
Disability: History and Theory
HSSC 561
Fall 2014
Tuesday, 1:30-4:30pm
Cohen Hall, Room 337

Professor Beth Linker
Office Hours:
Email:

Course Description:

Deemed “the next academic frontier,” disability studies is a vibrant and growing field of inquiry. When used as an analytic tool, disability destabilizes our understanding of traditional analytical categories such as race, class, sexuality, and gender. The purpose of this course will be to explore recent literature in the history and theory of disability. Throughout the semester, we will approach this literature with an eye to how disability studies can push the fields of the history of science, medicine, and technology in new directions. Topics will include: the pathological and the normal, the history of the body, the sociology of deviance, medicalization, chronic illness and disease, genetics and disability, war and disability, the role of disability in health care policy, as well as the politics of design and assistive technologies.

Course Assignments and Grading:

1. **Short Museum Reaction Paper, Due Oct. 13th, 9AM in Professor Linker’s mailbox, 303 Cohen.** (details to be discussed in class)
2. **Expert for the Day.** Come prepared to lead class discussion on an assigned day and submit a 3,000 word review of the required and supplemental readings.
3. **Final 20-page paper** (details to be discussed in class)

Schedule of Readings:

*Books marked by an asterisk are available for purchase at the Penn Book Center, 130 S. 34th Street, 215-222-7600.

Sept. 2 Introduction

Definitions and Theories

Sept. 9 (part 1)

*Irving K. Zola, *Missing Pieces: A Chronicle of Living with a Disability*

Suggested Supplemental Readings:

- Catherine J. Kudlick, “Disability History: Why We Need Another Other” *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 3 (June 2003): 763-93.
- Georges Canguilhem, *On the Normal and the Pathological*
- Susan Wendell, “Who is Disabled? Defining Disability,” in *The Rejected Body: Feminist Philosophical Reflections on Disability* (Routledge, 1996).

Sept. 16 (part 2)

*Tobin Siebers, *Disability Theory*

- Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*
- Beth Linker, "On the Borderland of the History of Medicine and Disability: A Survey of the Fields," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 87, no. 4 (Winter 2013): 499-535.
- Douglas Baynton, "Disability and the Justification of Inequality in American History," in: *The New Disability History: American Perspectives*, ed. Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky (New York: NYU Press, 2001), 33-57.

Synthetic Histories and Pre-Modern Analytics

Sept. 23

*Kim Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*

- Rosemary Garland Thompson, *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature*
- Irina Metzler: "Disability in the Middle Ages: Impairment at the intersection of Historical Inquiry and Disability Studies" *Hist. Compass* 9, no. 1 (2011): 46-60.

Monsters and Freaks

Sept. 30--FIELD TRIP TO THE MÜTTER MUSEUM

*Robert Bogdan, *Freak Show: Presenting Human Oddities for Amusement and Profit*

- Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150-1750*
- Mary E. Fissell, "Hairy Women and Naked Truths: Gender and the Politics of Knowledge in Aristotle's *Masterpiece*" *William Mary Quarterly* 60 (January 2003): 43-75.

Sense and Disability

Oct. 7

*Susan Burch, *Signs of Resistance: American Deaf Cultural History, 1900 to World War II*

- Lennard Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body*
- Kim Nielsen, *The Radical Lives of Helen Keller*

Disability and Technology

Oct. 14 (Part 1)

*Stuart Blume *The Artificial Ear: Cochlear Implants and the Culture of Deafness*

- "Sound and Fury," documentary and "Sound and Fury, Six Years Later," documentary
- Mara Mills, "On Disability and Cybernetics: Helen Keller, Norbert Wiener, and the Hearing Glove," *Differences* 22, no. 2-3 (2011): 74-111.
- Graham Pullin, *Design Meets Disability* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2009).

Oct. 21 (part 2)

*Katherine Ott, David Serlin and Stephen Mihm, *Artificial Parts, Practical Lives: Modern Histories of Prosthetics*, selections.

- Donna Haraway, "Able Bodies and Companion Species," in *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), ch. 6 AND idem., "A Cyborg Manifesto"

- Sarah Jain, "The Prosthetic Imagination: Enabling and Disabling the Prosthesis Trope," *Science, Technology & Human Values* 24 (Winter 1999): 31-54.

Chronicity, Debility, and Time

Oct. 28

*Julie Livingston, *Debility and the Moral Imagination in Botswana*

- Julie Livingston, "Insights from an African History of Disability," *Radical History Review* (Winter 2006): 111-126.
- Susan Wendell, "Unhealthy Disabled: Treating Chronic Illnesses as Disabilities," *Hypatia* 16, no. 4 (2001): 17-33
- Douglas Baynton, "These Pushful Days"

Disease and Disability

Nov. 4

*Daniel J. Wilson, *Living with Polio: The Epidemic and Its Survivors*

*Hugh Gregory Gallagher, *FDR's Splendid Deception*

- idem, "Teaching Disability History," *OAH Magazine of History* 23, no. 3 (June 2009): 7-8, 7.
- Naomi Rogers, *Polio Wars: Sister Kenny and the Golden Age of American Medicine*

Disability, Genetics, Parenting, and Ethics

Nov. 11

*Martin Pernick, *The Black Stork: Eugenics and the Death of Defective Babies in American Medicine and Motion Pictures*

- Harriet McBryde Johnson, "Unspeakable Conversations," *The New York Times*, 16 February 2003 <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/16/magazine/unspeakable-conversations.html?sec=health&pagewanted=1>
- Susan M. Schweik, *The Ugly Laws: Disability in Public* (New York: New York University, 2009).
- Alexandra Stern, *Telling Genes: The Story of Genetic Counseling in America*
- Leslie Reagan, *Dangerous Pregnancies: Mothers, Disabilities, and Abortion in Modern America*

"Invisible"/Intellectual Disabilities (or NO CLASS)

Nov. 18

*Allison C. Carey, *On the Margins of Citizenship: Intellectual Disability and Civil Rights in Twentieth-Century America*

- Chloe Silverman, *Understanding Autism: Parents, Doctors, and the History of a Disorder*
- Rachel Adams, *Raising Henry: A Memoir of Motherhood, Disability, and Discovery*
- Steven Noll, *Feeble-Minded in Our Midst: Institutions for the Mentally Retarded in the South, 1900-1940*

Nov. 25 NO CLASS (Thursday/Friday classes scheduled for Tuesday/Wednesday)

War, Rehabilitation, Masculinity, and Disability

Dec. 2

* Henri-Jacque Stiker, *A History of Disability*

- Beth Linker, *War's Waste: Rehabilitation in World War I America*
- David Gerber, Preface and Introduction to *Disabled Veterans in History*

Disability, Policy, and Lived Experiences

Dec. 9

*Paul Longmore, *Why I Burned My Book and Other Essays on Disability*, selections

- Deborah Stone, "Disability as a Clinical Concept," *The Disabled State* (Temple UP, 1984).
- Richard Scotch, "American Disability Policy in the Twentieth Century" in *The New Disability History*

For Reference:

- *The New Disability History: American Perspectives*, eds Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky (New York: New York University Press, 2001)
- *Encyclopedia of Disability*, eds. Albrecht GA, Bichenbach J, Mitchell D, Schalick WO, Snyder S, eds. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Press, 2005)
- *Encyclopedia of American Disability History*, ed. Susan Burch, 3 vols. (New York: Facts On File, 2009).
- H-Disability/H-Net