

DISABILITY WORLDS, SPRING 2016

ANTHROPOLOGY 289A, COURSE CODE 60770

Tom Boellstorff, Professor, Department of Anthropology
Meets Tuesdays, noon–2:50am, SBSG 3200
Office Hours: see online signup (<http://tinyurl.com/9eff6uc>)
First Meeting: Tuesday, March 29, noon, SBSG 3320
NOTE: there are readings for the first day of class!

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will explore disability from a range of methodological and theoretical perspectives, with an emphasis on ethnographic work. One focus of the course will be on embodiment, but we will touch on a range of other issues as well, including access, politics, selfhood, and sexuality. The course counts for the MSTS Graduate Specialization and MA.

The course is meant to be focused on reading and discussion, rather than writing. There is what appears to be a heavy reading load, but I will provide guidance on how to improve your ability to engage productively with large amounts of reading and the amount of writing you must do is reduced. Note: I will not allow any student to take an incomplete for this course under any circumstances.

The seminar discussions will follow three basic guidelines:

1) *Generosity*. With a ten-week course there simply is not time for substandard texts. All readings selected for the syllabus are insightful and theoretically innovative. Critiquing aspects of the readings is fine, but if you find yourself rejecting an argument in toto, this indicates your reading is insufficiently generous.

2) *Provisionality*. You are allowed (indeed, encouraged) to think out loud, say something and then take it back, and generally speak in a provisional manner, knowing that those around you will be patient, supportive, and slow to take offense.

3) *Community*. Some individuals are quite comfortable speaking at length: this is desirable, but the instructor reserves the right to ask persons to wrap up their comments, or to solicit comments from anyone during a course meeting.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) *Seven 2,500–3,000 character précis* (<https://goo.gl/vttStV>)

The primary requirement of the course is that you do seven (7) précis, which we will share with each other. This means you can choose three weeks (including Week 1) in which you do not have to do a précis. Each précis should be 2,500–3,500 characters in length. This is approximately 400–500 words, or 1.5–2 double-spaced pages, but you will be assessed based on character count). Each précis should take the form of critical questions, commentary, and analysis about at least two of the required readings for that week. If there is a book assigned for a particular week, that book must be one of the two minimum required readings discussed. (If you meet the requirement of discussing two required readings, you may also discuss other required readings and/or suggested readings, but you will not receive full credit if you discuss only suggested readings, or one required reading and one suggested reading.) A précis

can link the readings for a particular week to earlier course readings or readings from outside the course, but particularly the latter of these is discouraged. I discourage negative critiques; focus on generous engagement, linking the readings to our discussions. You should look briefly at all assigned readings for a week and be prepared to discuss them, even if you do not write about a reading in your précis (or do not do a précis at all that week).

A précis must be uploaded onto the course's Google Forms website before the beginning of class. You may optionally also bring one or more hard copies to class. A précis can never be turned in late. If you do not attend class, or leave class early, any précis you submit that day will not be counted. Each précis counts for 10 percent of your overall grade, so the seven précis together constitute 70% of the overall grade. Please note that falling even one précis short will thus severely impact your grade. You will receive only partial credit for a précis that does not meet the minimum requirements discussed above; if you do an additional (eighth, ninth, or tenth) précis, the grade for that additional précis can replace an earlier précis with a lower grade.

2) The final paper

You must write a course paper, which will be 30% of your overall grade. It must be emailed by the deadline as a single Word document (not pdf) to tboellst@uci.edu. Due to the emphasis on reading and précis, the final paper is relatively short. It should be 4,000–5,000 words long, inclusive of title, endnotes, and references. The paper can be on any topic that relates to the course, so long as you obtain my approval and so long as you cite and draw upon course texts and discussions in an extensive manner. I encourage you to engage in some way with your own research interests. You may use any style you wish so long as you are consistent; the preference is for Chicago Style, which is used by the American Anthropological Association. You must include full bibliographic references to course texts as they are used. You may bring in outside readings, but it is not necessary to do so and they should not overwhelm or substitute for course readings.

Overall grading

The course grade will be calculated as follows: seven précis x ten points per précis = 70 points; final paper = 30 points; total = 100 points. You will then be assigned a letter grade as follows: A+ 96.7–100; A 93.4–96.6; A- 90–93.3; B+ 86.7–89.9; B 83.4–86.6; B- 80–83.3; C+ 76.7–79.9; C 73.4–76.6; C- 70–73.3; D 65–69.9; F 64.9 and below.

Accommodations for disability

To quote from my colleague Karen Nakamura's syllabus: "Wouldn't it be ironic if a class on disabilities was inaccessible? If you need a reasonable (or even unreasonable) accommodation, please let me know and I'll make it happen. This goes triply for folks with non-visible disabilities or who pass or mask or compensate. No need to do that here."

COURSE TEXTS

The literature on disability is so large and interdisciplinary that assembling a syllabus on the topic, particularly given the constraints of the quarter system, entails painful choices as to what to include. With that in mind, below are eight books you should obtain (in physical or nonphysical form). They have also been placed on course reserves. The remaining readings are listed in the course schedule. They are available online unless marked with *, in which case they will be made available as PDF files.

Additional texts are listed each week as suggested readings. You do not need to read these texts: they are for future reference and also might be useful for your paper. For each week, readings are listed alphabetically by author's last name. On the first line of a week's schedule, you will find a recommended order for reading the texts.

Davis, Lennard, editor. 2013. *The Disability Studies Reader* ["DSR" for short]. London: Routledge.

Kafer, Alison. 2013. *Feminist, Queer, Crip*. Urbana: Indiana University Press.

Kulick, Don, and Jens Rydström. 2015. *Loneliness and Its Opposite: Sex, Disability, and the Ethics of Engagement*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Nakamura, Karen. 2013. *A Disability of the Soul: An Ethnography of Schizophrenia and Mental Illness in Contemporary Japan*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Phillips, Sarah. 2010. *Disability and Mobile Citizenship in Postsocialist Ukraine*. Urbana: Indiana University Press.

Rouso, Harilyn. 2013. *Don't Call Me Inspirational: A Disabled Feminist Talks Back*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Silverman, Chloe. 2011. *Understanding Autism: Parents, Doctors, and the History of a Disorder*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Titchkosky, Tanya. 2011. *The Question of Access: Disability, Space, Meaning*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE, 3/29 (2, 3, 1).

- 1) Beckett, Angharad E., and Tom Campbell. 2015. "The Social Model of Disability as an Oppositional Device." *Disability and Society* 30 (2): 270-83.
- 2) Ginsburg, Faye and Rayna Rapp. 2013. "Disability Worlds." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42: 53-68.
- 3) Siebers, Tobin. 2001. "Disability in Theory: from Social Constructionism to the New Realism of the Body." *American Literary History* 13 (4): 737-54.

WEEK TWO, 4/5 (1, 2, 3, 4).

- *1) Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*, Part 1 ("The Body").
- 2) Saerberg, Siegfried. 2015 "Chewing Accidents: A Phenomenology of Visible and Invisible Everyday Accomplishments." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 44 (5): 580-97.
- 3) Salamon, Gayle. 2012. "The Phenomenology of Rheumatology: Disability, Merleau-Ponty, and the Fallacy of Maximal Grip." *Hypatia* 27 (2): 243-60.
- 4) Samuels, Ellen. 2003. "My Body, My Closet: Invisible Disability and the Limits of Coming-Out Discourse." *GLQ* 9 (1-2): 233-55.

Suggested readings for week two:

- a) Csordas, Thomas J. 1988. "Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology." *Ethos* 18 (1): 5-47.

- b) Mauss, Marcel. 1973. "Techniques of the Body." *Economy and Society* 2 (1): 70–88.
- c) Paterson, Kevin, and Bill Hughes. 1999. "Disability Studies and Phenomenology: The Carnal Politics of Everyday Life." *Disability and Society* 14 (5): 597–610.

WEEK THREE, 4/12 (1, 3, 2, 4).

- 1) Davis, Lennard. "Introduction: Normality, Power, and Culture." In *DSR*, 1–14.
- 2) Kohrman, Matt. 1999. "Motorcycles for the Disabled: Mobility, Modernity, and the Transformation of Experiences in Urban China." *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*. 23 (1): 133–55.
- 3) Mladenov, Teodor. 2015. "Neoliberalism, Postsocialism, Disability." *Disability & Society* 30(3): 445–59.
- 4) Phillips, Sarah, *Disability and Mobile Citizenship in Postsocialist Ukraine*.

Suggested readings for week three:

- *a) Oyéwùmi, Oyérónké. 2003. "Visualizing the Body." In *The African Philosophy Reader*, Second Edition, edited by P. H Coetzee and A. P. J Roux, 456–86. New York: Routledge.
- b) Siebers, Tobin. "Disability and the Theory of Complex Embodiment." In *DSR*, 278–97.

WEEK FOUR, 4/19 (4, 1, 3, 2).

- 1) Erevelles, Nirmala, and Andrea Minear. "Unspeakable Offenses: Untangling Race and Disability in Discourses of Intersectionality." In *DSR*, 354–68.
- 2) Lukes, H. N. 2015. "The Sovereignty of Subtraction: Hypo/Hyperhabilitation and the Cultural Politics of Amputation in America." *Social Text* 33 (2): 1–27.
- *3) Snyder, Sharon L., and David T. Mitchell. 2006. "Subnormal Nation: The Making of a U.S. Disability Minority." In their *Cultural Locations of Disability*, 69–99. Chicago: University of California Press.
- 4) Tanya Titchkosky, *The Question of Access*.

Suggested readings for week four:

- a) Lukin Josh. "Disability and Blackness" In *DSR*, 308–15.
- *b) Valente, Joseph Michael. 2014. "Monster's Analysis: Vulnerable Anthropology and Deaf Superhero-Becomings." In *Literacies of the Minorities: Constructing a Truly Inclusive Society*, edited by M. Sasaki, 10–36. Tokyo: Kuroshio Publishing Co.

WEEK FIVE, 4/26 (1, 2, 4, 3).

- 1) Burchardt, Tania. 2004. "Capabilities and Disability: The Capabilities Framework and the Social Model of Disability." *Disability & Society* 19 (7): 735–51.
- 2) Kulick, Don, and Jens Rydström, *Loneliness and Its Opposite*.
- 3) Price, Margaret. "Defining Mental Disability." In *DSR*, 298–307.
- *4) Nicolaisen, Ida. 1995. "Persons and Nonpersons: Disability and Personhood among the Punan Bah of Central Borneo." In *Disability and Culture*, edited by Benedicte Ingstad and Susan Reynolds Whyte, 38–55. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Suggested readings for week five:

- *a) Landsman, Gail. 2004. "Too Bad You Got a Lemon: Peter Singer, Mothers of Children with Disabilities, and the Critique of Consumer Culture." In *Consuming Motherhood*, edited by Janelle S. Taylor, Linda L. Layne, and Danielle F. Wozniak, 100–21. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- b) Livingston, Julie. 2006. "Insights from an African History of Disability." *Radical History Review* 94: 111–26.

WEEK SIX, 5/3 (1, 4, 3, 2).

- 1) Ochs, Elinor, and Olga Solomon. 2010. "Autistic Sociality." *Ethos* 38 (1): 69-92.
- 2) Ortega, Francisco. 2009. "The Cerebral Subject and the Challenge of Neurodiversity." *BioSocieties* 4 (4): 425-45.
- 3) Silverman, Chloe. *Understanding Autism*.
- 4) Strauss, Joseph N. "Autism as Culture." In *DSR*, 460-84.

Suggested readings for week six:

- *a) Lilley, Rozanna. 2013. "Crying in the Park: Autism, Stigma, School Entry, and Maternal Subjectivity." *Studies in the Maternal* 5 (2): 1-28.
- b) Prince, Dawn Eddings. 2010. "An Exceptional Path: An Ethnographic Narrative Reflecting on Autistic Parenthood from Evolutionary, Cultural, and Spiritual Perspectives." *Ethos* 38 (1): 56-68.

WEEK SEVEN, 5/10 (3, 4, 1, 2).

- 1) Gammeltoft, Tine M. 2014. "Toward an Anthropology of the Imaginary: Specters of Disability in Vietnam." *Ethos* 42 (2): 153-74.
- 2) Nakamura, Karen. *A Disability of the Soul*.
- 3) Saxton, Marsha. "Disability Rights and Selective Abortion." In *DSR*, 87-99.
- 4) Tremain, Shelly. 2005. "Foucault, Governmentality, and Critical Disability Theory." In *Foucault and the Government of Disability*, edited by Shelly Tremain, 1-24. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Suggested readings for week seven:

- a) Shakespeare, Tom. "The Social Model of Disability." In *DSR*, 214-21.
- b) May, Vivian M., and Beth A. Ferri. 2005. "Fixated on Ability." *Prose Studies* 27 (1&2): 120-40.

WEEK EIGHT-NO CLASS MEETING

WEEK NINE, 5/24 (2, 3, 4, 1).

- 1) Baril, Alexandre. 2015. "'How Dare You Pretend to Be Disabled?' The Discounting of Transabled People and Their Claims in Disability Movements and Studies." *Disability & Society* 30(5): 689-703.
- *2) Block, Pamela, Devva Kasnitz, Akemi Nishida, and Nick Pollard. 2015. "Occupying Disability: An Introduction." In *Occupying Disability: Critical Approaches to Community, Justice, and Decolonizing Disability*, edited by Pamela Block, Devva Kasnitz, Akemi Nishida, and Nick Pollard, 3-14. Amsterdam: Springer Netherlands.
- 3) Harilyn Rousso, *Don't Call Me Inspirational*.
- 4) Friedner, Michele, and Jamie Osborne. 2012. "Audit bodies: Embodied Participation, Disability Universalism, and Accessibility in India." *Antipode* 45 (1): 43-60.

Suggested readings for week nine:

- a) Berube, Michael. "Disability, Democracy, & the New Genetics." In *DSR*, 100-14.
- b) Zimmerman, Adam B. 2009. "Do You Hear the People Sing? Balancing Parental Authority and a Child's Right to Thrive: The Cochlear Implant Debate." *Journal of Health and Biomedical Law* 5 (2): 309-29.

WEEK TEN, 5/31 (4, 1, 3, 2).

- 1) Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie. 2011 "Misfits: a Feminist Materialist Disability Concept." *Hypatia* 26 (3): 591-609.
- 2) Alison Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip*.
- 3) Liddiard, Kirsty. 2014. "I Never Felt like She Was Just Doing It for the Money': Disabled Men's Intimate (Gendered) Realities of Purchasing Sexual Pleasure and Intimacy." *Sexualities* 17 (7): 837-55.
- 4) McRuer, Robert. "Contemporary Able-Bodiedness and Queer/Disabled Existence." In *DSR*, 369-78.

Suggested reading for week ten:

- *a) Sentumbwe, Nayinda. 1995. "Sighted Lovers and Blind Husbands: Experiences of Blind Women in Uganda." In *Disability and Culture*, edited by Benedicte Ingstad and Susan Reynolds Whyte, 159-73. Berkeley: University of California Press.

FINALS WEEK, 6/7 (7, 1, 4, 2, 8, 5, 3, 6).

Your précis should address at least four readings (no book or suggested readings this week)

- 1) Anderberg, Peter, and Bodil Jönsson. 2005. "Being There." *Disability & Society* 20(7): 719-33.
- 2) Auerbach, David. "Facilitated Communication Is a Cult That Won't Die." *Slate*, November 12, 2015. Accessed January 17, 2016.
http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/medical_examiner/2015/11/facilitated_communication_pseudoscience_harms_people_with_disabilities.html.
- 3) Chib, Arul, and Qiaolei Jiang, 2014. "Investigating Modern-Day Talaria: Mobile Phones and the Mobility-Impaired in Singapore." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 19(3): 695-711.
- 4) Engber, Daniel. "The Strange Case of Anna Stubblefield." *New York Times*, October 20, 2015. Accessed January 17, 2016.
http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/25/magazine/the-strange-case-of-anna-stubblefield.html?_r=0.
- 5) Johnson, DMan. 2011. "The Role of Communication in Thought." *Disability Studies Quarterly* 31 (4): 1-5.
- 6) Pearson, Charlotte, and Filippo Trevisan. 2015. "Disability Activism in the New Media Ecology: Campaigning Strategies in the Digital Era." *Disability & Society* 30 (6): 924-40.
- *7) Siebers, Tobin. 2012. "A Sexual Culture for Disabled People." In *Sex and Disability*, edited by Robert McRuer and Anna Mollow, 37-53. Durham: Duke University Press.
- 8) Stubblefield, Anna. 2011. "Sound and Fury: When Opposition to Facilitated Communication Functions as Hate Speech." *Disability Studies Quarterly* 31 (4): 1-22.

Course paper due Tuesday 6/14, 5pm, emailed to tboellst@uci.edu.