

**Critical Disability Studies
Faculty of Graduate Studies
York University
Winter 2019**

CDIS 6150 3.0; HIST 5538 3.0:
Critical Interpretations of Disability History

Wednesdays, 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM
January 9 - April 3
Classroom: VARI HALL 1156

Course Description

This course will examine the historical experiences of people with disabilities primarily, but not exclusively, from ancient and medieval European history to twentieth century North American society. Topics to be examined include: pre-industrial interpretations of physical and mental disability; the impact of the industrial revolution on disability as a social category and lived experience; segregation, trans-institutionalization and community living; rehabilitation programs and their critics in the twentieth century; diversity, discrimination and activism within the disability community; the modern development of critical literature on the history of people with disabilities.

The teaching style for CDIS 6150, HIST 5538 will be seminar to allow for extensive discussion of the weekly readings.

Accommodation

Students with disabilities who need accommodation are encouraged to contact the course instructor.

Plagiarism

The submission of work which you did not write, will get a minimum of zero for that assignment and may lead to formal charges of academic dishonesty. This could result in an F in the course, depending on the extent of plagiarism, and it may also lead to expulsion from the university. **It is the sole responsibility of each student to ensure that your work is honest and is not plagiarized.** All students are required to read the full [York policy on academic integrity](#) and also to [complete the tutorial](#) about how to respect these procedures.

Students must save all drafts/revisions of their work – this is done not only in case of suspected loss of academic integrity, but also because it allows you to revisit your thinking on the content you are engaged with, an important scholarly practice.

Maintain a folder with your drafts until after your graded paper has been returned.

Evaluation and Assignments (to be discussed in more detail in class)

All assignments must be typed and have one consistent citation style (APA, MLA, Chicago). Composition, spelling, grammar and organization are extremely important in graduate school and this will be reflected in the grading of your assignments. Be sure to paginate your assignments. All assignments must be documented and have proper citation form.

ASSIGNMENTS

Book Review, 5-7 double-spaced pages – 30% of mark.

Due date: February 27

Students will review the book listed below. It will be due the day the book's author will give a guest presentation in class. The book review should be a critical analysis taking into account whether or not the book offers a critical disability studies perspective on the historical topic under consideration, as well as the extent to which a book makes a contribution to the history of disability. More details will be provided in class.

Galer, Dustin. *Working Towards Equity: Disability Rights Activism and Employment in Late-Twentieth Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018).

This book can be purchased at the York University Bookstore.

Grades and on the above will be provided within two weeks of receiving the assignment on the due date. Late papers may take longer to mark and return.

In-Class presentation on one article – 15% of mark.

Choose from course reading list at the start of winter term.

Students will choose **one article** to present in class (or two articles if two people choose to present together). Presentations will consist of preparing a summary on one reading, including comments explaining to what extent the article in question illustrates the theme for that particular class. At the end of a presentation students are to **prepare two questions** to discuss in seminar on a particular article. A presentation on one article should be approximately 15 minutes, followed by questions and discussion. Students can present verbally only, or use power point, as preferred. If a presenter wishes to use power point please let me know at least two days before class. Power point slides should also be available in an accessible format for everyone in seminar. **A grade for this assignment and written feedback will be sent by email to each student within one week of an in-class presentation.**

Research Essay on a Topic in Disability History – 40% of mark.

Due date: April 10

18-20 double-spaced pages (exclusive of notes and bibliography)

This topic will be chosen in consultation with the course instructor by March 6.

Your essay should be a critical examination of a particular aspect of disability history, such as are indicated in the themes for the weekly readings in the syllabus. Students are encouraged to go beyond the themes set out in the reading list. Your essay can also focus on providing a critical interpretation of the secondary sources that describe disability history. For example, you may wish to write a critical analysis of the way in which researchers have depicted people with intellectual disabilities in historical studies. There should be a minimum of twenty sources cited for the research essay. Students may

wish to consult the Archives of Ontario on campus for primary sources regarding topics on provincial history, though this is not a requirement for this essay.

Attendance/Participation – 15% of mark

Students are expected to participate regularly in seminar throughout the course and to come prepared to discuss the readings each week. Students are also expected to attend class, unless there is a good reason to be absent in which case the instructor needs to be informed.

Course readings

On-line: Journal and book readings indicated in course outline.

On reserve: Two readings (one each in Class 2 and 5) at York University Scott Library.

For book review and in-class discussion with the author, due on February 28, students will need to purchase:

Dustin Galer, *Working Towards Equity: Disability Rights Activism and Employment in Late-Twentieth Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018). This book will be available at the York University Bookstore.

If you have any difficulty accessing any of the above readings please contact me.

Contact information

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Office hours, CDIS 6150 HIST 5538: **Wednesdays, 10:30 – 11:30, 2:30-3 or by appointment.**

CDIS 6150 Course Outline and Readings:

Unless otherwise indicated, all below required readings for Classes 1 – 12 are available online and can be downloaded from the York University Library web site.

Class 1. January 9 – Introduction: Historiography and Methodology

Reaume, Geoffrey. "The Place of Mad People and Disabled People in Canadian Historiography: Surveys, Biographies and Specialized Fields." *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 28:1 (2017) [published August 2018]: 277-316.

Rembis, Michael. Review of Hanes, Roy; Brown, Ivan; Hansen, Nancy E., eds., [*The Routledge History of Disability*](#) (London: Routledge, 2018) H-Disability, H-Net Reviews. October, 2018.

Connor, J.T.H. "The 'Human Subject,' 'Vulnerable Populations,' and Medical History: The Problem of Presentism and the Discourse of Bioethics," *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 34, No. 2 (Fall 2017): 496–520

Class 2. January 16 – Disability in Ancient Biblical, European and Egyptian History

Bengtsson, Staffan. "On the Borderline: Representations of Disability in the Old Testament," *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* 16:3 (September 2014): 280- 292.

Rose, Martha L *The Staff of Oedipus: Transforming Disability in Ancient Greece* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), Chapter 2: "Killing Defective [sic] Babies," pages 29-49. On reserve at York University Library.

Penrose, Walter D. Jr. "The Discourse of Disability in Ancient Greece," *Classical World* 108:4 (Summer 2015): 499-523.

Draycott, Jane. "Reconstructing the Lived Experience of Disability in Antiquity: A Case Study from Roman Egypt," *Greece & Rome* 62:2 (October 2015): 189-205

Van Lommel, Korneel. "Heroes and Outcasts: Ambiguous Attitudes Towards Impaired and Disfigured Roman Veterans," *Classical World* 109:1 (2015): 91-117.

Class 3. January 23 – Disability in Medieval Europe and North America

Metzler, Irina. "Disability in the Middle Ages: Impairment at the Intersection of Historical Inquiry and Disability Studies," *History Compass* 9:1 (2011): 45-60.

Drew, Rose. "Lives of Deprivation or Lives of Industry: Possible Cerebral Palsy on the Mary Rose," *Medieval History Journal* 18:1 (2015): 25-45.

Brenner, Elma. "Recent Perspectives on Leprosy in Medieval Western Europe," *History Compass* 8:5 (May 2010), pages 388-406.

Orlemanski, Julie. "How to Kiss a Leper." *Postmedieval: A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies* 3:2 (Summer 2012), p. 142-157.

Nielsen, Kim. *A Disability History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012), Chapter 1: "The Spirit Chooses the Body It Will Occupy: Indigenous North America, Pre-1492", pages 1-11. E-book on York University Library system.

Class 4. January 30 – Slavery, Race and Disability

Block, Kristen. "Slavery and Inter-Imperial Leprosy Discourse in the Atlantic World," *Atlantic Studies* 14:2 (June 2017): 243-262.

Forret, Jeff, "'Deaf & Dumb, Blind, Insane, or Idiotic': The Census, Slaves, and Disability in the Late Antebellum South," *Journal of Southern History* 82:3 (August 2016): 503–48.

Boster, Dea H. "'Useless': Disability, Slave Labour and Contradiction on Antebellum Southern Plantations," *Review of Disability Studies* 7:3&4 (2011): 26-33. Download at: [Review of Disability Studies website](#)

Barclay, Jenifer L. "Bad Breeders and Monstrosities: Racializing Childlessness and Congenital Disabilities in Slavery and Freedom," *Slavery & Abolition* 38:2 (June 2017) 287-302.

Barclay, Jenifer L. "Mothering the 'Useless': Black Motherhood, Disability, and Slavery," *Women, Gender, and Families of Color* 2:2 (Fall 2014): 115-140.

Downs, Jim. "The Continuation of Slavery: The Experience of Disabled Slaves during Emancipation," *Disability Studies Quarterly* 28:3 (Summer, 2008): 14 pages.

Class 5. February 6 –Staring and "Repairing": Charity, Disabled People as "Exhibits" and the Emergence of Rehabilitation

Stiker, Henri-Jacques. *A History of Disability*, translated by W. Sayers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), Chapter 6, "The Birth of Rehabilitation," pages 121-189. On Reserve at York University Library.

Daen, Laurel. "Martha Ann Honeywell: Art, Performance, and Disability in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 37:2 (Summer 2017): 225-50.

Stuckey, Zosha. "The Rhetorical Fitness and Self-Fashioning of Ann E. Leak and Lavinia Warren, 19th Century Side Show Performers," *Enculturation: A Journal of Rhetoric, Literacy, and Culture* (November 2010), 12 pages.

Carmody, Todd. "In Spite of Handicaps: The Disability History of Racial Uplift," *American Literary History* 27:1 (2015): 56-78.

Durbach, Nadja. "'Skinless Wonders': *Body Worlds* and the Victorian Freak Show", *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 69:1 (2013): 38-67.

Class 6. February 13 – Disability Histories in Asia and Africa

Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, “The Haves and the Have Nots: A Historical Study of Disability in Modern Iran,” *Iranian Studies* 43:2 (2010): 167-195.

Jane Buckingham, “Writing Histories of Disability in India: Strategies of Inclusion,” *Disability & Society* 26:4 (June, 2011): 419-431.

Brégain, Gildas. “Colonialism and Disability: The Situation of Blind People in Colonized Algeria,” *ALTER: European Journal of Disability Research* 10:2 (April-June 2016): 148- 167.

Clear, Esme. “Deaf Connections and Global Conversations: Deafness and Education in and Beyond the British Empire, ca. 1800-1900,” *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 16:1 (Spring 2015): 13 pages.

Grischow, Jeff D. “Kwame Nkrumah, Disability, and Rehabilitation in Ghana, 1957-66,” *Journal of African History* 52:2 (July, 2011): 179-199.

Klausen, Susanne M., and Julie Parle. “‘Are We Going to Stand By and Let These Children Come Into the World?’: The Impact of the ‘Thalidomide Disaster’ in South Africa, 1960-1977,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 41:4 (August 2015): 735-752.

February 20 - NO CLASSES due to READING WEEK

Class 7. February 27 – Class and Labour in Recent Canadian Disability History

Guest Speaker: Dustin Galer will present on his new book (book review due today):

Galer, Dustin. *Working Towards Equity: Disability Rights Activism and Employment in Late-Twentieth Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018).

Class 8. March 6 – People with Intellectual Disabilities: From Eugenic Persecution to Deinstitutionalization

Mostert, Mark P. “Useless Eaters: Disability as Genocidal Marker in Nazi Germany,” *The Journal of Special Education* 36:3 (Fall 2002): 155-168.

Ellis, Jason. “Early Educational Exclusion: ‘Idiotic’ and ‘Imbecilic’ Children, Their Families, and the Toronto Public School System, 1914-50,” *Canadian Historical Review* 98:3 (September 2017): 483-504.

Koester, C. Elizabeth. “An Evil Hitherto Unchecked: Eugenics and the 1917 Ontario Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Mentally Defective and Feeble- Minded,” *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 33:1 (Spring 2016): 59-81.

Kalinnikova, Liya and Sven Trygged, "A Retrospective on Care and Denial of Children with Disabilities in Russia", *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* 16:3 (2014): 229-248.

Allen, Holly and Erin Fuller. "Beyond the Feeble Mind: Foregrounding the Personhood of Inmates with Significant Intellectual Disabilities in the Era of Institutionalization," *Disability Studies Quarterly* 36:2 (Spring 2016).

Spagnuolo, Natale, and Kory Earle. "Freeing our people: Updates from the long road to deinstitutionalization." *The Monitor*, 4 July 2017, available at [CCPA Website](#).

Class 9. March 13 – War and Disability

Rubery, Matthew. "From Shell Shock to Shellac: The Great War, Blindness, and Britain's Talking Book Library," *Twentieth Century British History* 26:1 (March 2015): 1-25.

Magowska, Anita. "The Unwanted Heroes: War Invalids in Poland after World War I," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 69:2 (2014): 185-220.

McBrinn; Joseph. 'The work of masculine fingers': The Disabled Soldiers' Embroidery Industry, 1918–1955, *Journal of Design History*, 31:1 (February 2018): 1–23,

Withers, A.J. "(Re)constructing and (re)habilitating the disabled body: World War One era disability policy and its enduring ramifications," *Canadian Review of Social Policy* 75 (2016): 30–58.

Tremblay, Mary. "Going Back to Civvy Street: A Historical Account of the Impact of the Everest and Jennings Wheelchair for Canadian World War II Veterans with Spinal Cord Injury," *Disability and Society* 11:2 (1996): 149-69.

Reagan, Leslie J. "'My Daughter was Genetically Drafted with Me': US-Vietnam War Veterans, Disabilities and Gender" *Gender and History* 28:3 (November 2016): 833-853.

Class 10. March 20 – Accommodation Struggles of Deaf and Blind People since the 18th Century

Leahy, Anne M. "[Ruston: The foundational case for interpreting with deaf parties in Anglo-American courtrooms.](#)" *The Interpreters' Newsletter* 21(2016): 79-93.

Verstraete, Pieter, and Yva Söderfeldt. "Happiness Disabled: Sensory Disabilities, Happiness and the Rise of Educational Expertise in the Nineteenth Century," *Paedagogica Historica* 50:4 (2014): 479-493.

Galmarini-Kabala, Maria Cristina. "Ability to Bear Rights or Ability to Work? The Meaning of Rights and Equality for the Russian Deaf in the Revolutionary Period," *Historical Research* 90:247 (February 2017): 210-229.

Johnson, Russell. "'Better Gestures': A Disability History Perspective on the Transition from (Silent) Movies to Talkies in the United States" *Journal of Social History* 51:1 (2017): 1-26

Pearce, Joanna. "Not for Alms but Help: Fund-raising and Free Education for the Blind," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 23:1 (2012): 131–155.

Baár, Monika. "Disability and Civil Courage under State Socialism: The Scandal over the Hungarian Guide-Dog School," *Past and Present* 227 (2015): 179-203

Class 11. March 27 – Disabled Activists, 18th to mid 20th Centuries

Kogan, Nathaniel Smith. "[Aberrations in the Body and in the Body Politic: The Eighteenth-Century Life of Benjamin Lay, Disabled Abolitionist,](#)" *Disability Studies Quarterly* 36:3 (Summer 2016)

Malhotra, Ravi. "Electioneering and Activism at the Turn of the Century and the Politics of Disablement: The Legacy of E.T. Kingsley (1856-1929)," *Review of Disability Studies* 7:3&4 (2011): 34-42. Download at [the Review of Disability Studies website](#)

Poore, Carole. "Recovering Disability Rights in Weimar Germany," *Radical History Review* 94 (Winter 2006): 38-58.

Cathain, Mairtin O. "'Blind But Not to the Hard Facts of Life': The Blind Workers' Struggle in Derry, 1928-1940," *Radical History Review* 94 (Winter 2006): 9-21.

Longmore, Paul 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* 87:3 (December 2000): 888-922.

Class 12. April 3 – Disability Activism from the Mid to Late 20th Century

Gebrekidan, Fikru Negash. "Disability Rights Activism in Kenya, 1959-1964: History from Below," *African Studies Review* 55:3 (December 2012): 103-122.

Brégain, Gildas. "[An entangled perspective on disability history: The disability protests in Argentina, Brazil and Spain, 1968-1982](#)," in *The Imperfect Historian: Disability Histories in Europe*, (Bern: Peter Lang, 2013): 13 pages

del Cura, Mercedes. "[The Future We Want: Demanding Rights for People with Disabilities during the Spanish Democratic Transition,](#)" *Public Disability History* blog journal (January 30, 2017).

Brune, Jeffrey A. "Blind Like Me: John Howard Griffin, Disability, Intersectionality, and Civil Rights in Postwar America." *African American Review*, 50.2 (Summer 2017): 203- 219.

Erkulwater, Jennifer L. "How the Nation's Largest Minority Became White: Race Politics and the Disability Rights Movement, 1970-1980," *The Journal of Policy History* 30:3 (2018): 367-399.

Schweik, Susan. "Lomax's Matrix: Disability, Solidarity, and the Black Power of 504," *Disability Studies Quarterly* 31:1 (2011): 23 pages.