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Review: Titchkosky, Tanya and Rod Michalko, Eds. *Rethinking Normalcy*.
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A primary contribution of this edited collection, aside from gathering together significant Canadian contributions to the field of Disability Studies, is its key point of departure: to distinguish Disability Studies from the study of disability. For an undergraduate audience, or a novice graduate level reader who is new to the field, the distinction is key, and it is nice to see a collection that does not take the need to draw out that distinction for granted. Michalko and Titchkosky nicely illuminate the importance that vantage point has for the development of perspectives and commitments, and help novice readers to see that the study of disability takes as its point of departure the obvious need to repair, to find a solution to the problem of disability, to return bodies burdened by disability to a 'normal' state. Disability Studies, by contrast, assesses the inherent value of lives lived in/with/through difference.

The introduction maps these distinctions in perspective and in practical commitments, and so opens them up as matters of political importance for readers to consider. The editors' preface, however, speaks to these same distinctions in a more obviously embodied mode that situates how Titchkosky and Michalko come to learn in and through their own disabilities, and to positively value the particular critical acumen that disability has provided them. This phenomenological inroad to epistemic and human rights concerns will likely come as a "new" mode for consideration: *through* dis/ability, rather than strictly *about* disability.

As far as thinking through, or *via* dis/ability, some essays stand out for their exceptional challenge to the status quo of charity models and educational "inclusiveness" that have traditionally treated disability as a stigma that renders a person less than, compromised, a problem to be contained, solved, eradicated. Chapter 9, "Conspicuous Contribution and American Cultural Dilemmas" by Paul K. Longmore, in Section III, is a particularly strong example, taking the oh-so-familiar charity telethon as its object to show the ironic lack of generosity - either emotional or intellectual - that motivates the very *raison-d'etre* of "charities" and telethons. Longmore's essay reveals with incisive clarity the absence from charities and telethons of any value of disability in itself,

This value for disability in itself is also what James Overboe refers to as "Difference in Itself" in his essay of the same title, also reprinted in the collection. In short, what Overboe argues, and what Longmore illustrates, is that disability exists to the charity only as a problem to be solved, and for the telethon only as the means to an end for countless Americans to demonstrate their symbolic value as moral subjects who *care* (about the poor, tragic, cripples). The Longmore and Overboe essays, though they date from the late 1990s, remain "fresh" and provide a badly needed perspective for students who are typically drawn, at least at my own institution, to classes on "disability" because they view the world from a "helping" model that presumes disability to be a problem to be solved by a combination of social work and medical interventions.

The collection, which also addresses the social model of disability with an essay from Michael Oliver, seems to be quite aware of what motivates the average undergraduate to take a first course in Disability Studies, not realizing, perhaps, that such courses do not study disability, but take an approach to research that is informed in/by/through disability.

Challenging that typical view, the book is organized to work through stages, providing some of the most powerful, keystone essays that have helped to define the field. Among them, Garland-Thomson's "Disability, Identity, and Representation" along with Overboe's "Difference in Itself" and Kudlick's "Why We Need Another Other" will be probably the most theoretically dense and challenging for a novice audience, but these are important papers that address questions about who gets to represent disability, according to whose terms, what it means to operate as the "Other" (and Other to/for whom?), and what it might mean to value difference on its own terms, without trying to "fix" it, render it "normal", or "restore" what medicine refers to as "species typical functioning" - which is how medicine distinguishes between procedures it sees as cosmetic enhancements from those it regards as medical treatments (Holmes, 2002; Parens, 1998).

I first encountered Overboe's 2003 essay "Difference in Itself" when it was still a new publication; it informed the development of my own course on issues in embodiment and disability, so I am glad to see it included in this collection as it is among the essays that remains most challenging to normative thinking, and questions just what is so great about "the human" as a template for being.

In any collection there is a risk that not all essays included will have equal strength and depth, and that seems to be true of this collection as well. In particular, though it raises provocative questions, Chapter 8, "To Be or Not to Be", a dialogue between Tanis Doe and Barbara Ladouceur skims too quickly over the issue of suicide, confuses it at times with euthanasia, and takes "choice" to be a fairly unproblematic value that needs no serious consideration regarding its context, limitations or structure. The discussion comes to a halt rather without warning and seems quite unfinished, and while the absence of resolution in the discussion can be fertile ground in a teaching context, the discussion itself appears weak in a collection of work that is generally scholarly rather than emotive. Nonetheless, I liked reading the Doe and Ladouceur discussion back-to-back with Rod Michalko's essay, "Coming Face to Face with Suffering", though his concluding remarks impugned motives and views to Tracey Latimer's parents that I am not certain are correct, regardless of how many times those motives and failures are asserted by Michalko. It is not clear to me that in mourning the loss of the child they expected that the Latimer's did not see Tracey as human, but it is certainly clear that as a rural family, neither Tracey nor her family was well-supported with day-to-day services that may have gone a long way toward valuing Tracey's life, and the lives of her parents and siblings.

It is certainly a key marker that a field has reached a recognized status as a *bona fide* academic territory when a collection can gather together more than 20 essays, thus representing in a single volume the key debates, developments, and turns that typify the work done therein. That a significant number of the essays collected here are from Canadian scholars and address Canadian cases and concerns attests to our significant presence in, and contributions to, a field that that has developed only since the mid-1980s.

To the extent that the essays gathered in *Rethinking Normalcy* address attitudes that take the "normal" to be the only possible "good life" (p. 5), they may, as a consequence of that commitment, represent a victor's version of lived disability. There are essays here to address the value of lives that do not express themselves in ways recognized as valuable, but these essays can act only as cautionary speculations regarding what Overboe, parsing Agamben, refers to as "bare life." In this speculative framework it is not so much that the world is haunted by disability as suggested by Robert McRuer (*Crip Theory*), but that disability is haunted by spectres of failed parents - mothers most especially for their passive failures to protect disabled children from murderous fathers and eugenically minded medicos.

We hear little from parents or guardians in this collaboration, and the omission may be a fair reflection of the state of the discipline, but it also indicates a direction that disability studies needs to get critical about: general social anxieties about the proper way to mother, i.e., with complete self-sacrifice, D-I-Y sensibilities that are unflagging, and infinite emotional and physical stores to fight for our children. Few scholars have really addressed the kinds of demands those expectations place on parents (mothers in particular), but it is a shame not to see work like that of Hilde Lindeman (2007) here. A collection that is open about disagreements regarding such fundamental issues as choice, autonomy, (in)dependence, and identity ought also be able to present a view that does not demand that parents of children with disabilities be held to an even more impossible standard than other parents are to be unequivocal and unfailing at all times.

The final omission from the collection is the absence of scholarship on disability and sexuality. Some of the essays included here point obliquely toward sexual matters via parallels with queer theory, or discussions of reproductive rights, but none addresses sexuality head-on. As a reader, I cannot know if those who have worked in the area refused permission for their work to be included, but the absence leaves the unfortunate suggestion that sexuality (still) isn't on the disability studies agenda. Perhaps a second edition a few years hence will enliven these areas in the account of what we are doing in critical disability studies.

In the end, the reader provides a rich collection that represents Canadian and global scholarship very well. The section I found most vital is Section VI, Global Interconnections and Local Challenges. The essays here by Corbett Joan O'Toole, Anita Ghai, Robert McRuer, and Carla Rice end the collection with a powerful rallying cry for more intersectionality, more dialogue, less hubris, and a greater global awareness, both of disability scholarship as interdisciplinary scholarship, and of the needs of persons with disabilities in a global community.

The collection assumes a reader already familiar and comfortable with fairly sophisticated social theory. It is not, therefore, an introduction for novice readers, but will serve advanced undergraduates and graduate students quite well as a one-stop point of departure. I know that the next time I teach my courses on embodiment and disability at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, I will be including this volume as a required course text.

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