Disability History

DIS ST / CHID / LSJ 430 Topics in Disability Studies

HSTCMP 490 Advanced Topics in Comparative/Global History

Summer A-Term 2022

Tues, Wed, Thurs 1:50-4:00

Canvas site: https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1556109

Instructor: Joanne Woiak

[jwoiak@uw.edu](mailto:jwoiak@uw.edu)

Campus Office: Smith 019

Zoom Office: URL on Canvas

Class Meetings:

Classroom Smith 309 & Zoom synchronously

All class sessions will be recorded

# Getting started:

Welcome to my disability studies class on the histories of disability! I understand that these are unique circumstances and transitional times. I am here to support you. The course is designed to provide flexibility in how you access the content and how you show your engagement with the material. I’m looking forward to teaching and learning with you this quarter. To begin the course, on the Canvas Home Page click on “Getting Started.” The first class will take place on in Smith 309 & on Zoom, Tuesday, June 21, 1:50pm, and it will be recorded for asynchronous access.

# Course description:

“It is time to bring disability from the margins to the center of historical inquiry” (Baynton 2001). This course seeks to engage with topics and themes in the histories of disability in the United States from the 19th to the 21st centuries. We will consider how historical analysis can more fully encompass the lives of disabled people, as well as the ways that the concept of disability has worked with—and against—other forms of discrimination and rights movements in American society. Learning goals are to deepen our understanding of disability and ableism in the past and how these may shape the present. How does disability as a category of analysis inform other social constructions such as race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality? Course topics will also focus on the histories of disability activism, design, and accessibility. We will engage with ways that “artifacts actively shape and define disability” (Ott 2014), as well as the practice and politics of producing and disseminating knowledge of the histories of disabled people and disability. Our readings are grouped thematically and explore experiences and interpretations of oppression and agency.

Specific topics to be covered include the Section 504 sit-in for disability rights and the role of the Black Panther Party (1977); the history of eugenics, settler ableism, and the Canton Asylum (1902-1934); how disability and disability disavowal were used in debates over women’s rights and gay rights; and the history of accessible design and disability material culture. The course counts as a W or writing credit course.

Methods of instruction will encompass class discussions and posts, lectures, podcasts, webinars, and films. There will be synchronous and asynchronous participation options. The course content will be offered in a variety of modalities in order to provide as much flexibility and accessibility as possible. All class materials will be available for asynchronous access, and class meetings will be recorded. My goal is to support you this summer in engaging with the course material while navigating hybrid learning. The plan for course delivery is:

* Mondays: Pre-recorded lectures and podcasts. No synchronous meetings.
* Tuesdays: Class meets hybrid in person and on Zoom, 1:50-4:00.
* Wednesdays: Class meets hybrid in person and on Zoom, 1:50-4:00.
* Thursdays: Class meets on Zoom only, 1:50-4:00.

# Accommodations, access, and resources:

Please read the Disability Studies Program statement on Covid precautions for Summer term: <https://disabilitystudies.washington.edu/news/2022-03/dsp-statement-covid-spring-quarter>

Please do not wear scented products in our classroom or the instructor’s office, to make these spaces more accessible for people with chemical sensitivity.

The instructor is trying to create an inclusive learning environment. Your experiences in the class are important to all of us. If you anticipate or encounter barriers participating or demonstrating your learning because of any aspect of how the course is taught, I encourage you to contact me as soon as possible so that we can discuss options.

We can work in conjunction with Disability Resources for Students: [Disability Resources for Students (UW Seattle)](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1396414/file_contents/course%20files/disability.uw.edu) Email: [uwdrs@uw.edu](mailto:uwdrs@uw.edu) Phone: 206-543-8924. If you have already established accommodations with DRS, please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions.  Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS.

Note that while this is directly applicable to students who are registered with DRS, you do not need to disclose a disability or provide an accommodations letter to discuss accessibility. **Please feel free to talk with me about any aspect of accommodations or accessibility**.

## Religious Accommodations Policy

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW’s policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations Policy](https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/).

## Mental Health Services to Students:

* Here is the main UW website with many on-campus and off-campus resources: [https://wellbeing.uw.edu/topic/mental-health](https://wellbeing.uw.edu/topic/mental-health/)
* View more Student Support Services on [this Canvas page](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1396414/pages/student-support-resources) and on the [University Services and Support Page Link](https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1396414/pages/university-student-policies-resources-and-assistance)

## Writing Resources:

* POL S/LSJ/JSIS Writing Center: http://depts.washington.edu/pswrite/
* Odegaard writing & research center: <http://depts.washington.edu/owrc/>
* CLUE writing center: <http://depts.washington.edu/clue/dropintutor_writing.php>
* CHID (Interdisciplinary Writing Studio) <https://chid.washington.edu/writing-center>

# Assignments:

* 15% Participation
  + Class activities will be synchronous and asynchronous
* 30% Reading Responses – write 3 papers
* 20% Facilitating Discussion – do 2 days, individual assignment
  + Hand in: discussion questions, reading notes, and annotations
  + Help facilitate discussion synchronously in class or asynchronously
* 35% Project
  + 10% Pre-writing and peer workshop
  + 25% Final essay/project

# Readings & Lectures:

All of the required readings are on the course website as pdf files or links. Please let me know if there are any problems accessing those. Each day's readings, lecture/podcast, and activities can be found in the Module for that day. Films will be available outside of class either as links or as a DVD on reserve in the library. The assigned pre-recorded lectures, podcasts, and webinars will be available as links on Canvas with captions or transcripts provided.

It’s expected that you do the required reading before class begins and be prepared to discuss your ideas, queries, and opinions. Consult the course website regularly for readings, supplementary texts, and updates to the assignments.

# Learning objectives:

* Understand the history of disability and activism in connection with other social categories and movements.
* Gain a theoretical background in the field of disability studies (DS), and apply the concept of the social construction of disability to knowledge and methods in disability history.
* Investigate how normalcy is constituted through gender, sexuality, race, class, and disability.
* Develop skills in critical thinking and writing about diversity and intersecting identities.
* Disability Studies Program Learning Goals: [https://disabilitystudies.washington.edu/skills-knowledge-careers](https://disabilitystudies.washington.edu/skills-knowledge-careers))

**Grading scale**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A  4.0: 97-100 | B+ 3.3: 87 | B- 2.6: 80 | C 1.9: 73 | D+ 1.2: 66 |
| A 3.9: 95-96 | B+ 3.2: 86 | B- 2.5: N/A | C- 1.8: 72 | D 1.1: 65 |
| A- 3.8: 93-94 | B 3.1: 85 | C+ 2.4: 78-79 | C- 1.7: 71 | D 1.0: 64 |
| A- 3.7: 92 | B 3.0: 84 | C+ 2.3: 77 | C- 1.6: 70 | D 0.9: 63 |
| A- 3.6: 91 | B 2.9: 83 | C+ 2.2: 76 | C- 1.5: N/A | D- 0.8: 61-62 |
| A- 3.5: 90 | B- 2.8: 82 | C 2.1: 75 | D+ 1.4: 68-69 | D- 0.7: 60 |
| B+ 3.4: 88-89 | B- 2.7: 81 | C 2.0: 74 | D+ 1.3: 67 | E 0.0: 0-59 |

# Communication policy:

All requirements and policies of this course are outlined in this syllabus. Any changes to the syllabus, announcements, and handouts will be posted on the course website, and it is your responsibility to keep track of assignments and to check the website regularly for updates. Feel free to contact the instructor if you have any questions or concerns about the course.

# Policies for submitting work and late work:

All work for this course will be submitted electronically via Canvas. No extra credit or rewrites. You are encouraged to consult with the instructor about your ideas and questions regarding the assignments and class participation.

# Documentation of sources and academic integrity:

All work submitted for course credit must be an original effort. For all writing assignments, direct quotations, paraphrases, information, interpretations, and opinions taken from another person’s work must be identified. Plagiarism means presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own, for example by turning in someone else’s work or failing to document material you have quoted or borrowed. Any evidence of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for that assignment. Additional sanctions may be imposed under the provisions of the Student Conduct Code. You are responsible for understanding all aspects of University regulations regarding academic integrity.

# Discussion participation policies and expectations:

Students who enroll in this class must be prepared to engage with a heavy reading load of texts from a variety of scholarly disciplines, as well as films, podcast, and narratives. Students will get the most out of the activities and discussions during class time by completing the readings beforehand. Active participation is an important aspect of the learning process in this class. Lecture slides will be posted on the course website prior to each class. We may have some guest presenters.

Many of the topics covered raise sensitive questions of ethics, identity, and policy. We will work to create a learning environment that feels as safe as possible for everyone and fosters open inquiry. You will be expected to critically examine your own beliefs in comparison with those of others and as they relate to issues in disability studies. Students in the class have a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. For some, the information may be completely new; others may have previous knowledge of disability issues and/or other systems of oppression. Please keep in mind that this course is being taught from an anti-oppressive point of view, and my principal goal is to teach the academic disability studies approach.

The goal of discussions in class and in discussion posts is to help you understand difficult material and think through your and others’ ideas. Working through unclear understandings or positions that you later reconsider may be part of this process. I am looking for contributions that show you are paying careful attention to the course materials and to the contributions of your fellow students, and that you are thinking critically and creatively about them. You are expected to show that you have analyzed the readings and that you are forming reasoned ideas and opinions about the themes of the course. Participation includes listening carefully and responding constructively.

# SCHEDULE OF TOPICS – Summer 2022

# Schedule is subject to change - consult the MODULES in Canvas regularly

[Content warnings are in offered on the Canvas site for material that may be triggering for some - these will be updated periodically in the Home Pages of the Modules]

## Week 1

### Tuesday June 21 Introductions

### Before class begins if possible, watch the pre-recorded lecture:

* + “Disability Studies: An Introduction” (17 minutes, captioned)
* Read before class or as soon as possible:
  + Simi Linton, “Reassigning Meaning,” from *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity*, NYU Press, 1998, pp. 8-17, [Disability History Museum](http://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/edu/essay.html?id=21)
* Film in class:
  + *Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution* (2020 Netflix & [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFS8SpwioZ4)), we will watch the first 60 minutes today. [Content includes: historical video footage of institutionalization of disabled people]

**Wednesday June 22 Disability Activism**

* Read before class:
  + Eli Clare [he/him], “Stolen Bodies, Reclaimed Bodies: Disability and Queerness,” *Public Culture*, Vol. 13, 2001, pp. 359-365 [content includes: rape, murders of disabled people and people of color]
  + Sins Invalid, “What is Disability Justice,” from *Skin, Tooth, and Bone: A Disability Justice Primer*, 2nd edn., Sins Invalid, 2019, pp. 1-14
  + Kim Nielsen, “‘I Guess I’m an Activist. I Think It’s Just Caring’: Rights and Rights Denied,” from *A Disability History of the United States*, Beacon Press, 2012, pp. 157-183 [content includes: rape, sexual assault]
* Film in class:
  + *Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution* (2020 Netflix & [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFS8SpwioZ4)), we will watch the final 45 minutes today

**Thursday June 23 Disability & Civil Rights Movements**

* Read before class:
  + Susan Schweik, [“Lomax’s Matrix: Disability, Solidarity, and the Black Power of 504,”](https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/1371/1539) *Disability Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 31, 2011
  + Eileen AJ Connelly, [“Overlooked No More: Brad Lomax, a Bridge Between Civil Rights Movements,”](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/obituaries/brad-lomax-overlooked.html) *New York Times*, July 8, 2020
  + Paul Longmore and David Goldberger, “The League of the Physically Handicapped and the Great Depression: A Case Study in the New Disability History,” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 87, 2000, pp. 888-922
* Video clips in class:
  + Sami Schalk, “504 and Beyond: Disability Politics and the Black Panther Party”
  + Leader of the Black Panther Party Elaine Brown talks about the Party's involvement and support of the 1977 Section 504 Occupation

## Week 2

### Tuesday June 28 Disabling Societies, 1700-1900

* Watch before class:
  + Pre-recorded lecture “Disability and Normalcy in Historical Perspective” (53 minutes)
  + Pre-recorded lecture, “The History of Human Differences” (31 minutes)
* Read before class:
  + Kim Nielsen, “The Deviant and the Dependent: Creating Citizens, 1776-1865,” pp. 49-77
  + Kim Nielsen, “I Am Disabled, and Must Go at Something Else Besides Hard Labor: Institutionalization of Disability, 1865-1890,” pp. 78-99
  + Dea Boster, “‘I Made Up My Mind to Act Both Deaf and Dumb’: Displays of Disability and Slave Resistance in the Antebellum American South,” from *Disability and Passing: Blurring the Lines of Identity*, Temple University Press, 2013, pp. 71-98
* Video in class:
  + Patrick Cokley, “We’ve ALWAYS Resisted: The History of Disabled Black Activism”

### Wednesday June 29 Disability & the Justification of Inequality

* Read before class:
  + Douglas Baynton, “Disability and the Justification of Inequality in American History,” from *The New Disability History*, NYU Press, 2001, pp. 33-57
  + Yvonne Pitts, “Disability, Scientific Authority, and Women’s Political Participation at the Turn of the 20th Century,” *Journal of Women’s History*, Vol. 24, 2012, pp. 37-61
  + Natalia Molina, “Medicalizing the Mexican: Immigration, Race, and Disability in the Early-Twentieth-Century United States,” *Radical History Review*, Issue 94, 2006, pp. 22-37

Thursday June 30 **Disability Things: Technology, Cure, & the Body**

* Read before class:
  + Katherine Ott, “Disability Things: Material Culture and American Disability History, 1700-2010,” from *Disability Histories*, University of Illinois Press, 2014, pp. 119-135
  + Jaipreet Virdi, “Introduction: Cures of Yesterday,” from *Hearing Happiness: Deafness Cures in History*, University of Chicago Press, 2020, pp. 1-34
  + Penny Richards and Susan Burch, “Documents, Ethics, and the Disability Historian,” from *The Oxford Handbook of Disability History*, Oxford University Press, 2018

Video clips in class:

*Through Deaf Eyes* (2007)

## Week 3

**Tuesday July 5 Eugenics, Disability, & Race**

* Watch before class:
  + Pre-recorded lecture “History of Eugenics, Disability, and Race”
  + Film: *The Lynchburg Story: Eugenic Sterilization in America* (1993, 50 minutes)
* Read before class:
  + Eli Clare, “Yearning toward Carrie Buck,” *Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies*, Vol. 8, 2014, pp. 335-344
* Film in class:
  + *Golden Doo*r (2006, 118 minutes)

**Wednesday July 6 Defining the Defective**

* Read before class:
  + Kim Nielsen, “Three Generations of Imbeciles Are Enough: The Progressive Era, 1890-1927,” pp. 100-130
  + Ellen Samuels, “Examining Millie and Christine McKoy: Where Enslavement and Enfreakment Meet,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 37, 2011, pp. 53-81
  + Douglas Baynton, “Defectives in the Land: Disability and American Immigration Policy, 1882-1924,” *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 24, 2005, pp. 31-44

**Thursday July 7 History of Design & (In)Accessibility**

* Read before class:
  + Bess Williamson, “Introduction: Disability, Design, and Rights in the Twentieth Century” and “Berkeley, California: An Independent Style of Access,” from *Accessible America: A History of Disability and Design*, NYU Press, 2019, pp. 1-16 and 96-128
  + Jay Dolmage, “Introduction: The Approach,” from *Academic Ableism*, University of Michigan Press, 2017, pp. 1-39
* Podcast in class:
  + [Bess Williamson, “Disability and Design,”](http://dishist.org/?p=1382) Disability History Association, Jan. 31, 2020 (50 minutes)

## Week 4

**Tuesday July 12 Committed Histories**

* No class meeting today
* Read and listen:
  + Susan Burch, “Introduction” from *Committed: Remembering Native Kinship in and beyond Institutions*, University of North Carolina Press, 2021, pp. 1-21
  + Podcast: [Susan Burch, “Remembering Native Kinship in and beyond Institutions,”](http://dishist.org/?p=2110) Disability History Association, Dec. 2021 (1 hour, 40 minutes)

**Wednesday July 13 Entanglements of Race & Disability**

* Read before class:
  + Pemina Yellow Bird, “Wild Indians: Native Perspectives on the Hiawatha Asylum for Insane Indians”
  + Vanessa Jackson, “In Our Own Voice: African-American Stories of Oppression, Survival, and Recovery in Mental Health Systems,” *International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 2002, pp. 11-31
  + Ayah Nuriddin, “Psychiatric Jim Crow: Desegregation at the Crownsville State Hospital, 1948–1970,” *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, Vol. 74, 2018, pp. 85–106

**Thursday July 14 Histories of Sex & Disability**

* Read before class:
  + Regina Kunzel, “The Rise of Gay Rights and the Disavowal of Disability in the United States,” from *The Oxford Handbook of Disability History*
  + Ruth Colker, “Homophobia, AIDS Hysteria, and the Americans with Disabilities Act,” *Journal of Gender, Race, & Justice*, Vol. 35, 2004-2005, pp. 33-55
  + A. J. Withers, “Disability, Divisions, Definitions, and Disablism” When Resisting Psychiatry is Oppressive,” *Psychiatry Disrupted: Theorizing Resistance and Crafting the (R)evolution*, MQUP, 2014, pp. 114-128

Week 5

Tuesday July 19 **Cripping Time, Cripping Popular History**

* Read before class:
  + Alison Kafer, “Time for Disability Studies and a Future for Crips,” from *Feminist, Queer, Crip*, Indiana University Press, 2013, pp. 25-46
  + [Haley Moss, “Helen Keller’s Legacy: A Socialist and a Suffragette Who Pushed Boundaries,”](https://www.teenvogue.com/story/hellen-keller-legacy-sanitized) Teen Vogue, March 14, 2022
* Podcast in class:
  + [“The Helen Keller Exorcism,”](https://radiolab.org/episodes/helen-keller-exorcism) Radiolab, March 11, 2022

Wednesday July 20 Project Workshops