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Complexities of Survival and Resilience

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This special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies (CJDS)* includes 18 original works that critically examine survival and resilience as socio-political phenomena. The volume of contributions in this issue suggest the complexities of survival and resilience are important current considerations for critical disability studies scholarship and praxis. Drawing on interdisciplinary disability and mad studies perspectives, and a wide range of methodologies, including autoethnography, poetry, photography, art, commentary, as well more traditional academic methods for sociological and social-geographical, genealogical, and geopolitical analysis, these works expose, resist and rupture unexamined relations to difference and adversity.

Narratives of survival and mythologies of resilience play a central role in the cultural reproduction and lived experiences of Westernized ways of feeling, knowing and living. A paternalistic public discourse informed by positive psychology and an ideology of "rugged individualism" holds that lived experiences of adversity are resources that can be productive and even profitable, when effectively managed (Aubrecht, 2012). Individualizing, biomedical and psychiatric knowledge and expertise authorize conceptions of adversities as personal characteristics, skills, assets and opportunities that can be capitalized on to adapt to challenges

and live successfully in a market-dominated, neoliberal society (Dolmage, 2017). Yet, and as many of the authors, activists, poets and artists in this issue suggest, adversities can also be imagined otherwise – as the effects of oppressive and exploitative systems, structures and expectations, and as sites of relationality, resistance and care. It is also important to acknowledge the emotional and subjective dimensions of resilience and how, as Davidson and Milligan (2004) posit, "Our emotional relations and interactions weave through and help form the fabric of our unique personal geographies" (p. 523).

By mapping tacit and contested assumptions about adversity, works in this issue shift understandings of survival and resilience from individual assets to spaces of solidarity, collective action, culture-building and community identity. Spanning diverse institutional, geographic, community and subjective sites, authors chart new terrains for knowing, representing and experiencing survivals, ruptures and resiliencies. Poetry (viva davis halifax; Nicki), art (Stewart) and commentary (O'Neil) mark distinct moments in the issue, serving as *interstices* or intervening spaces that reveal and disrupt disabling temporalities, spatialities, and aesthetics. Essays describe challenges to coercive psy-stories in the form of counter-narratives, struggles and new subjectivities (Voronka; Beresford; Sherry; Healey), and resilience governances and discourses (Mfoafo-M'Carthy & Wolbring), mediations (Rajabi) and dislocations (Nabbali), that mark and unmake colonial, geopolitical and disciplinary borders of the nation-state (Nair; Kazemi; Inman), the university (Alzhammari; Aubrecht; Ignagni, Chandler, Collins, Darby & Liddiard), and the body (Docherty-Skippen). Diverse and discontinuous relations to resilience featured in this issue chart new directions in resilience inquiry, foregrounding the power of a disability studies informed multi-perspective approach in provoking new questions about the meaning of resilience, and why and how resilience matters.

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