

## **SPRING 2016 DHA Newsletter**

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## **MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR**

Penny L. Richards

### **WELCOME!**

When I'm not working on this fine organization's newsletter, sometimes I'm writing Wikipedia entries, and sometimes they're about disability history topics (of course). In the past month, I've started entries for the surgeon **Hugh Williston Davies**, singer **Christine la Barraque**, artist **Nerys Johnson**, preacher **Daniel Davies**, and accessible travel expert **Scott Rains**, among others. Would you like to join me, or maybe just learn more about disability topics on Wikipedia? Check out **WikiProject Disability**:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject\\_Disability](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Disability)

**If you have a moment, would you contact DHA President Sandy Sufian at (sufians@uic.edu)** and let DHA know if you have any suggestions for improvements, especially with regard to activities or programs? The DHA Board of Directors are striving to find new ways to promote disability history and would be very appreciative of your feedback.

**Have you renewed your DHA membership for 2016?** Please consider doing that right now, while you're enjoying the newsletter, it won't take but a moment. And if you already have your membership, perhaps make a surprise gift to a colleague or student?

<http://www.dishist.org/join.htm>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Message from the DHA Board

Sara Scalenghe is rotating off as DHA Treasurer. We thank her for her service over the past two years and we wish her the best on her upcoming research sabbatical, during which she hopes to start writing a book about disability in modern Lebanon and Syria. We warmly welcome Kathleen Brian as our new Treasurer. Kathleen earned her M.A. (2009) and Ph.D. (2013) in American Studies from George Washington University. After completing a post-doctoral appointment as Visiting Professor of American Studies at George Washington, she became, and currently serves as, a Lecturer in Liberal Studies at Western Washington University. Her work has appeared in the *History of Psychiatry* and *Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies*, and is forthcoming from the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*. While continuing work on her first book project, *Where Ends Meet: Suicide and Eugenics in America*, she is co-editing, with James Trent, a volume on historical intersections of disability and masculinity that is forthcoming from Oxford University Press (2017). She serves as co-editor of H-Disability and H-Eugenics, and has held fellowships with the Cultural Resource Division of the National Park Service and the Pennsylvania Area Consortium for the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine.

### Fifteen years of H-Disability's "Current Journal Articles" now available

Download "Current Journal Articles (March 2001 - March 2016)" as a [PDF here](#), or as a [DOC here](#). Compiled to mark the 15th anniversary of the founding of H-Disability in March 2001.

### Public Disability History - new online blogjournal launched

[www.public-disabilityhistory.org](http://www.public-disabilityhistory.org)

(Sebastian Barsch)

Since its first steps in the 1990's, the field of Disability History has been growing. Nowadays it is considered as an established and specific historical sub-discipline. One of the core characteristics of the disability histories told so far is their strong connection to environments outside of the academic world. Whereas other scholarly fields sometimes struggle to reach out to public debates, politics, and activism, Disability History has steadily worked its way from the public to the field of scientific research and

discussion. Histories produced by disability historians indeed aim to trigger public debate. They want to enlarge our understanding of contemporary and past disability discrimination and to contribute to ongoing theoretical as well as practical struggles towards emancipation, participation and advocacy. In short, disability histories have always tried to come up with scholarly work that is also meaningful for a broader audience: The public!

This *Public Disability History* blogjournal aims to stimulate and support activist as well as academic reflection on the public character of disability histories. It's main aim thus consists in promoting and systematizing reflection with regard to the divergent ways curators of exhibitions, directors of documentaries, theatre plays and dance performances, authors of graphic novels and edited volumes, university scholars etc. have (un)successfully integrated disability histories in order to reach out to a certain public and bring about societal change. As a consequence the general aims of the blogjournal are:

1. Transforming Disability History into a debatable thing, the subject of public debates.
2. Offering a platform to present various projects from different fields that deal with Disability History.
3. Setting up and intensifying cooperation between people with and without disability.
4. Promoting practices that make Disability History research accessible to everybody.

The blogjournal is open for all contributions that approach the general. Given its ambition to provide a space where Disability History can become a trigger for rethinking the way people with and without disabilities have been living and do live together, special attention is devoted to accessibility issues. This implies that images, which illustrate the journal texts, are described in detail, videos will only be uploaded if provided with subtitles and the texts need to be written in accessible English. The hope we have is that Public Disability History will provide opportunities for overcoming dichotomous ways of thinking and speaking.

## **Disability History on Recent Audio Programs**

\*“Passing: Race, Disability, and Gender” is the latest episode of the History Buffs Podcast, posted May 8, 2016. Hosts Sarah Handley Cousins, Marissa C. Rhodes, and Katie Smyser discuss Franklin Roosevelt’s disability in the context of passing, among many other topics, on the hour-long podcast.

<https://historybuffs.org/2016/05/08/passing-race-disability-and-gender/>

\*Another podcast, Missed in History, focused on the sign language of Martha’s Vineyard in an April 2016 episode:

<http://www.missedinhistory.com/podcasts/the-shared-sign-language-of-marthas-vineyard/>

(The transcript for this one is also at the link.)

\*And BBC Radio 4’s “The Reunion” featured an episode recently (April 2016) that “reunites five people who experienced a long and bitter struggle for historic disability discrimination rights.” The conversation includes Baroness Jane Campbell, Sir Bert Massie, Peter White, Lord Hague, and Adam Thomas.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0769qsq>

## **UT-Arlington earns NEH Grant for Disability History meeting, online portal**

<https://www.uta.edu/news/releases/2016/04/Library-NEHgrant-disabilityhistory.php>

First sentences of the press release:

Leading U.S. disability history scholars and practitioners will converge at The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries in July to formalize a consortium committed to developing an online portal for disability history resources.

The Disability History Portal will provide online resources for the study of disability history such as images, archives, data sets, videos and more. The meeting is supported in part by a \$40,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities awarded to Brenda McClurkin, project director and department head of UTA Libraries Special Collections, and to Sarah Rose, project co-director and associate professor of history in the College of Liberal Arts.

## CALLS FOR PAPERS

### **CFP: Disability, Work and Representation: New Perspectives**

#### **Special Issue: *Disability Studies Quarterly* (Fall 2017)**

Editors: David Turner, Kirsti Bohata, Steven Thompson, Swansea University

In/ability to work plays a critical role in definitions of dis/ability, but the complexities of the relationship between people with disabilities and the world of work have only recently started to gain scholarly attention. Contributions are sought for a special issue of *Disability Studies Quarterly* that will showcase new interdisciplinary perspectives on disability, work and its representation in both contemporary and historical perspective. The issue will take a long and interdisciplinary view of the relationship between disability and work and encourages contributions that explore different national experiences and impairment perspectives. We aim to foster critical thinking about how dis/ability has been defined in relation to work and about how factors such as changing hiring processes, legislation and working environments have impacted upon participation. Contributions are also sought that will explore ways in which disability has been represented in relation to work culturally and artistically, or the impact of literary, artistic or media representations on policy. Contributors are invited to think about work broadly, to include paid and unpaid employment, emotional and intellectual as well as physical labor.

Please send an abstract (max 200 words) and a short biography (100 words) to Professor David Turner ([d.m.turner@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:d.m.turner@swansea.ac.uk)) by July 1st 2016. The final deadline for submission for articles selected for inclusion in the Special Issue (max. 8000 words) will be January 31st 2017 with publication scheduled for September 2017. Final acceptance of manuscripts is subject to peer review.

### **CFP: On the DL: Athletes, Athletics, and Disability (edited collection, proposals due July 31, 2016)**

Joseph P. Fisher

contact email:

[fishdog@gwu.edu](mailto:fishdog@gwu.edu)

Popular rhetoric about athletics consistently emphasizes corporeal mastery and bodily perfection. Always exhibiting physical and mental toughness, athletes train ceaselessly to reach the pinnacle of sporting accomplishment: taking things to the next level. In fact,

there is a good argument to be made that athletic excellence requires superhuman skill, for it is only when athletes devote 110% of themselves to their sports that victory can be achieved.

Yet, despite their apparent otherworldly physical strength and endurance, athletes constantly inhabit positions of disability. Whether experiencing performance interruptions due to “overuse” injuries or bearing the brunt of permanently disabling violence—concussions, spinal cord damage, any number of musculoskeletal traumas—athletes are defined by disability just as much as they are defined against it.

*On the DL: Athletes, Athletics, and Disability* is the title of a proposed essay collection that will read competitive athletics through a disability studies lens. Given the myriad definitions of “sport” across the globe, On the DL is interested in compiling a wide variety of theoretically-engaged analyses of sporting culture. In addition to traditional academic approaches to this topic, On the DL invites submissions that take the form of memoir/autobiography, photojournalism, or any other innovative non-traditional format. Again, however, all submissions must articulate rigorous, clearly defined theoretical angles on their subjects.

Furthermore, On the DL is explicitly seeking discussions of disability and mourning. In an attempt to push disability studies to address questions about unwanted disability—say, when a fulfilling athletic career ends due to a sudden disabling condition—this collection is particularly enthusiastic about essays which contend, in any number of ways, that athletes need space to lament bodily dysfunction.

Please send 750-1000 word proposals to Dr. Joseph P. Fisher at [fishdog@gwu.edu](mailto:fishdog@gwu.edu). Also, please include a one-page CV with your proposal. Proposal submissions due by July 31, 2016.

**CFP: Making Modern Disability: Histories of Disability, Design, and Technology**  
A Conference at the Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware  
October 28, 2016

On October 28, 2016, the Hagley Museum and Library will host a conference to explore the history of modern design and technology with regard to disability. While devices adapted to the needs of people with disabilities can be found throughout human history, industrialization created distinctive circumstances for the material lives of the disabled.

On one hand, people with sensory, cognitive, and physical disabilities were often those who struggled most to adapt to modern material life with its rationalized work routines, standardized products, and inaccessible architecture. On the other hand, modern design culture was one of improvement. Designers, architects, and engineers proposed ways to adapt products and sites for users of varying abilities, while people with disabilities and their families found creative ways to improve access for themselves. Legal and policy efforts such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities also spurred change in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as they defined access to architecture and technology as a civil right.

We ask for papers that examine specific histories of material culture and disability, considering how technology both responded to and defined disability in modernity. How is the very definition of disability contingent on modern material life and its built-in assumptions of ability? Who are the agents of change – producers, designers, users, activists, policymakers? And how do we research the history of disability in technological cultures that did not acknowledge the existence of disability or the rights of the disabled?

Papers should be historical in nature and focused on the modern period (approximately 1750-present). Topics may include, but are not limited to, national and international cultures of design and disability; the influences of ideologies including eugenics, Disability Rights, neuro-and biodiversity; and the effects of law and policy on design and technology for the disabled. A focus on archival material and object examples are especially appreciated given Hagley's rich offerings pertinent to this topic, including the papers of Marc Harrison and Richard Hollerith, two American industrial designers who promoted the principle of Universal Design in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Interested scholars should submit abstracts of 300 words accompanied by a 1-page CV to Carol Lockman at [clockman@hagley.org](mailto:clockman@hagley.org) by May 1, 2016. Travel support and lodging will be provided for presenters at the conference.



## **CFP: DISABILITY AS SPECTACLE: APRIL 13-14, 2017**

UCLA Meyer and Renee Luskin Conference Center  
Proposal Submission Portal Open Soon

Proposal Deadline: June 15, 2016

[Click here to view the full Call for Proposals](#)

Theme: Disability as Spectacle

Disability is experiencing a new wave of visibility in popular culture from autobiographies and parent memoirs on disability to characters with disabilities in film and television to new inclusive initiatives in the areas of art and dance. The examples are numerous: Dancing with the Stars recently featured a veteran amputee, a major motion picture, Kingsman, featured a disabled woman as a central figure, double amputee and fashion supermodel, Aimee Mullins, continues to grace the pages of popular fashion magazines like Elle, Vogue, and Bazaar, and of course the inclusion of disabled athletes, like South African Olympic swimmer Natalie du Toit and NFL player Derrick Coleman, in amateur and professional sports have brought further attention to the achievements and life experiences of people with disabilities.

This new visibility raises important questions about how disability is depicted in mass media and which disabilities are excluded or rendered invisible in this new cultural landscape. Does our current moment's heightened awareness of disability produce benefits or disadvantages in other social, political, or economic spheres? The film and television industry's central role in disability's changing status makes Los Angeles the ideal location to reflect upon disability as spectacle.

The conference theme encourages scholars and audience members to think critically about disability's new visibility and invites them to share ideas about the future of disability rights and Disability Studies as this historically marginalized community continues to make advances in mainstream culture.

The following timeline is an overview. Specific dates will be posted soon!

February 1, 2016: Call for Proposals: Proposal submission portal opens

June 15, 2016: Call for Proposals DEADLINE

July 31, 2016: Conference participants notified of proposal status

November 1, 2016: Conference registration opens

All conference presenters must register by November 15, 2016.

April 13-14, 2017: Conference in Los Angeles

## **Call for Papers: Disability and Illness in Children's Literature**

Children's literature, Lois Keith argues, has long tended to use disability and illness as metaphors, as "devices to bring the character through a period of trial and desolation into the bright light of resolution and a happy ending" (2001, 194). Where they were depicted at all, disabled and ill characters have mainly been described in terms of pity, their physical or psychological difference has been portrayed as a punishment for a transgression, or euphemistically been glossed over altogether. Over the course of the last decade, however, a decided shift in the quantity and quality of children's books featuring disability and illness has occurred, and an exciting trend seems to be emerging: The number of disabled characters in children's literature is increasing and so is their psychological depth. From *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* to *The Fault in Our Stars*, there are more narratives featuring disability and illness, and those texts tend to be more authentic, varied, and positive about non-normative characters.

interjuli 01/17 will deal with Disability and Illness in Children's Literature.

As always, we also welcome contributions that do not directly pertain to our focal topic. Please send in your manuscripts by August, 1st, 2016 to [info@interjuli.de](mailto:info@interjuli.de). Guidelines concerning formatting and editing standards will be sent out upon request and can be found at [www.interjuli.de](http://www.interjuli.de).

interjuli is an open access interdisciplinary journal dedicated to the research of children's literature. We publish research papers and interviews as well as reviews of primary and secondary works.

[www.interjuli.de](http://www.interjuli.de)

[facebook.com/interjuli.magazine](https://facebook.com/interjuli.magazine)

[twitter.com/interjuli](https://twitter.com/interjuli)

## **CFP: Disability & Society Learning from the Past: Building the Future**

Deadline: 31 August 2016

Special Issue Call for Papers

It has been more than 30 years since *Disability & Society* first began publishing. The journal now provides a world-leading focus for debate about such issues as human rights, discrimination, definitions, policy and practices against a background of change in the ways in which disability is viewed and responded to. It is 40 years since The Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) pioneered the distinction between impairment and disability that enabled social model thinking to transform disabled people's rights. In the US the Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted in 1990 and in the UK the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) has been in place for more than twenty years. At the turn of the 21st Century the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) was established as a human rights treaty to reaffirm disabled people's human rights and entitlement. In the light of all this, we are wondering how much, and in what ways, have disabled people's lives and entitlements changed in the past 30 years?

In the next Special Issue of *Disability & Society* we wish to bring together cutting-edge discussion of the changing role Disability Studies has played, and is playing, in bridging the gap between the academy and the actuality of disabled people's lives; what learning has come from our discipline's past and what issues arise for building the future?

We welcome contributions on a wide range of themes. The list below is not meant to be exhaustive and we encourage creative interpretation of topics which fit with ideas of Learning from the Past & Building the Future in relation to any matters of disability and society.

Submissions should be made online at the *Disability & Society* ScholarOne Manuscript site. New users should first create an account. Once a user is logged onto the site submissions should be made via the Author Centre. Maximum word length is 8,000 words (including bibliography).

The final deadline for receipt of papers is 31st August 2016. No papers will be considered after this date.

This Special Issue will be published in 2017. For further advice on the submission procedure please go to the journal homepage

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

26-27 May 2016, London, UK

Conference: **After the End of Disease**

<http://www.histmed.org/announcements/calls-for-papers/calls-for-papers-after-the-end-of-disease-1403>

17 June 2016, London UK

Symposium: **Embarrassing Bodies: Feeling Self-Conscious in the Nineteenth Century**

<http://navsa.org/2016/03/15/cfp-embarrassing-bodies-feeling-self-conscious-in-the-nineteenth-century-4222016-6172016/>

22 June 2016, Liverpool, UK

Conference: **Disability Studies Student Society Symposium**

<https://disabilityresearchforum.wordpress.com/2016/03/22/disability-studies-student-society-symposium-liverpool-hope-university-uk-june-2016/>

17-20 July 2016, Leuven

Conference: **Medicine in Bible and Talmud**

<https://eabs.net/site/medicine-in-bible-and-talmud/>

15-16 September 2016, Huddersfield, UK

Conference: **Voices of Madness, Voices of Mental Ill-Health**

<https://www.hud.ac.uk/research/history/events/voicesofmadness.php>

28 October 2016, Wilmington DE USA

Conference: **Making Modern Disability: Histories of Disability, Design, and Technology**

<http://www.hagley.org/hagley-conferences>

3-4 November 2016, Oulu, Finland

Conference: **Environment and Health in History**

<http://www.oulu.fi/history/node/34417>

1-3 December 2016, Byron Bay, NSW, Australia

Conference: **Technicity, Temporality, Embodiment: 10th Annual International Somatechnics Conference**

<https://technotemporalities.wordpress.com>

13-14 April 2017, Los Angeles CA USA

Conference: **Disability as Spectacle**

<http://www.ugeducation.ucla.edu/dsconference/submission/>