

Karen Mason

Disability Studies

Online resources for a growing discipline

Disability Studies as an interdisciplinary field of academic inquiry began to emerge in the 1970s in the United States and in the United Kingdom. Today, Disability Studies is a nearly global phenomenon with universities in Scandinavia, Asia, Europe and South Africa offering minors, certificates, graduate, and undergraduate degrees in the field. Disability Studies grew out of the Independent Living movements, and gained momentum as people with disabilities and their advocates began deeper and more active engagement in the political process so as to effect changes in public policy.

With its basis in social activism, many disability theorists began to question the exclusive focus on disability as a sickness or impairment that needed to be corrected and favored a theoretical approach that takes into account the ways in which society uses images and language to shape notions of ability/disability.

Although advocacy and activism are central to any discussion around disability, this list of Internet resources is primarily focused on sites particularly useful to scholars, researchers, and bibliographers of Disability Studies.

Meta Web sites

- **Annual Disability Statistics Compendium.** The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and Demographics (StatsRRTC) collects large quantities of survey data and administrative records related to people with disabilities each year for use primarily by policy makers. Researchers can browse online or

download the 2009 PDF. *Access:* <http://disabilitycompendium.org/>.

- **Disability Online, the Disability Online Resource Center.** A directory of resources for people with disabilities, the site is organized into folders for links to chats and forums, other directories, news and media, as well as links to disability studies. Subscribers to the site can log in and rate the usefulness of the links provided. *Access:* <http://www.disability-online.com/>.

- **Disability Resources Monthly Guide to Internet Resources.** This Web resource is organized and managed by “librarians, and those in the fields of communication and disability studies.” The volunteers monitor, report on, and classify by subject books, videos, and telephone hotlines of interest to the disability community. The site features Librarians Connections, a list of resources on library accessibility. *Access:* <http://www.disabilityresources.org/>.

- **Disability Studies: Information and Resources.** Published in 2003, this Web site, sponsored by the Syracuse University Center on Human Policy, Law, and Disability Studies, is a gateway to resources for disability history. Edited and compiled by Steven Taylor, Bonnie Shultz, and Pamela Walker, this comprehensive resource on periodicals, links to Web sites for organizations, resources for teaching disability studies from the fields of law and public policy, gender studies, philosophy,

Karen Mason is assistant professor/serials librarian at the Charles Evans Inniss Memorial Library at Medgar Evers College, CUNY, e-mail: kmason@mec.cuny.edu

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religion, and so on. The Web site is an annotated bibliography for works published before 2003 on disability studies. The link to academic programs in disability studies is updated regularly and is current as of 2009. *Access:* http://thechp.syr.edu/Disability_Studies_2003_current.html.

National and international organizations and associations

- **Canadian Disability Studies Association (CDSA)-Association Canadienne des Études sur l'Incapacité.** Formed in 2004, CDSA supports research and scholarship by people with disabilities. CDSA is supported by a similar organization, the Canadian Centre for Disability Studies, but CDSA has as its mission the inclusion of interdisciplinary disability studies as part of the academic discourse. The site provides links to online Web zines, journals, and organizations of interest to the disability community. *Access:* <http://www.cdsa-acei.ca/about.html>.

- **DisabilityStudies.net.** The network is U.K.-oriented, but international in scope. The site provides links to items of interest to researchers, activists, and academics, including conferences, news, and events, with links to Web sites for international organizations, academic organizations, governmental organizations, and disability research. *Access:* <http://www.disabilitystudies.net/>.

- **Independent Living Institute.** Based in Sweden, the nonprofit foundation describes itself as a policy development center specializing in consumer-driven policies for disabled peoples' freedom of choice, self-determination, self-respect, and dignity. The institute, which grew out of the international Independent Living movement, states on its Web site that the foundation is controlled by persons with disabilities. The links are primarily to self-help and advocacy Web sites, but also includes links to Disability Studies and Research and Disability Culture. This site include links to M. Miles's annotated bibliography, *Glimpses of Disability in the Literature and Cultures of East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East & Africa* (2007-08). The Web site may be

viewed in Swedish or English, but most of the links are to English-language materials. *Access:* <http://www.independentliving.org>.

- **NNDR, the Nordic Network on Disability Research.** This organization, established in Denmark in 1997, provides a forum for scholars of all disciplines interested in research surrounding disability and marginalization. The official language of the organization is English. The Web site itself is sparse, most useful for links to other Northern network. *Access:* <http://www.nndr.dk/oldnndr/index.html>.

- **Society for Disability Studies (SDS).** Founded in 1982 as the Section for the Study of Chronic Illness, Impairment, and Disability (SSCIID), the organization was renamed the Society for Disability Studies in 1986. SDS is an international nonprofit organization that seeks to promote a greater awareness of disability across time and geography, as well as to advocate for social change. The site hosts discussion lists, sample syllabi, and publishes guidelines for the establishment of disability studies program. Participation in some of the discussion lists requires paid membership. The society publishes the open access journal, *Disability Studies Quarterly*. *Access:* <http://www.disstudies.org/>.

National and international academic programs

- **Centre for Disability Studies, University of Leeds, U.K.** The Centre's Web site hosts a very active disability research discussion list, has links to current research projects, such as the politicization of disabled women in South Korea, and a genealogical history of dyslexia. The university runs the Disability Press, which offers titles free as downloadable PDFs for personal use. *Access:* <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/disability-studies/>.

- **Miami University Disability Studies.** This site provides links to syllabi for teaching disability studies classes, written by professors from departments of speech pathology and audiology, women's studies, English, and sociology. *Access:* <http://www.units.muohio.edu/disabilitystudies/index.html>.

Discussion networks

- **Disability-Research Discussion list.**

Administered by the Center for Disability Studies at the University of Leeds, the list claims to be the largest discussion forum of its kind and welcomes posts on all aspects of disability studies, from the practical to the theoretical. *Access:* <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/disability-studies/>.

- **H-Disability Discussion Network.**

A discussion network launched in March 2001, coedited by Penny Richards of UCLA and Susan Sufian of Oregon Health Sciences University. The list is hosted on the Humanities and Social Sciences Online Network to disseminate scholarly information related to disability history. The earliest posts offer a fascinating glimpse of the growing pains associated with the emergence of a new discipline. *Access:* <http://www.h-net.org/~disabil/>.

Open access e-books, journals, and newsletters

- **Critical Disability Discourse/Discours critique dans la champ du handicap.** An open-access annual journal begun in 2009 by York University's Critical Disability Studies Graduate Student Association (CDSSA). *Access:* <https://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/cdd/index>.

- **Disability History Association newsletter.** This newsletter is published twice a year and was formerly edited by the founder of the H-Dis discussion forum. This newsletter advertises events relevant to the disability community and contains additional material not found on discussion lists, such as interviews with graduate students in the field. *Access:* <http://www.dishist.org/>.

- **Disability Studies Quarterly.** The journal of the Society for Disability Studies (SDS), describes itself as the first journal of disability studies. Available online through the Open Journals systems from volume 20, no. 4 (2000) to the present, the interdisciplinary journal offers themed issues such as Disability and Humor, Disability Blogging, and Disability Studies and Technology, Sexuality and Disability. Each journal includes book

and film reviews, as well as a section for poetry and short fiction. *Access:* <http://www.dsqsds.org/>.

- **The HSRC Press.** A nonprofit, hybrid publisher for The Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa, this site offers free, open-access e-books on scholarly social science research in Africa, including Disability Studies. *Access:* <http://www.hsrapress.ac.za/product.php?productid=2151&freedownload=1>.

- **The Inclusion Daily Express.** This is an international disability rights news service, which also includes archived links to the once popular, but now defunct, Ragged Edge Online. *Access:* <http://www.inclusiondaily.com/>.

- **Review of Disability Studies (RDS): An International Journal.** RDS is a peer-review journal published quarterly by the Center on Disability Studies at the University of Hawai'i-Mano. Published since 2003, the journal showcases research articles on a wide range of subjects, including studies about disability in other countries, negotiating strategies for working from home, and law and policy studies. The journal is available free online as a downloadable PDF or as a viewable Web page. *Access:* <http://www.rds.hawaii.edu/>.

Annotated bibliographies

- **About Disability.Com.** The resource created for the President's Office on Disability Policy (2001), the comprehensive annotated *New Paradigm of Disability: A Bibliography* (2007) is located under the Disability Culture link and is organized by categories: Community/Culture, Disability Studies, Family, Children and Relationships, History, Identity, Policy/Civil Rights, Publications, Video, Radio, Music, and the Internet. *Access:* <http://www.aboutdisability.com/bib.html>.

- **Best Resources for Achievement and Intervention re Neurodiversity in Higher Education (BRAINHE).** Although this Web site is primarily concerned with issues around inclusive education, it is also an important

resource for bibliographies and links on the social model of disability. This site links to scholarship that begins to apply theory to the ways we educate. *Access:* <http://www.brainhe.com/TheSocialModelofDisabilityText.html>.

- **Center for International Rehabilitation Research and Information Exchange (CIRRIE).** Under its Additional Resources link, CIRRIE hosts several exceptionally well-researched online bibliographies on the cultural and historical origins of the construction of disability in the Middle East and Southern Africa, and in the countries of Pakistan and Afghanistan from antiquity to the present. Compiled, updated, and annotated by M. Miles, the bibliographies contain both historical materials, as well as medical-rehabilitation-related links. Because many of the references are obscure and may be difficult to obtain, the annotations are particularly useful in deciding whether the item is worth pursuing. *Access:* <http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/bibliography/>.

- **Studies of the Body.** An annotated bibliography on general studies on the body, including gender and disability, compiled by Nathan Sivin for the University of Pennsylvania's History and Sociology of Science course. Although the site was last updated in 2003, most of the items are from the 1980s and 1990s, although there are a few earlier resources. *Access:* <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~nsivin/bib414.html>.

Blogs

- **Media dis&dat.** B. A. Haller's blog supplies and aggregates links to representations of disability in the media, as well as information related to cultural studies and disability. *Access:* <http://media-dis-n-dat.blogspot.com>.

- **University of California at Davis Disability Studies Blog.** Created by the Disability Studies bibliographer at UC-Davis, the librarian blogger alerts students to conferences, fellowships, online bibliographies, and current journal articles of interest to the disability studies community. *Access:* [\[blogspot.com/2009/03/announcement-disability-history.html\]\(http://blogspot.com/2009/03/announcement-disability-history.html\).](http://ucddisstudies.</div><div data-bbox=)

- **We Can Do.** Scholars interested in investigating disability history and disability advocacy in developing countries will find a wealth of information on this blog by Andrea Shettle. In addition to calls for papers, internships, and job opportunities her links under Research, Reports, Papers, Statistics will take the reader to such resources as a PDF toolkit for conducting surveys on disability based on work done in Afghanistan in 2005; a report: State of Disabled People's Rights in Kenya 2007; videos that highlight life for deaf people in the Central African Republic, Philippines, and Venezuela; and obscure and unique conferences, such as the First Symposium on African Sign Languages held in Cologne, Germany, August 2009. *Access:* <http://wecando.wordpress.com/about/>.

Art and history museums, and online exhibitions

- **Art, Disability, and Expression Exhibit.** An online exhibit curated by Stephanie Moore, director of visual arts initiatives at VSA—the international organization of arts and disability—examines the cultural expressions of artists with disabilities. *Access:* <http://www.vsarts.org/prebuilt/showcase/gallery/exhibits/disability/index.html>.

- **History of Disability in South Australia.** Launched in 2006, this project describes the history of disability in South Australia since settlement in 1836. The site contains short articles, stories by contemporary disabled people, and a searchable database of primary source material, including photographs from the State Library of South Australia and the History Trust of South Australia. *Access:* <http://history.dircsa.org.au/>.

- **Museum of disABILITY History.** A project by People, Inc., a nonprofit agency based in New York that helps seniors and those with disabilities live independently, the Museum of disABILITY History collects objects and artifacts related to disability history. The museum is located in Buffalo, New York, and its online catalog of images, objects, books, and the archive is searchable.

Access: <http://www.museumofdisability.org/home.asp>.

• **National Arts and Disability Center.**

A project of the University of California-Los Angeles, this site contains online images and organizations of disabled visual artists, filmmakers, musicians, and performance artists. The center's mission is to promote the work of disabled artists through representation in their online gallery. The site provides links to artists' bios and relevant articles related to art and disability, including news about grants, exhibition venues, and other opportunities for disabled artists to showcase their work. The site also provides links to current literary journals written and edited by disabled artists, and to the archived content of some now-defunct literary Webzines, such as *Bent*, a queer disability magazine. Access: <http://nadc.ucla.edu/>.

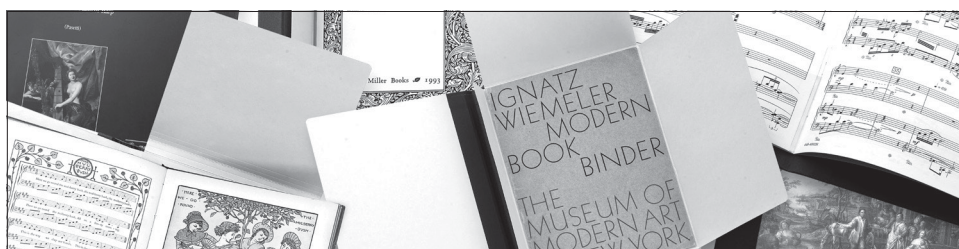
Educational videos

• **Accessible Educational Technology Series.** As part of the publications.bond.edu.au

open access repository of research and scholarly output of Bond University, scholar Shelly Kinash created a video series on education, accessibility, and assistive technology. The videos are posted on Vimeo, the high-definition video-sharing and networking site. The series include videos on topics such as "Issues of Online Learning in a Disability Studies Context," "Braille Literacy," and "Over-reliance on Assisted Technology." Videos feature interviews with disabled students and scholars. Access: <http://vimeo.com/8205436>.

• **Resistance, a 3-D Installation.** This video posted on Vimeo offers a preview and description of a 3-D multimedia installation of a project developed by Liz Crow on the possibility of resistance of disabled people to Aktion T-4, the Nazi extermination program. Access: <http://vimeo.com/3175590>.

• **Useless Eaters, Disability as Genocidal Marker in Nazi Germany.** This online presentation, based on the research (continues on page 260)



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consummate host and revealed Bermuda to us in its best light, although it must be said that beginning with the descent to the airport a visitor is hard pressed to uncover the downside of Bermuda.

This experience was a cultural and global opportunity to partner with other library professionals while presenting an occasion to observe how another country prepares its citizens to participate in the 21st-century global environment. Not only did we have the chance to work with and meet library person-

nel from across Bermuda, but to also actively participate in an exchange of ideas about how information is preserved. Although we sensed the difficulty of maintaining libraries and data storage facilities with reduced resources, we also witnessed the commitment of Bermuda's information professionals to sustain their environments. Overall, our time spent in Bermuda was both inspirational and educational and underscored the importance of working across boundaries to share information and resources. ♪

("Promotions . . ." continues from page 236)

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1. "Core Purpose," National Collegiate Athletic Association, ncaa.org/wps/ncaa?key=/ncaa/NCAA/About%20The%20NCAA/Overview/mission.html.

2. "NCAA Rules and Bylaws," National Collegiate Athletic Association, ncaa.org/wps/ncaa?key=/ncaa/ncaa/legislation+and+governance/rules+and+bylaws.

3. "Worlds Connect @ Your Library," *American Libraries*, June/July 2009, 24–25.

4. "Butler University Compliance," www.butlersports.com/information/compliance/compliance_info.

5. "NCAA Virtual Library," National Collegiate Athletic Association, www.ncaa.org/wps/ncaa?key=/ncaa/NCAA/Library/. ♪

("Disability Studies" continues from page 256)

of Mark Mostert, professor at Regent University in Virginia, shows the often-neglected and almost hidden history of the Nazi Aktion T-4 program. Techniques and methods for exterminating asylum inmates and others considered defective or degenerate served as a blueprint for the concentration camps. Although there is nothing graphic about the historical photos, their presence alongside the text and narration makes this video profoundly disturbing. Access: <http://www.regent.edu/acad/schedu/uselesseaters/>.

Radio broadcasts

• **BBC's Ouch!** This Web site from the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) features news, blogs, podcasts, and interviews by and for all those interested in contemporary issues facing those with disabilities. Access: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/ouch/>.

• **Beyond Affliction: The Disability History Project.** A radio program by producer Laurie Block was the result of her interest in media portrayals of people with disabilities. The site and program are sponsored by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Portions of the shows may be viewed on the site, and tapes and transcripts of the shows may be ordered. The site also contains photos and other primary source material connected to the project. Access: <http://www.npr.org/programs/disability/>.

Conclusion

As with any newly established discipline, Disability Studies has its share of internal, academic disputes and controversies. As scholars work to make disability more visible in our society and history, brand new lines of inquiry can be investigated, and classic texts can be re-examined to effect paradigm shifts in our understanding of our cultures. ♪