tools to interrogate this space.

The paper draws upon my experiences in specialist health services for people with intellectual disabilities as well as the academy. Two main patterns of disablement are focused on here. The first pattern is that of the 'Strange Loop' (Cronen, Johnson & Lannamann, 1982) where paradoxical cultural spaces are created where contradictory demands are made upon people with impairments and their networks of significance. The second pattern is that of the 'Charmed Loop' (Cronen, Johnson & Lannamann, 1982) where mutually confirming texts and contexts create and maintain stable disabling environments. Suggestions are made for dis-covering loops and unsettling them.

The paper suggests that using CMM theory to explicate what is being made in social communication – including looped communications - may work to de-psychologise problems currently more commonly located in persons; placing problems in discursive contexts rather than individual bodies, irrational or faulty cognitions, behaviours or toxic relationships with significant others. This provides space for a challenge to psycho-emotional processes of disablement (Reeve, 2002; 2008) of people with intellectual disabilities and their supporters.

Prachatip Kata

The birth of ambiguous citizen and dis/able body in Thailand: From biological body to political body

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This paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted among blind singers and groups of musicians working in the streets of Bangkok, analyzes texts such as available literature, public policy, and law documents relating to disabled people, and interviewed governmental and non-profit organizations. My paper explores the bio political production of disabled people in Thailand. Ambiguous citizen situation and disabled body or able body of people with disabilities in Thailand were constructed by Thai neo-liberal state's ideology in each era. The disabled people became to be problematized in the field of political thought as moral-political subject, of observe of techniques of power of Modern Thai state in each era. Their ambiguous citizen situation and their dis/abled body were excluded by means of an inclusion through power of state mechanisms in many ways. It is not only to secure power of politics and economy of state but also maintains social morality. The dis/abled body of people with disabilities was identified as moral-political subject of modern Thai

state where power was exercised a double movement of inclusion-exclusion in order to regulate good citizen, good body or, and in the process solidify sovereign power of modern Thai state.

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Eimir McGrath

Challenging the crippling stare; dancing with difference. Changing perceptions of disability in dance film performance.

University of Bedfordshire

This paper explores the potential for dance film performance to act as a conduit for changing existing western societal perceptions of physical disability. Dancers with physical disabilities are rarely seen in professional dance performances that are not specifically labelled 'integrated dance', yet dance offers a potential means of changing exclusionary perceptions of disability.

Dance performance can be understood as both an expression of societal values and as a vehicle for initiating change (Dale et al. 2007). These apparently contradictory roles make dance an intriguing site for exploring the placement of the physically disabled body in contemporary society, and for disrupting existing perceptions of physical disability as transgressive.

Through a critical evaluation of Petra Kupperts' dance film *Water Burns Sun* (2009), the embodiment of the prevailing western cultural notion of physical disability is examined, with particular reference to the act of staring (Garland Thomson, 2009). One of the dancers, Neil Marcus, has cerebral palsy and his performance provides the means to explore the notion of embodied difference. In viewing dance, permission is tacitly given to engage in what Garland Thomson has called 'the baroque stare', the stare of infancy and early childhood. Dance performance unravels the familiar ways of looking at disability - the blank stare that negates and makes invisible, or the knowledge producing medical gaze where disability becomes hypervisible. The freedom to engage in the baroque stare when viewing dance opens up the possibility that the viewer can let go of existing perceptions in the creation of a new shared understanding of the dancer's embodied presence, a transformative shared experience that gives rise to interpersonal synchrony, where the humanity of the dancer is recognized rather than his perceived disability.

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China Mills

Spook: Faking Normal, Faking Disorder.

Manchester Metropolitan University

"[T]he most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed" (Steve Biko, 1978: 92).

How do spoof, 'fake' psycho-pharmaceutical adverts work to queer the 'real' adverts, and the disorders they market the drugs for? How do they cripple conceptions of normality and sanity?

These spoof ads point to a creeping psychiatrization of our everyday lives, a psychiatrization globalised through 'mental health literacy' campaigns and psycho-education in low-income countries of the global South. This paper will explore how this psychiatrization interlaces with colonial subject formation. For while pharmaceutical adverts and psychiatry interpellate, hail, 'make up', and elicit particular subjects – as pharmaceutical citizens, neurochemical selves; there is also a force at work in 'making up' these subjects, through the power of the gaze, that for Frantz Fanon; objectifies, seals, crushes and abrades. But how does medication broker subjectivity? How does it, as the ads claim, restore us to ourselves, make us whole again?

This paper will attend to the visual, to mechanisms of looking, to psychiatric fields of visibility. In India, many mental health Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), go to rural areas to 'identify' people with 'mental illness', making them visible through diagnostic systems developed in the global North, and medicating them. They say these people are 'invisible people'. So how do medication and psychiatry make people visible? What ways of 'seeing' do they make possible? For Homi Bhabha (1994) invisibility does not signify lack; instead it works to disrupt identification and interpellation through refusing presence. Thus how might these 'invisible people', those who refuse to 'reproduce hegemonic appearances' (Scott, 1990), work to disrupt the gaze of psychiatry? Might invisibility; the doubling, dissembling image of being in two places at once (Bhabha, 1994), work as both a 'symptom' of oppression, and a means of subversion?

To read psychiatrization as a colonial discourse opens up possibilities to explore how the secret arts, the hidden transcripts, of resistance of the colonised might be read in people's resistance to psychiatry – from the slyness of mimicking normality, to the mockery of 'spoof' drug adverts. How the 'disembodied eyes' of the subaltern that see but are not seen, might disrupt and subvert both the presumed 'I' of the unitary 'whole' subject, and the surveillant, penetrative 'eye' of psychiatry.

How medication might work to make people visible is more troubling if we read invisibility as camouflage and potential subversion. It suggests that medication might make people more vulnerable in their submission to sociality, in their domestication. But with what conceptual tools can we establish whether being invisible is an act of resistance through camouflage, a strategy solely for survival, or a mark of adaptation and assimilation? Perhaps certain forms of psychiatric 'looking' allow us not to 'see'; enable us to encounter difference

and yet defer it, domesticate it– to recuperate the hegemonic, the status quo, in the final look.

In this paper I will explore how spoof adverts may mimic ‘real’ ads in a similar way to how some people mimic normality, slyly; a ‘resemblance and menace’ that mocks the power .

Damian Milton

Embodied sociality and the conditioned relativism of dispositional diversity

Following on from last year’s presentation on the micro-sociological analysis of autism, this paper takes this exploration further by reviewing the concepts of ‘embodiment’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1945), as well as those of ‘conditioned relativism’ and ‘dispositional diversity’ as first devised by the paper’s author some fifteen years ago as an undergraduate student, and applied to debates regarding neurodiversity. These concepts were devised by the author many years prior to being diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum, having been previously assessed as ‘suffering’ from a number of ‘mental illnesses’ by a number of psychiatrists in his youth. Drawing upon Marxist and Phenomenological theories in particular, these concepts are explained through interactive activities, yet also an eclectic citation of references ranging from Lao Tsu to Jimi Hendrix. These philosophical/sociological conceptualisations will be contrasted with those of others within the neurodiversity movement as a way of highlighting the need for ‘autistic solidarity’ and the disabling effects of being isolated from others of similar ‘disposition’. It is hoped that through this overview, a new theoretical ‘paradigm’ of autism and neurodiversity will be presented, that presents a theoretical explanation for the autistic ‘difference’ being a ‘normal’ part of the diversity characteristic of all nature, and thus hopefully dislodging the hegemonic dominance of what constitutes ‘normalcy’ yet further. It is hoped that this paper will go some way toward promoting a paradigm shift in the field of autism studies.

Dr Wayne Morris

'To be in the Image of God: Exploring our Obsession with Rationality and Reason'

Western societies have in no small way been influenced and shaped by Judeo-Christian traditions, and the way that disability is understood in the West is no exception. So, what is the reason for our obsession with rationality and reason? Part of the response to this question at least can be found by turning to the notion of the 'image of God' in Christianity. For much of Christian history in the West, it has been argued that to be human is to be made in God's image; that is what distinguishes humanity from the rest of 'creation'. That part of the human that was thought to most reflect God's image in human beings was the capacity to reason. To be human and to be in God's image, therefore, is to be a rational, reasonable creature. Such notions have historically served to dehumanize and marginalize people who do not conform to such constructions of the normal human; people with profound learning disabilities, people with mental health problems, and people with dementia among others. This paper will explore the significance of the 'image of God' within the Christian tradition and outline some of the ways it has been used to the detriment of people

with disabilities historically. It will examine how theologies of disability have sought to deconstruct this notion of the 'image of God' and propose alternative theological perspectives on what it means to be human. This may go some way, it is argued, to transforming not only Christian perspectives on reason and rationality, but the influences such perspectives have had in Western societies more widely.

Cassie Ogden

Gases, Liquids and Solids: reclaiming fluidity in a liquid modern world.

University of Chester

Much academic focus has led to the understanding of the commodification of the body, which has resulted amongst other things in the devotion of time, money and effort, to pursue the 'perfect' body. This commitment to an idealised/normalised asceticism is often manifested in the actual or appeared alteration of the size and shape of the body with the 'help' of various diets, clothing, surgery, drugs and exercise. One's corporeality therefore partially shapes social reality and statuses according to the degree to which bodies are accepted into society. Despite the importance placed on the body in terms of appearance and productivity in the contemporary world, mundane functions of the body are often deemed shameful in this fallacious imaginary of the body resulting in the denial and/or veiling of regular bodily functions. Repulsion and exclusion can be felt by those possessing 'leaky' bodies or more accurately bodies that leak without control. This paper utilises a Baumanesque analysis of modernity to highlight the convenience of a controlled body to a consumerist society. Also reflective of Shildrick's (2009) plea for troubling dominant discourses and instead envisaging all bodies as non-stable, Bauman's work creates the potential to imagine an emancipated society where static, constricting notions of the body are obsolete. Through the location of society as liquid modern (Bauman, 2000), the common sense notion of 'bodily control' will be interrogated and highlighted as a dangerous benchmark that people are best to resist.

Lani Parker

Everywhere and Nowhere: Constructions of Whiteness in the Lives of Physically Impaired/Disabled People

Critical Whiteness studies has focused on the construction of whiteness as hegemonic and normative and has underlined the importance of deconstructing whiteness in order to eliminate racism. Thus, it is useful to look at how visibly disabled people construct themselves as disabled people and as white people in order to gain insight into how the dominant discourse of disability is racialised. In this paper, debates arising from the fields of Critical Whiteness studies and Disability studies will be used as a theoretical framework to explore the construction of white disabled people's identities in order to open up debates around people's perceptions of themselves as racialised subjects, to look at the patterns of how white, disabled people as racialised subjects both reinforce and resist racism in the context of wider power structures in the everyday, and to look at the interaction between racism and ableism. I will argue that manifestations of whiteness in white, disabled people's identities may be similar in some ways to hegemonic manifestations of whiteness, for example whiteness as invisible, pervasive and a signifier of white privilege. However, physically

disabled people hold specific positions in society as part of a subordinate group, and I contend that because of this positionality, their “whiteness” will be inflected by the experience of being disabled.

Dr Donna Reeve

Dr Karen Soldatic

Neoliberal workfare and the impaired body: The role of the WCA in redefining the disability category and the production of economic zones of indistinction

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Disabled people and their entitlement to social security benefits are now a central concern of neoliberal economic policy debates (OECD, 2009). As a consequence, across western (neo)liberal democracies, a redefinition of who is seen as ‘really disabled’ is taking place. The form that this takes varies with country; in the UK this has resulted in many disabled people who were formerly in receipt of Incapacity Benefit, being now declared as ‘fit to work’ under the successor Employment Support Allowance.

As the coalition government continue their plans to reform disability benefits under the auspices of a time of austerity, the Work Capability Assessment is a key tool to separate out disabled people into those deserving of support, those deemed fit to work and those in the intermediate work-related activity group. Drawing on interviews with disabled women talking about their experience of claiming ESA, this paper will discuss their experiences of attending a WCA medical. We will show how these women internalise governmental and media discourses about who is seen as disabled (and worthy of support) and the ways in which they navigate the complex, trap-laden setting of the WCA medical.

This paper will be presenting new ideas which are still under development by the two authors. One line of discussion will show how these narrative accounts illustrate the ways in which ESA and the associated WCA lead to economic zones of indistinction (Agamben, 1998). In these liminal spaces disabled people are no longer protected by the welfare state and instead find themselves at the mercy of prejudiced employers and part-time, insecure work opportunities. This paper will also discuss the impact on the emotional health of these disabled women caused by their negotiation of the multiple, shifting, conflicting identities foisted upon them by external agents.

Siegfried Saerberg,

Playing, watching and celebrating football A sensory Autoethnography of Normalcy

Independent scholar, Germany

Besides watching and celebrating, currently playing football is a growing field of leisure activity among people who are blind or visually impaired. It becomes normal.

Normalcy is a paradox. Why? It’s a relative term and we cannot find a notion of Normalcy that is independent from the social contexts where it is applied to. How then is normalcy experienced and

negotiated by individuals who act in various social situations in interdependence with other social and material agencies?

1. Normalcy is experienced with regard to powerful, already established social norms, routines, rites and values that are imitated or used: On weekends, normally, she travels to the matches of her favourite team.

2. Normalcy contains the extraordinary and gives birth to it by way of the feast. Hereford (UK) hosted the IBSA world Blind Football Championship 2010. The tournament concluded with the award presentations of the golden boot among others.

3. Normalcy has to do with the viewpoint: Her Grandpa took her to all the matches since she was five years old. Unusually for a girl of this age, she knew all the players personally.

4. Normalcy is a process: „When I met her the first time, it was quite unfamiliar for me to have a blind fan with me in the bus. Now it’s normal.“

5. Normalcy contains the extraordinary and gives birth to it by way of failure: One Saturday she missed the bus because she overslept. She decided to travel 500 km all alone by train from Gelsenkirchen to Berlin where her team had an away game. This was extraordinary for her!

6. Normalcy is corporeal. It’s stabilized via the interplay of bodies, material things, habitus and the rules of the game: „It has been a challenge for me to begin playing blind football. Your whole body has to be rearranged: listening, knowing the field of play, running, controlling the ball, shouting and kicking!“

Alex Tankard

If I am not grotesque I am nothing’: Aubrey Beardsley and Victorian Disability Pride

Is it possible to find an expression of ‘crip pride’ seventy years before the modern disability movement? If so, what would it look like?

This paper discusses portraits of Decadent artist Aubrey Beardsley (1872-1898), and his playful battle with prudish Victorian critics. Although he died at the age of twenty-five, Beardsley’s startling black-and-white drawings influenced Art Nouveau, 1960s psychedelia and modern graphic design. However, his status as a disabled artist is rarely acknowledged.

To appreciate Beardsley’s place in the history of ‘disability pride’ we must first understand the dominant Victorian models of disabled identity that determined the form Beardsley’s rebellion would take. Diagnosed with chronic tuberculosis (or ‘consumption’) as a child, Beardsley was disabled by socio-economic structures that discriminated against people with debilitating, life-limiting illness, and by pervasive cultural stereotypes surrounding ‘consumptives’. During his brief lifetime, traditional Romantic concepts of ‘consumption’ as a spiritual state of special sensitivity were being challenged by a new biomedical concept of ‘tuberculosis’ as a disgusting disease that eugenicists associated ‘with other degenerate conditions, such as idiocy, insanity, deaf-mutism,

cancer, drunkenness, epilepsy, and crime.' For a society that valued 'healthiness' above all other traits in life and art, Beardsley's celebration of sickness was terrifying.

Beardsley defied Romantic stereotypes of the consumptive artist as a tragic, tormented figure by showing the public that he was invulnerable to criticism and having a great time even if it killed him. However, his engagement with contemporary eugenic anxieties was more sophisticated. Rather than simply denying accusations of sickness, perversion and degeneracy, Beardsley displayed his dying body in stylised portraits and self-portraits, using the persona of the queer, anti-natural *fin de siècle* dandy to transform this diseased object into a work of art.

Margrit Shildrick:

Celebrating Crip Pleasure: The Somatechnics of Disability and Desire

Linköping University, Sweden

Abstract: In this presentation, I intend to address pleasure and desire in the disabled body in relation to somatechnics in which embodiment is always technologised. The focus will primarily be on sexuality, but also on other bodily engagements.

As one aspect of biotechnology, prostheses have long been in term use as compensatory technologies that stand in for some putative lack or deficiency that is supposedly the mark of anomalous embodiment. More recently, however, the emphasis has firmly switched to enhancement and supplement, and it is that more productive trajectory that I shall pursue. My argument is that in the era of postmodernity, the disabled body specifically can raise acute questions about the always ambivalent relationship between embodied subjects, pleasure and biotechnology. Desire is no longer focussed on the replication of a more or less acceptable model of normative practices but on a highly productive alternative that inevitably queers the meaning of sexuality itself.

Jenny Slater

Different battles, same war? Crippling youth and adulthood

Manchester Metropolitan University

Considering young people as adults-to-be potentially leaves disabled young people in a paradoxical position: although adulthood is wrapped up in ableism, leading to infantilising disabled people, there is simultaneously an idealised discourse of youth as a health-and-beauty-thing which leaves little space for human diversity. During my PhD study I have critiqued discourses of youth and adulthood, not only because they potentially *exclude* dis/abled young people, but because I, a 24-year-old non-disabled woman, have felt personally constrained by 'adulthood expectations' resulting from *inclusion* in such discourse.

This paper draws upon fieldwork carried out alongside my disabled peers, through which we shared experiences of growing-up. Although confirming similarities, sharing our stories also illuminated my 'able-bodied privilege'. Expectations placed upon disabled young people were sometimes oppositional to my own, to the extent that many of my disabled participants were fighting for acceptance into discourses I felt constrained by. Young disabled people helped me understand this

as a desire to be recognised amongst one's peers, and I questioned my place in celebrating disability as a challenge to the normative discourses I was already accepted into.

However, although our strategies were sometimes oppositional, the war we were fighting seemed the same. As someone accepted into discourses of independence and femininity, and expected to conform to heterosexual expectation, I needed to challenge them. For those excluded from adulthood independence, and not considered as gendered and sexual beings, maybe the more immediate fight was for recognition. Yet, in these fights, young disabled people were reconceptualising independence, and making conscious decisions about when to strategically relate to normative discourses of gender and sexuality in order to assert themselves as gendered and sexual beings. I use some of these stories to show how despite differing battles, we are in fact comrades in arms.