spotlight on TEACHING

AAR

May 2005

Published by the American Academy of Religion
www.aarweb.org

Vol. 20, No. 3

IN THIS ISSUE

Embracing Disability in Teaching Religion

The AAR Committee on Teaching and Learning (Eugene V. Gallagher, Chair) sponsors *Spotlight on Teaching.* It appears twice each year in *Religious Studies News—AAR Edition* and focuses on teaching and learning around a particular theme, concern, or setting.

Editor
Tazim R. Kassam
Syracuse University

Guest Editor
Kerry Wynn
Southeast Missouri State University

Spotlight on Teaching
is published by the
American Academy of Religion
825 Houston Mill Road, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30329
Visit *www.aarweb.org*

Embracing Disability in Teaching Religion

Kerry Wynn, Southeast Missouri State University
Guest Editor

From the Editor's Desk

Tazim R. Kassam
Spotlight on Teaching *Editor*

According to the 2003 U.S. Census, one in seven persons in the U.S. has a disability, a figure that translates to some 37.5 million people, many of whom have severe disabilities. Fifty-three percent of them, or 19.9 million, are between the ages of 21 and 64.[1] As educators, it is essential to be aware of various forms of discrimination as they pertain to equal access and opportunity for diverse groups, especially those groups that have been historically marginalized; and to understand, practically speaking, how laws that safeguard equal access and opportunity, such as the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, apply to teachers in the classroom. The global need to uphold equitable standards of access for people with disabilities was affirmed by the U.N. in 1993 when it adopted *The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.*

This issue of *Spotlight* is devoted to highlighting the concerns and rights of people with disabilities, many of whom are our students, fellow colleagues, and staff, and to offering pragmatic ways of ensuring that educational practices and pedagogies are nondiscriminatory and inclusive.

The AAR Task Force on Religion and Disabilities was established in 2002 to make recommendations to the Board on how to address the needs of Academy members with disabilities. In order to better ascertain these needs, the Task Force conducted a survey of the AAR membership, wherein respondents with disabilities expressed their various concerns, including the practical challenges posed by the size of the Annual Meeting, the distance between sessions and conference hotels, and the accessibility of presentations made during the AAR sessions. In addition to taking up the question of how best to provide suitable accommodations for its members with disabilities, the Task Force also drew attention to the importance of (a) providing faculty with useful information and practical guidelines on teaching students with learning disabilities; and (b) recognizing religion and disability studies as a subdiscipline within religious studies that deserves to be treated as a distinct and legitimate area of academic inquiry. An important outcome of the Task Force's efforts is the guidelines on accessibility provided on the AAR Web site, which include tips on how to give presentations, design Web pages, and provide facilities and instructional materials that are disability friendly.[2]

Some practical issues discussed in the following articles include: What are faculty's legal obligations and what on-campus services are available to assist them in responding optimally to their students with disabilities? What challenges do faculty who are themselves hearing impaired or who have a chronic illness face when teaching or leading classroom discussions? What are the challenges of conveying subject matter saturated with sense-dependent metaphors or visual imagery (iconography, ritual, music) to visually or hearing-impaired students?

Are students who have a visual impairment automatically discouraged from pursuing advanced study that would require them to learn Hebrew, Latin, or Arabic? What classroom and career-related practices inadvertently favor the able-bodied?

Intimately linked to the pragmatic questions of properly accommodating persons with disabilities is the task of critiquing cultural and religiously mediated constructions of disability that underlie the manifold exclusions of social, educational, and institutional practice. Prototypical notions of the ideal and/or normative body, and stigmas of abnormality and deficiency attached to bodies that deviate from these norms, are explored in this issue. The myriad biases and judgments embedded in common phrases that rely on metaphors of disability, such as "fell on deaf ears," "has a blind spot," or "is morally crippled," betray the extent to which negative valences permeate attitudes towards disability. Religious and theological texts are deeply implicated in inscribing on bodies that are infirm, ill, weak, and physically impaired meanings that signify ignorance, evil, sin, moral deficiency, and lack of faith, and consequently evoke a mixture of condemnation, pity, and contempt. Scholars are thus invited to consider the multiple ways that the identification of the holy with beauty, perfection, and the good in religious art and imagination casts into exile bodies that are deemed disabled and defective.

For calling the attention of our readership to disability studies, both in terms of teaching pedagogy and as a legitimate subdiscipline, thanks are due to the guest editor of this issue, Kerry Wynn, who chairs the Task Force on Religion and Disability, as well as to the members of the Task Force and the individual contributors. ❧

[1] Thanks to William Erickson, MS, Research Specialist at Cornell University's Employment and Disability Institute for providing this information. See *www.DisabilityStatistics.org* and *www.edi.cornell.edu.*

[2] See *www.aarweb.org/other/accessibility/default.asp.*

Integrating Disability in Religious Studies and Theological Education

Nancy L. Eiesland, Emory University

Nancy L. Eiesland is associate professor of sociology of religion at Emory University's Candler School of Theology and Graduate Division of Religion. Her publications in disability studies in religion include The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability (1994) *and* Human Disability and the Service of God (1998).

DISABILITY IS everywhere once you know how to look for it. The challenge for those who study religion and theology has been to develop conceptual frameworks, intellectual practices, and pedagogical awareness that investigate disability's presence, rather than perpetuate the "absent presence" of disability within our work. Disability has been clearly present in our own lives, the lives of students and co-religionists, sacred stories, and social context. Yet until relatively recently, it has not been explicitly incorporated into our religious and professional identities, theories, or descriptions of religion.

Increasingly scholars in religion and theology are creating and adapting new theories about disability within our teaching, research, and professional identities. The emergence of this focus has not happened as a result of our spontaneous enlightenment — it has been people with disabilities who have brought these questions to the forefront. Just as the presence of women in the classroom and profession has challenged assumptions of gender norms, people with disabilities, ever more present in our educational and religious contexts, have illuminated workings of disability systems. (My use of the term "disability system" draws on and extends that of Rosemarie Garland-Thomson [2002].) Scholars with disabilities are using their own lives to examine the taken-for-granted symbols and sacred texts of their work. Students with disabilities come to classes with normalized expectations for accommodation. Religious professionals seek new ways to practice their leadership that honors their disabilities. Yet disability isn't at work only when people with disabilities are present; it is invoked anytime "normal" conditions of humanity are invoked in ways that exclude disability. Normal bodies only exist in relation to the unnamed category of "abnormal" or disabled bodies. Further disability is not constructed only as an individual issue. Collective representations, political values, and religious mores incorporate disability whether or not we have learned to see them. In the essays that follow, individuals who know the terrain of disability guide us toward understanding all the ways and places it is present — even if not plainly on the surface.

Historically, the dominant disability system in the United States resulted in the almost total marginalization of people with disabilities. Existing under a system in which the only measures to be taken in relation to disability were preventive, curative, and rehabilitative, people with disabilities were segregated and subject to medical and moral care, attended to by doctors and chaplains. Yet the formation of the Independent Living (IL) movement in the 1960s, which asserted that people with disabilities should have the choice of living in the community with personal assistance that would allow the individual to hold a job, keep a home, go to school, and worship, began to transform postsecondary education for people with disabilities. In so doing, it opened the way for intellectual currents that have come together to create today's disability studies.

When Ed Roberts enrolled as the first severely disabled student at the University of California at Berkeley, the assumption that the work of college and university teachers *should* include attention to the educational needs of diverse learners, especially students with disabilities, emerged. Later legislative advances were made, especially with the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (later called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), which established the right of children with disabilities to a public school education in an integrated environment. In the next two decades, millions of disabled children were educated under its provisions, radically changing the lives of people in the disability community and radically altering the context of postsecondary education. Our physical presence in educational settings necessitated some attention to basic architectural access and to attitudinal biases against people with disabilities.

Whereas the existence of ramps allowed physical access and laws protected from outright discrimination, people with disabilities continued to encounter intellectual frameworks for disability within most academic disciplines that were inadequate to their experience. Generally, disability has been defined as a medical problem and thus a personal tragedy. Despite diverse emphases, the ethos was that disability was synonymous with suffering — physically, psychologically, and spiritually. The pitiable state of being disabled was linked to illness, aging, bereavement, and death.

The status quo in interpreting disability was disrupted by the expansion and public attention to the disability rights movement in the United States and internationally. Disability activists adamantly rejected the tragedy paradigm that fatalistically relegated people with disabilities to a lesser existence, and they denied claims that medical experts were the primary authorities on such people's lives. The realities that plagued people with disabilities — poverty, lack of affordable and accessible housing, low employment rates, and continued poor education — did not emanate from biology. They were the result of socially constructed factors that systematically excluded people from active participation in society. The tragedy rested not in the bodies of people with disabilities, but in the body politic. Activists trained their efforts on the passage of a comprehensive disability rights bill. Passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1995 sought to ensure reasonable accommodation in the workplace, in state and local government services, and in public accommodations and commercial facilities.

Within the context of social and political activism, people with disabilities asserted "nothing about us without us" — meaning that we were the subjects of our own experience and we deserved to be at the speaking center of any account of disability. Illuminating systemic barriers, exclusionary practices, and cultural misperceptions, people with disabilities gave accounts that did not fit within the existing models of disability. While no single account of "what really is a disability?" can be given, increasingly the means for framing the question turned away from biology toward cultures and societies, asking, for example, "what are the shared cultural assumptions about disability and how do they relate to the systemic treatment of people with various disabilities?" Incrementally new and more socially attuned models have been advanced, many by scholars with disabilities themselves. Broadly understood, these models view disability as a means for scaling human variation, which assign value to bodies and which help to determine attitudes and practices toward those bodies, their appearance, and their functioning. Disability systems are integrative regimes of cultural interpretation and social organization, not unlike race and gender systems. Most societies have multiple disability systems, but generally one tends to be dominant. Within it, different disabilities are scaled differently; psychiatric disabilities may be understood to be infinitely worse than paraplegia, for example. Further, not only differences in functional limitation structure individual experiences of disability, but also differences in collective cultural interpretation and social opportunity shape how a person experiences his or her own disability. This approach allows us to reinterpret disability so that it is not only about people with disabilities, but rather a systemic means for scaling bodies in society. Understanding disability systems necessitates a careful and full account of the multiple and sometimes contradictory roles of religions and theologies in creating, sustaining, and undermining them. Too frequently these accounts of religious and moral meaning of disability have been missing.

Historicizing the emergence of disability as a focus of intellectual inquiry highlights the basic elements that continue to be vital as we work toward making disability fully present in religious studies and theological education. First, students with disabilities on our campuses and in our classrooms necessarily raise basic issues about the adequacy of our pedagogical practices, our built environment, and our social arrangements. Second, attention to disability within the classroom ought to situate people with disabilities at the "speaking center" — individually and collectively as subjects of their own experience and initiators of activism. Third, definitions and frameworks of disability need to elucidate the dynamic interplay of a complicated constellation of cultural, economic, political, and biological factors. While the disability system is understood to be different things in different contexts, it always functions to scale bodies and provide moral valuations to those differences. Fourth, a systemic approach requires a willingness to reevaluate our religious practices, theories, and descriptions in light of the disability system at work in them.

Disability studies in religion is, thus, not simply any religious reference to disability or any effort to incorporate students with disabilities into the content and structure of a religion or theology class. Integrating disability studies into our teaching and research means broadening our collective inquiry and questioning our assumptions. Today disability studies is burgeoning in the study of religion and theology. As one of the founding co-chairs of the AAR's Religion and Disability Studies Group, I have seen the exciting genesis of scholarship in this area. Religious and theological studies are not simply recipients of new ideas generated elsewhere in the humanities and social sciences, but are contributing new ideas about how myths of origin function in disability systems or how battles over moral meanings of disability shaped the history of asylums, for example. We are offering to disability studies a more nuanced, considered, and complex account of the multiple roles religious symbols and practices play within the emergences, fostering, and alteration of disability systems (Eiesland 1995).

The essays in this issue of *Spotlight* provide various perspectives on the extent to which disability has, indeed, become a category of analysis, a set of pedagogical practices, a social identity, a political position, a historical account, and a representational system within the context of religious studies and theological education. No single account within disability studies in religion could possibly hope to address all or most diverse experiences of disability, cultural context, and religions represented within the contemporary classroom contexts. Yet some of the insights here provide the scholar-teacher with direction and reassurance for the critical intellectual work that will facilitate greater integration. After the appearance of *The Disabled God*, many fellow scholars noted that they would be interested in incorporating disability into their courses, but there wasn't literature specific to their subdiscipline in the study of theology and religion. In 1998, I (with Don E. Saliers) sought to respond to that need by publishing a book that addressed some primary academic areas within theological education. Since then the expansion of scholarship on disability studies in religion has meant that more and more subject areas within religious studies and theological education have at least some scholarship that integrates disability. Now, whenever we teach a class, we can respond to our question "what is a disability studies perspective on this?" by accessing some appropriate content. Though much work remains, integrating disability into religious studies and the theological education curriculum and pedagogy is underway, and these articles further the effort. ❧

References

Eiesland, Nancy. "Religion and Disability Studies: Thoughts on the Status of an Emerging Dialogue." *Disability Studies Quarterly* 15, no. 3 (1995): 4–9.

Eiesland, Nancy. *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Religion*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994.

Eiesland, Nancy, and Don E. Saliers. *Human Disability and the Service of God: Reassessing Religious Practice*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998.

Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie. "Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory." *NSWA Journal* 14, no. 3 (2002):1–32.

Disability Law and the Classroom

F. Rachel Magdalene, Appalachian State University

F. Rachel Magdalene is currently adjunct visiting assistant professor of Bible at Appalachian State University. She practiced and taught law for over a decade before earning her PhD in Biblical Interpretation. She is a member of the AAR Religion and Disability Task Force and co-chair of the SBL Biblical Scholarship and Disabilities Consultation.

TWO IMPORTANT PIECES of legislation protect the rights of persons with disabilities and seek to provide equal access to higher education: *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973* and *Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* (ADA). Section 504 applies to all schools that receive any federal financial assistance. Virtually all colleges and universities, whether public or private, fall under this law. The ADA regulates public educational institutions, including state universities and community colleges. Together, these acts control a significant number of institutions. In 1999, the U.S. Department of Education (DOE, n.d.) reported that these laws covered approximately 4,100 colleges and universities.

Because of the enactment of these laws, postsecondary educational institutions have experienced rapid growth in their populations of persons with disabilities. The DOE (1999) has reported that, between 1978 and 1996, the percentage of full-time first-year students declaring a disability increased from 2.6 to 9. The percentage of students with a disability declaring a learning disability rose from 15 to 35 (ibid.). It is highly likely that every professor will find persons with disabilities in his or her classroom at some point. Consequently, understanding these laws is imperative for faculty members in higher education. This article will discuss briefly the scope of these acts and their impact on teaching.

The substantive provisions of Section 504 and the ADA are similar in a number of respects. The point of these laws is to prevent discrimination, both intentional and unintentional, against “an individual with handicaps.” They seek to remove any barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from receiving the full benefits of an education and to “level the playing field” between persons with and persons without disabilities. This does not mean that the results between these two classes must be identical in all cases. The aim is to “afford handicapped persons equal opportunity to obtain the same result, to gain the same benefit, or to reach the same level of achievement, in the most integrated setting appropriate to the person’s need” (DOE 2000).

Section 504 defines an individual with handicaps as including persons with any current “physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities.” It also includes persons with an actual or perceived history of such impairment. The U.S. Supreme Court has indicated that, for purposes of the ADA, these terms should be defined broadly (*Bragdon v. Abbott*). A disfigurement, a physically, emotionally, or intellectually disabling condition, or a chronic illness may meet the criterion. Hidden disabilities — that is, those not visible to the naked eye, such as low vision, learning disabilities, or diabetes — are covered. During the assessment of the disability, persons are expected to use any available mitigating measures, such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, or medication (*Sutton v. United Airlines; Murphy v. United Parcel Service*). Title IV specifically excludes homosexuals, bisexuals, those with certain gender identity and sexual behavior disorders, those with certain compulsive disorders, and active illicit drug users from the definition, but rehabilitated drug abusers are included. Class auditors and international students are protected persons, entitled to the same benefits as domestic or degree-seeking students.

These acts apply to the full scope of university life. Regulated activities include academic affairs, student services, special interest groups and clubs, social and cultural activities, athletics, and transportation, among others. Even activities of a college or university that occur off campus, such as class field trips and internships, may be controlled.

> *“The institution must provide, upon request, auxiliary aids, benefits, or services to a student with disabilities if failure to provide such items would result in a denial of access to any program benefit.”*

The institution must provide, upon request, auxiliary aids, benefits, or services to a student with disabilities if failure to provide such items would result in a denial of access to any program benefit. Consequently, with respect to coursework, the school must provide the student with whatever aid or service is necessary to make the learning experience accessible and meaningful. This varies considerably among students, which is a subject other authors take up in this issue of *Spotlight on Teaching*. The institution must bear the cost of the accommodation unless the student arranges to receive such benefits from third parties, such as a state vocational rehabilitation program.

Adaptive technology is advancing quickly, and students may request the best and latest of such technology. Although the ADA makes clear that the institution is to give primary consideration to student requests, the school is not required to provide any assistance that is unduly burdensome for it. Nor must it provide the most sophisticated aid or service available, so long as the provided aid effectively meets the student’s needs. The determination of what will be an effective accommodation should be a cooperative effort between the student and the institution. Such effectiveness must be determined on an individual basis and in the specific context in which the student will use it. For instance, what the student needs in a large lecture hall may be different from what is needed in a seminar setting.

Accommodations may also require making appropriate academic modifications for the student. This can be the most difficult type of accommodation for a faculty member to make. No teacher is required to lower, or make substantial modifications to, the essential requirements of the course. Questions may arise, however, regarding what is essential. Furthermore, certain adaptations to assessment tools may be fitting. The DOE (1998) states: “A test should ultimately measure a student’s achievements and not the extent of the disability.” Substitution of a more helpful assessment tool is permissible and often most appropriate. Faculty might wish to employ a variety of assessment tools in a class so that no particular academic strength or weakness becomes the entire basis for a student’s grade.

Occasionally, faculty object to the use of provided accommodations on grounds unrelated to the disability, such as the use of a tape recorder because it may infringe on a copyright or the free speech of those in the classroom. The laws demand, in this instance, that the professor allow the aid. The institution may oblige the student, however, to act in such a way as to protect the rights of others, such as by signing a copyright protection agreement.

Both Section 504 and the ADA place the burden on the student to obtain a diagnosis of the disability and to give notice to the institution concerning the disability. The school has no responsibility to identify students who need assistance; its duty is only to inform students as to the availability of services generally and provide the name of a contact person. Furthermore, an institution may not make a pre-admission inquiry concerning a student’s disabilities. After admission, however, the school is free, if it so chooses, to make confidential inquiries in order to ascertain what services might be needed. Nonetheless, the student has the fundamental responsibility to self-identify. Documentation of the disability is required. Often, schools will reject documentation that is more than three years old for conditions that are subject to change. A student may give notice to Disability Student Services (DDS), an appropriate dean, the student’s advisor, or a professor. A notified professor should contact DDS and encourage the student to do the same.

Once the student provides documentation, he or she must assist the school in identifying the appropriate auxiliary aids. This may include supplying a prescription from a qualified professional as to the proper accommodation. The school may decide, however, to secure its own professional determination regarding the need for specific requested aids and services. Once a student gives notice that he or she may be, or is, a person with a disability in need of accommodation, the provisions of the acts apply. The presumption is that the student requires the accommodation, which should be provided until such time as it is determined that the student is not, in fact, in need.

Generally, making accommodations for students without involving DDS is ill-advised. First, DDS may ultimately determine that the student does not have a legitimate request. Second, either under- or overaccommodating the student can be detrimental to his or her ultimate success. The DDS professionals are experienced in finding the right accommodation.

Hidden disabilities often go undiagnosed. Faculty members are well situated to notice certain learning disabilities and may come to suspect that a student, who has not declared him- or herself to be a person with a disability, in fact has a disability. The law allows professors to approach the student. Broaching the subject, however, is a delicate issue. Many students know that they have a disability but choose not to identify themselves for various reasons — including a fear of discrimination. Others simply are unaware, and the news might not be welcome. Consequently, if the faculty member chooses to approach the student, he or she should do it sensitively. At times, a student provides an excellent opportunity to raise the subject when they come in for academic assistance or to have a deadline postponed. Nonetheless, one may feel free to enlist the aid of DDS before one makes contact.

Faculty members are on the front line of compliance with Section 504 and the ADA. Knowing the school’s legal obligations toward students with disabilities can assist faculty in giving such students a positive academic experience. ❧

References

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. U.S. Code 42 (1990) § 12010–212.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504. U.S. Code 29 (1973) § 794.

Bragdon v. Abbott, 524 U.S. 624 (1998).

Murphy v. United Parcel Service, 527 U.S. 516 (1999).

Sutton v. United Airlines, 527 U.S. 471 (1999).

U.S. Department of Education. *Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance*. 34 CFR 104.4(b)(2), as amended 2000.

________. “Auxiliary Aids and Services for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities: Higher Education’s Obligations under Section 504 and Title II of the ADA.” September 1998. *www.ed.gov/about/offices/lists/ocr/docs/auxaids.html* (accessed July 28, 2004).

________. “Impact of the Civil Rights Laws.” January 1999. *www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/impact.html* (accessed July 28, 2004).

________. “The Laws Apply to Educational Institutions.” N.d. *www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ensure03_pg3.html* (accessed July 28, 2004).

Accommodating Disability in the Classroom

Kerry H. Wynn, Southeast Missouri State University
Guest Editor

Kerry H. Wynn is director of the Learning Enrichment Center at Southeast Missouri State University, where he provides academic support and disability services. He teaches for the Department of Political Science, Philosophy, and Religion. He chairs the AAR's Religion and Disabilities Task Force and co-chairs the Religion and Disability Studies Group.

THEY CAN COME in many ways. They can come through campus mail. They can come by e-mail. They can be handed to you by a student. They can come in many different ways in many different institutions, but their coming is inevitable. The first encounter with the notification that you will have a student with a disability in class can cause a jolt of panic. For many, the 21st such notification still causes a jolt of panic. How much additional work will this mean? Will I have to compromise the integrity of my course? I am clueless about disabilities!

Remember that you are not alone. Accommodating students with disabilities is a three-party team effort: the student is the expert on their experience with disability; you are the expert on your course; and the disabled student services personnel provide expertise on how to bridge the gap between your course and your student's learning potential. Depending on the size of your institution, this third party may range in size from a multistaff unit to a faculty member who has taken on the responsibility of learning how to accommodate students with disabilities. Whoever has this responsibility should obtain the proper education on disability law, disability documentation and interpretation, and the appropriate accommodations for particular disabilities.

Disabled student service staff are your friends. They provide the expertise to collect and interpret documentation, to identify diagnoses and the appropriate accommodations, and to note what is required and not required under disability law so that faculty members do not have to determine these issues for themselves. Professionals in Disabled Student Services (DSS) are as committed as faculty to insuring that academic integrity is not compromised. They know that to compromise academic rigor is to compromise the student's education. Their job is to make sure that students with disabilities have access to the same quality of education as that received by nondisabled students. DSS professionals do not try to guarantee success for students with disabilities — they try to make sure that students with disabilities have equal access to opportunities for both success and failure.

> *"The first encounter with the notification that you will have a student with a disability in class can cause a jolt of panic.... How much additional work will this mean? Will I have to compromise the integrity of my course?"*

All three partners should be involved in the accommodation process. You should know who is responsible for DSS on your campus. If a student comes to you with a request for accommodation that is not documented by the DSS staff, you should refer the student to DSS to register for services. The student will be required to provide the appropriate documentation from the appropriate diagnostic professionals to verify the disability. This is in compliance with disability law and insures that there is an actual disability and that the accommodations given are appropriate without compromising your course.

The minimal involvement by the three partners would entail what we might call the "cookbook" approach to accommodation. In this scenario the student provides documentation and registers with DSS, which then determines what the standard accommodations for the disability are in order to meet the student's needs while insuring compliance with disability law. The faculty member is then provided with a list of these accommodations, which he or she can then use as a checklist to insure that they have met their legal obligations. DSS will probably not include a diagnosis with this notification since the list should provide sufficient information for the faculty member to accommodate the student. Learning disabilities may require that a student be provided a note-taker for lectures and a reader and extended time for an exam. Attention Deficit Disorder may require that a student be given extended time on exams in a solitary environment. A visually impaired student may require enlarged or taped tests or readers and scribes for exams. There should always be a conversation between the faculty member and the student as to how these accommodations will be provided.

DSS should provide special seating arrangements, sign language interpreters, real time transcription (CART), or other services in the classroom. The faculty may be expected to notify the DSS staff when these services fail to function appropriately. There are services outside the classroom for which the faculty may not receive notification. These include taped or electronic textbooks, assistive technology, and accessible housing and library facilities.

The provision of other services may vary from institution to institution. Some institutions will provide readers, scribes, and proctors for exams through DSS or centralized testing services. Others will expect the faculty member to make these arrangements. There are differing philosophies on note-taking services; some DSS professionals favor paid note-takers while others believe volunteers taking the course take better notes. Some institutions will send note-takers to a class while others will rely on the faculty to recruit volunteers. This should be discussed with the disabled student. They may already have someone in the class whom they know or have worked with before that they would like to ask to take notes for them. If you are familiar with your students and know who takes good notes, you might ask them if they would be willing to share notes. As a last resort you might announce to the class that you have a student with a disability who needs a note-taker. When a volunteer is found, you can ask them to stay after class for a moment and then identify and introduce them to the student for whom they will be taking notes. DSS should provide photocopy services or NCR (noncarbon reproduction) pads for note-takers.

Some accommodations will require cooperation between faculty, student, and DSS staff. The use of an Assistive Listening Device (ALD) is one example. An ALD is a closed FM radio system that broadcasts directly from the instructor to the student. DSS will need to provide the equipment, while the student must wear the receiver and the faculty member must wear the transmitter and the microphone. If a class is discussion-oriented, the instructor should talk to DSS about providing a conference microphone for the ALD system. DSS should provide CART and interpreter services. The faculty should talk to these professionals about the way they can best work together. However, when talking to the student, the instructor should always address the student, never the interpreter.

Other accommodations will lie solely with the instructor. In today's technologically sophisticated world these include such things as enlarged handouts and copies of overheads used in class. E-mail attachments can provide electronically formatted materials that a student can then access through their own assistive technology. Accommodations can be as simple as allowing a student to tape record lectures. In any case, taping lectures is an accommodation guaranteed by law. If you have a problem with students retaining tapes of lectures, you can negotiate providing the tapes for the students on the condition that they return the tapes to you at the end of the term.

Some accommodations may not be listed but will enhance the classroom experience. These include facing the students rather than the chalkboard when talking. When using audiovisual equipment in a darkened room, it is good to remember that students who read lips will require that a speaker's face be lit, while students with visual impairments may require copies of materials in alternate formats. Remember that even when an accommodation is the responsibility of the faculty member, the DSS staff is available to advise you on how best to meet it.

Faculty who are committed to teaching, however, will want to move beyond this basic cookbook method. They will want to engage all three partners in designing accommodations that will enhance the learning experience for their specific course. The accommodation list provided by DSS should be considered as minimal. Alternative accommodations that better serve your specific classroom situation may be substituted on consultation with the student. Situations unique to a course can be identified and addressed. The DSS staff is available to assist in brainstorming how to address unique learning opportunities, and they have access to an extended professional community as well. DSS professionals are usually affiliated with the Association for Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), which publishes numerous resource materials and manages the Disability Student Services in Higher Education List (DSSHE-L), a list-serve that provides an ongoing dialogue via e-mail for DSS staff. DSSHE-L also provides an archive of all communications on the list. Topics that have been discussed in the past include how to accommodate biblical languages such as Greek and Hebrew for students with visual and learning disabilities.

While faculty should feel confident in being creative and innovative in providing accommodations, I would offer one word of caution: Remember that you are in the position of power. Students tend to be agreeable with those who hold power over them. They may agree to less-than-appropriate accommodations simply because you are the instructor. This does not mean that they will refrain from charging you with insufficient accommodation if they are not satisfied with the final results. The student must feel that an accommodation is appropriate. It would be advisable for you to discuss your innovations with the DSS staff. Again, DSS assist the faculty as well as the student.

The latest school of thought emerging in DSS is "Universal Instructional Design" (UID). UID advocates building diverse ways of addressing various learning styles and disabilities into the structure of the curriculum. It is hoped that as the best teaching methods for addressing diverse learners are incorporated into the classroom, accommodation will be part of the natural structure of the education process. As faculty become more comfortable with addressing diverse learners, they will become more confident in accommodating students with disabilities. ❧

Resources

Information on Disability Services may be found at:

www.easi.cc

listserv.acsu.buffalo.edu/cgi-bin/wa?S1=dsshe-l

www.ahead.org

www.janejarrow.com

A Student's Perspective on the Accessible Classroom

Kirk VanGilder, Boston University

Kirk VanGilder is a candidate for the Doctor of Theology at Boston University's School of Theology. Born hard-of-hearing and mainstreamed through hearing schools, his entry into higher education at Ball State University dovetailed with a progressive hearing loss, a discovery of deaf culture, and a calling into ministry in the United Methodist Church.

THE MOST ACCESSIBLE classrooms I have encountered as a deaf student in both my MDiv and ThD programs have been those which employ a pedagogy that honors the presence of everyone. As simple as this sounds in principle, the practice of good, inclusive pedagogy is often one of the more complex aspects of teaching. Many professors approach accessibility in the classroom by expressing a desire for clear-cut lists of "dos and don'ts." When a deaf student is in your classroom, do lecture normally; the interpreters will translate what you're saying. Don't talk to the interpreters when you mean to address the student. Do repeat things when the interpreters ask for clarification; chances are half the class could benefit from this as well. Don't stand between the deaf student and the interpreters; they need to see each other. As helpful as these hints are, they will vary from student to student depending on their particular abilities and learning styles. Therefore, the accessible classroom cannot be reduced to "helpful hints for professors" any more than theological education can be reduced to "helpful hints for pastors." Instead, the very act of making your classroom accessible must entail a transformation of what it means to teach and create an atmosphere of learning. This atmosphere for learning will involve the formation of practices which honor the presence of each person in the room, and allow for their particularities to shape how communication and learning takes place. It should also challenge each participant to expand their understanding of the course material as they encounter it and in seeing how it is perceived by others in the classroom. Such a classroom becomes a radically inclusive and liberating atmosphere that allows for students of a variety of abilities and experiences to actively learn and contribute to the scholarly discourse.

Presence and Perception in the Classroom

In my own case, my presence often disrupts the status quo of a regular classroom. Although this may stem from my tendency to be an outspoken participant in classroom discussion, it also results from the presence of two other individuals who translate everything being said into American Sign Language (ASL). The presence of interpreters makes it possible for me to be myself and participate fully in the learning experience. In addition, my self-conception of my being is often radically different from the general assumptions a hearing professor has of what it means to be "deaf." I see myself as a member of a community and culture of deaf people, as well as a user of a minority language — American Sign Language (ASL). This articulation of being in the world is often represented in deaf studies by capitalizing the word "Deaf" when speaking of a cultural understanding, and using "deaf" to speak of the experience of hearing loss in general. I present myself as a cultural-linguistic minority student rather than a student with a disability.

Not everyone with hearing loss adopts the cultural viewpoint. Quite often, college-aged students are at a point in their lives where they are discovering who they are and how they exist in the world, and their identity formation may be vague and in flux. Therefore, a deaf/Deaf student may not be able to fully articulate who they are and, even if they do, they will likely present a hybrid identity which moves between the Deaf world and the hearing world, as they are in a hearing classroom. A professor who assumes that a "deaf" student means a student with hearing loss and that all deaf students will have similar experiences will find herself faced contrarily with a plethora of identities in various stages of formation. To this complex picture add the fact that many students who are visually impaired, mobility impaired, learning disabled, etc., have begun to adopt a view of themselves which is somewhat similar to the cultural-linguistic view of Deaf people. Disability is increasingly being understood as a socially constructed condition rather than something rooted solely in the bodies of people. What makes a person disabled is not that she or he cannot see and, therefore, adaptations must be made, but rather that the classroom experience has been designed around the needs of sighted people in a way that excludes those with limited vision. While this doesn't carry the full effect of Deaf people presenting themselves as a cultural-linguistic minority, it does have the effect of reframing our presence as students in the classroom from placing the locus of the "problem" on the student to finding that locus in the pedagogical approaches employed by professors.

Dancing with Diversity

While Deaf studies, disability studies, and multiculturalism do not present the same particularities, they intersect in the classroom in presenting professors with the need for a pedagogy that can negotiate the diversity of identities in such a manner that facilitates learning for all. Honoring the alterity of each and every student in the classroom must mean recognizing that each student brings a particular set of factors into the room that will shape how communication, dialogue, and therefore, teaching and learning take place. Although I generally tell professors, "The way you teach doesn't have to change," in regard to the presence of interpreters, it often does. Clear communication and careful attention to how dialogue takes place come to the forefront. Intuitively, students and faculty see how easy it is for a fast-paced discussion interpreted at speed, but with a slight lag time for the interpreter to process how she or he will translate what's being said, can make it difficult for me to contribute. Therefore, the way turn-taking happens in discussion is given some attention by the professor, if not discussed in class at some point. This has a benefit for the entire class, as often the same dynamics will negate the contributions of other students from minority groups who struggle with concerns over how their contribution will be viewed, especially if it is contrary to what is being presented by the professor, and who thus feel isolated and uninvited to participate. This serves to illustrate how accommodations in teaching style and pedagogy serve not only to include the Deaf student or student with a disability, but can benefit the entire learning process and facilitate a more richly inclusive classroom.

> *"Therefore, the specter of failure in the classroom is often a moment of crisis which reaches deep into our identities, as we come to question the legitimacy of our presence there and whether we have the right to enter this 'foreign world' or not."*

In this way, intuitively feeling and dancing your way through the process of teaching can be much more beneficial than simply adopting set pedagogical models in relation to adaptive teaching methods for students with disabilities and applying them in practice.

African-American feminist theorist bell hooks writes of her efforts to create an inclusive classroom in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. In her reflections on the importance of honoring the presence of every student, she states that she requires her students to keep journals on their engagement with the class material and share paragraphs before the whole class. She sees this as an "exercise in recognition" (1994, 41) that allows the presence of each student to contribute to the shape of the classroom discussion; "even if there is a student present whose voice cannot be heard in spoken words, by 'signing' (even if we cannot read the signs) they make their presence felt." Overlooking hooks's use of quotation marks to qualify the use of American Sign Language in her classroom as if it were something less than spoken words, she has still honored the "voice" of a deaf student; she has recognized the power of how even the "voiceless" can contribute and shape the meaning of a class when empowered to contribute. In her collection of essays *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*, hooks examines how shame operates differently in the lives of minority students as compared to majority students. Many white male professors entered college as students fully aware that they might be subjected to rituals of shaming to prove their worth, their right to be one of the chosen. As a consequence they may endure these rituals without feeling threatened or destroyed. Not so for the vulnerable students from marginalized groups who may enter college with no awareness that ritualized shaming may take place. Rituals of shaming may create in them a true crisis of spirit where they doubt both their self-worth and their reason for being in college (2003, 101–2).

Deaf students and students with disabilities often experience similar fears and moments of shame when confronted with such situations. We find ourselves "outsiders" to the world of the classroom in ways that students of majority populations in society do not. Therefore, the specter of failure in the classroom is often a moment of crisis which reaches deep into our identities, as we come to question the legitimacy of our presence there and whether we have the right to enter this "foreign world" or not.

In conclusion, when working to create an accessible classroom, professors need to consider how Deaf students and students with disabilities bring particularities to the situation that challenge the status quo. These challenges need not exasperate the professors, nor leave them feeling disempowered. Rather, they can become moments of mutual learning and professional growth that shape the very nature of the classroom in a manner that can honor the presence of everyone. Although neither the young student in the midst of identity formation nor the professor who is new to the presence of a Deaf student or student with a disability has a complete grasp of all the dynamics present in the classroom, a careful exploration of the literature on Deaf studies and disability studies will reveal parallels and differences between the experiences of Deaf and disabled students and those experiences that professors have already encountered while teaching in multicultural contexts. These parallels can assist in making the classroom more accessible and beneficial for everyone. ❧

References

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

________. *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Spotlight on Teaching Solicits Guest Editors and Articles

AAR members interested in guest editing an issue of *Spotlight on Teaching* are invited to submit the title of a theme focusing on teaching and learning in the study of religion, along with a succinct description (500 words) of the theme's merit and significance, to *Spotlight's* general editor, Tazim R. Kassam. In addition to issues devoted to specific themes, problems, and settings, *Spotlight on Teaching* will also occasionally feature a variety of independent articles and essays critically reflecting on pedagogy and theory in the field of religion. Please send both types of submissions to:

Tazim R. Kassam, Editor
Spotlight on Teaching
501 Hall of Languages
Department of Religion
Syracuse University
Syracuse, NY 13244
E-MAIL: *tkassam@syr.edu*

New Bodies of Knowledge: Disability Studies and Teaching Biblical Studies

Hector Avalos, Iowa State University

Hector Avalos is associate professor of religious studies and director of the U.S. Latino/a Studies Program at Iowa State University, where he was named Professor of the Year in 1996, and a 2003–04 Master Teacher. He is currently at work on the second volume of a trilogy, Illness and Health Care in the Ancient Near East.

IF REFERENCE WORKS measure the status of a field, then one need only read the article "Lame" in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (1962) to gauge how some biblical scholars conceptualized disability in the 1960s. The main preoccupation for the author, Roland K. Harrison, was in diagnosing the disability in modern medical terms. Thus, the lame man in Acts 3:2 suffered from "weakness of the astragalus and metatarsus bones of the foot." The person healed at Lystra (Acts 14:8) probably "suffered from some form of cyllosis."

Another stream of scholarship had a more ethnocentric and "orientalist" approach. Merrill F. Unger's article "Diseases" in *Unger's Bible Dictionary* (1966) tells readers: "Insanity is much more rare in the East than in the West. This is doubtless due to the freedom from the strain which so severely tests the endurance of the more active minds of the Japhetic stock."

If we fast-forward to more recent reference works (e.g., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*), we find mixed results at best. In fact, most biblical scholars, critical or not, still see disability in essentialist medical terms, and view their job as translating biblical descriptions into modern medical terminology.

Justifying Disability Studies

A survey published by David Pfeiffer and Karen Yoshida (1995) showed that not a single Disability Studies (DS) course was taught under the sponsorship of a religious studies program or department in 1993. A 2003 survey compiled by Steven J. Taylor and Rachael Zubal-Ruggieri of the Center on Human Policy at Syracuse University shows that not much has changed since 1993 in this respect.

My own unscientific survey of the key term "disability" in the archives of the American Academy of Religion Syllabi Project found 13 matches, and none referred to actual course content about disability, but rather to accommodations for the disabled. I was unable to find a single course in biblical studies in my search that had even a reference to disability studies.

An obvious reason for this situation is that DS competes with many approaches already in place, not to mention others that could also be introduced. There are only so many weeks in a semester or quarter, and there are potentially dozens of perspectives that deserve attention. But selection of topics has always been subjective and adaptive. For example, literary source criticism is deemed important in a graphocentric culture. Yet, not all people in the world are literate, and most societies in biblical times were not graphocentric.

If demographics alone could justify disability studies, we could note that 100 percent of people live in an "embodied" state in literate or nonliterate cultures, ancient or modern. Indeed, one important reason for integrating disability studies into almost any subject, including teaching the Bible, is helping students become aware of how their bodies are conceptualized, disempowered, and valued by societies.

Disability studies should be an important part of biblical studies for at least two other reasons: 1) the Bible has exerted tremendous influence on how we have conceptualized and valued the body in European and American societies; and 2) biblical authors use "disabilities" to promote theological and literary agendas in their narratives and discourse. Accordingly, much may be missed in the literary analysis of the Bible if attention is not paid to disability discourse.

How to Integrate Disability Studies

While there is a plurality of disability studies models for conceptualizing disability, most of them are a response to an essentialist medical model of the "normal body." Many disability studies scholars emphasize that "disabilities" are created when societies obstruct the ability of persons to perform certain actions, rather than when certain physical features render persons unable to perform certain actions. Other scholars may emphasize that the disabled should be accepted for the body they have rather than be rehabilitated to conform to the "normate" body.

Given the plurality of models and perspectives that one could emphasize, integration of disability studies may range from including DS materials in opportune moments of a course, to a course devoted fully to a disability studies perspective. Regardless of the level of integration, there are at least five approaches to integrating disability studies into undergraduate courses on the Bible:

1. An "attitudinal approach" may be introduced as the class encounters relevant texts. For example, students may be asked to meditate on how "blindness" is viewed in Deuteronomy 28:28, which suggests that it can be the result of sin. Discussion about the assumptions of this biblical author can generate further discussions of whether any modern societies see disabilities as the result of sin. Many of my students note how some in our society see AIDS as a punishment for sin, which then engenders discussion about other conditions. The Book of Job, which denies that sin is a necessary cause of disability, can be used for comparison with the views expressed in Deuteronomy.

2. The literary role of disability can also help students understand how authors "use" disabilities to tell their stories. This is an insight systematically explored by David Mitchell, who argues that disabilities play a central role in narratives and film. One example may suffice: Deuteronomy 6:4 (NRSV) says, "Hear, Oh, Israel, YHWH, our God, is one YHWH." Although the selection of "hearing" may seem insignificant to some, the use of this "sense" may be part of a systematic privileging of hearing over seeing that one finds in other parts of the Deuteronomistic History. We are specifically told, for example, that the Israelites did not see Yahweh, but rather heard him (Deut. 4:12). The verse 1 Samuel 9:9 contains the seemingly odd note that prophets were formerly called "seers" in ancient Israel. The prophet Ahijah (1 Kings 14:1–7) is portrayed as perceptive despite the fact that the story specifically emphasizes that he is unsighted. Ahijah's correct information comes from hearing God's message rather than from seeing. The last example specifically shows how the author uses one disability, "blindness," to tell a story about the privileged nature of "hearing" God. At the same time, such differential attitudes toward the senses may also help the student understand how the privileging of specific "abilities" (perceiving without "seeing") are constructed by theological and social agendas. In a full-scale course emphasizing disability studies, one can study systematically how different biblical corpora view disability and privilege some senses above others.

> *"The literary role of disability can also help students understand how authors 'use' disabilities to tell their stories."*

3. The fact that biblical scholarship itself reflects ideological investments in the body can be illustrated by comparing writings from various periods and perspectives within biblical scholarship. Merrill F. Unger's view of "insanity" can be contrasted with other views of madness/insanity. We may note that Unger and other scholars were not concerned with how biblical authors empowered or disempowered the disabled through their rhetoric and theology.

4. Books and/or articles may be assigned that include discussion of disability from the perspective of disabled scholars. John Hull, for example, writes about blindness in the Bible from the perspective of an unsighted scholar.

5. Sociological studies may be introduced that focus on how modern persons of faith use the Bible to address their own disabilities. Lisa Copen of Rest Ministries, for instance, develops devotional literature to aid the disabled in living productive lives. Even if one does not agree with her theology, such resources are useful in studying how some disabled persons use the Bible on more practical levels.

As noted by a number of disability scholars, experiential, inclusivist, and activist pedagogical approaches can also be useful. One's experience as a disabled faculty member can be a model for empowering disabled students. The plasticity of the disabled identity can also be important to note. Due to chronic respiratory problems caused by Wegener's Granulomatosis, I experienced highly restricted mobility for a significant portion of my life, but now surgery has increased my breathing capacity to near "normal." Thus, I sometimes address how one can move from "abled" to disabled identities and vice versa.

Conclusion

Disability studies is at least as deserving of attention as any other approach to biblical studies. It can be seen as part of a larger body of experience that may be called "corporeal studies" or "corporeal criticism," which focuses on how different cultures value and conceptualize the body. If education means knowing more about the world in which we live, then students of the Bible should know more about how the most influential book in history addresses our embodiment. Yet, there are still many challenges and obstacles in the way of a thriving (systematic?) disability studies approach to biblical studies. One desideratum is a corpus of scholarly literature that addresses disabilities in the Bible and the ancient Near East in a more systematic manner. ❧

References

Albrecht, Gary L., Katherine D. Seelman, and Michael Bury, eds. *Handbook of Disability Studies.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001.

Avalos, Hector. *Illness and Health Care in the Ancient Near East: The Role of the Temple in Greece, Mesopotamia, and Israel.* Harvard Semitic Monographs 54. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995.

Hull, John. *In the Beginning There Was Darkness: A Blind Person's Conversations with the Bible.* Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001.

Holden, Lynn. *Forms of Deformity.* Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991.

Mitchell, David T., and Sharon L. Snyder. *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000.

Pfeiffer, David, and Karen Yoshida. "Teaching Disability Studies in Canada and the USA." *Disability and Society* 10/4 (1995): 475–500.

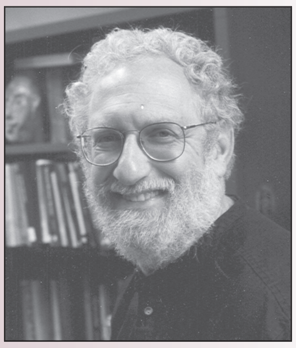
Stiker, Henri-Jacques. *A History of Disability.* Translated by William Sayers. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000. Contains a chapter on the Bible.

Taylor, Steven J., and Rachael Zubal-Ruggieri. "Academic Programs in Disability Studies." *http://www. ada.osu.edu/ disabilitystudies/academicprograms.htm.*

For how some persons of faith integrate the Bible in addressing their disability, see *http: //www.restministries.org/pro-devotion.htm.*

Disability and the Tasks of Social Justice

Roger S. Gottlieb, Worcester Polytechnic Institute



Roger S. Gottlieb is a professor of philosophy and the author or editor of 14 books on social and political philosophy, the Holocaust, religious life, and the environment. He is book review editor for Social Theory and Practice *and* Capitalism, Nature, Socialism, *and a columnist for* Tikkun.

AS IS TRUE FOR ALL great social justice movements, the full entry of people with disabilities into social life requires that we examine society as a whole and our own individual experience and beliefs, as well as take a new look at the group in question. Given the comparative newness of the disability rights movement and its many unique features, these tasks pose remarkable theoretical challenges and offer rich opportunities for teaching.

1. What is a "disability"? Who is "disabled"? Who decides?

Is "being disabled" a simple, natural fact about a person, comparable to their height or eye color? Or is it more socially constructed, like "being a resident of Michigan"? Some have argued for the distinction between an "impairment" and a "disability." An *impairment* is some restriction on the normal functioning of a limb, organ, or mechanism of the body. A *disability*, by contrast, is a kind of disadvantage or restriction based in social structure and/or technological development. Five hundred years ago I, with poor vision bordering on legal blindness, would have been seriously disabled. In our society, I need merely put on my glasses to see almost perfectly. My *impaired* vision is, in contemporary America, no *disability* at all. Severe dyslexia causing an inability to read is a big deal today; but in a peasant village in which almost no one was literate, the concept of "having trouble learning to read" would not even exist. If new technologies were devised that would compensate for quadriplegia the way my glasses compensate for my nearsightedness, would people with severe spinal cord injuries cease to be disabled?

Notice how key the concept of "normality" is here. We generally do not think of babies as "disabled," even though they cannot walk, talk, or feed themselves, yet a 20-year-old who could not do those things would be. As people approach old age, they generally become progressively less physically able, and often less mentally so. Are all old people disabled? What of conditions such as chronic fatigue syndrome, which can ebb and flow over the course of a week or month? Do people with such syndromes go in and out of the disabled group? Are seven-year-olds who cannot tolerate sitting at desks for extended periods "disabled" with Attention Deficit Disorder, or are they the victims of an educational system which stigmatized a natural and widespread need for physical movement? If a young woman with developmental delay cannot go into public alone because she lacks the social skills to know whom to trust, is the real disability hers or that of a society in which so many people are predators?

2. What is autonomy? What is intelligence?

Clearly people with certain disabilities are highly dependent, and this, many feel, is the defining mark of their difference. Yet, while people without classic disabilities may not need Seeing Eye dogs or wheelchairs, virtually all of us in modernized societies are dependent on other people for food, electricity, housing, information, and medical care. We also need the energy provided by the sun, the action of nitrogen-fixing bacteria in the soil, food, and water. Further, at different points in our lives, our own needs may vary greatly. Break a leg or pop an eardrum and you find yourself in a radically different position than you were. At other times it may not be us who changes, but the "normality" of our surroundings. A 20-year-old will do fine if the elevators are out of whack, but someone in their 70s might not be able to walk up 14 floors. Given the universal fact of human dependence and the way the extent and nature of that dependence can vary over a lifetime, why is it so critically important to distinguish between the disabled and the rest of society? What is gained by making some kind of categorical separation between the two?

> *"Together with other social issues, disability can be thought of in terms of justice and recognition, both the protection of rights and the granting of respect and care."*

As for intelligence, it is true that my daughter, who has a variety of distinct physical and mental special needs, cannot read the *Times*, do long division, or understand the nature of representative government. These are losses, and should not be either denied or ignored. Yet they are not the only kind of losses we face. Societies controlled by people of "normal" (or even "superior") intelligence have created a world in which enormously clever technical accomplishments combine with monumental failures of efficiency, morality, and simple common sense. (One need only think of nuclear weapons and nuclear waste, gridlock, the hole in the ozone layer, or the fact that 29,000 children die *each day* from malnutrition or preventable diseases to see what I'm referring to.) Again, could it be that focusing on what my daughter lacks is a distraction from our own limitations? Could it be that "normal" society is riddled with such monumental obtuseness that singling out the developmentally delayed as being the ones who are deficient in intelligence is itself an act of monumental *chutzpah*? And perhaps a reflection of our accommodation to the social and political status quo?

3. How does "disability" relate to issues of justice and politics of identity?

Together with other social issues, disability can be thought of in terms of justice and recognition, both the protection of rights and the granting of respect and care. Along with other groups from peasants, workers, and women to homosexuals and the colonized, those with disabilities have been marginalized, stigmatized, denied equality, and literally not seen. Because of this shared experience, both the condition of and the resistance by the disability community can be explored by applying the familiar vocabulary of democracy, rights, freedom, and respect. In this investigation it must be remembered that human identities are multiple: no one is simply a woman, a Hispanic, or blind. Each person's identity is formed by several social identities: class and race, gender and nationality, sexuality and forms of ability/disability. Further, as white and black women have racialized experiences of patriarchy, so within the disability community there is a hierarchy in which those with only physical impairments have more status and recognition than those with mental or emotional ones.

There are also (at least) two ways in which disability issues are unique, and therefore require radically new concepts and policies. First, unlike being female, African-American, or gay, having an impairment is a real deficit: there is an inability where there might have been an ability. This fact should never lead to a global devaluation of the person with the impairment, nor an unthinking acceptance that it is "smart" to make "smart" bombs or live with current pollution levels. Yet we also should not gloss over Down's syndrome or paralysis as simply a "difference," like being from of a different race, culture, or gender. A person who cannot walk simply should not be treated exactly like someone who can, at least when it comes to the design of a building.

Second, the need of people with disabilities for extensive forms of personal care creates political issues for their caregivers, as well as those with disabilities themselves. The intense physical and emotional nature of care-giving labor, as well as its devaluation in our society, creates a socially and morally problematic situation. Those who care for the extremely dependent carry a burden far in excess of the normal subjects of political life. Because the labor in service of dependency is poorly paid and assigned to racial minorities, and because doing it well requires a unique blend of personal involvement and moral commitment, dependency workers often lack the time, energy, and resources to represent their personal interests in a public sphere designed for autonomous individuals. Thus, even political reforms based in other struggles may not be adequate to this one. For instance, although women can vote, own property, and become brain surgeons, they will lack real social equality if they are de facto expected to take primary responsibility in the care of their autistic (or some other disability) child, their father with Alzheimer's, or their paraplegic sister.

4. How do we teach this stuff?

Along with historical and theoretical writings on disability and justice, it is essential for students to get a sense of the actual life experience of those who must face these challenges. Memoirs, biographies, and films can provide some insight into the particular lives of people with disability.

Strategies for developing awareness are as important as reading books and writing papers. Here are some possibilities: 1) keeping a journal in which the student pays attention to the way these issues surface in daily life, around campus, in the news — in everything from the use of "retard" as a put-down to the presence or absence of wheelchair ramps; 2) having students reflect on their own experiences of difference — how they felt "different," "unable," "less than," when they were bad at sports, late to learn how to read, or lacked friends (students might write paragraphs on this topic and then the teacher may read them aloud anonymously in class); 3) having students share experiences of disability from their own lives or their families: who has a brother with Down's syndrome, a mother with chronic fatigue, or their own unusual condition?; 4) having students "become disabled" for a day or a week: use a wheelchair, wear a scarf over their eyes, tie all the fingers of their right hand together; 5) having students connect to someone with a serious disability and interview them, or have the person lecture to the class. In short, make it real. ❧

References

Charlton, James. *Nothing about Us without Us: Disability, Oppression, and Empowerment*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Gottlieb, Roger S. *Joining Hands: Religion and Politics Together for Social Change*. Cambridge, MA: Westview, 2002.

Kittay, Eva. *Love's Labor: Essays on Women, Equality, and Dependence*. New York: Routledge, 1999.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues*. Chicago: Open Court, 1999.

Mair, Nancy. *Waist-High in the World: A Life among the Nondisabled*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996.

Meyer, Donald J. *Uncommon Fathers: Reflections on Raising a Child with a Disability*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House, 1995.

O'Brien, Ruth. *Voices from the Edge: Narratives about the Americans with Disabilities Act*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Scotch, Richard K. *From Good Will to Civil Rights: Transforming Federal Disability Policy*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001.

Shapiro, Joseph P. *No Pity: People with Disabilities Forging a New Civil Rights Movement*. New York: Random House, 1994.

Wendell, Susan. *The Rejected Body*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Teaching Students Who Are Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, and Hearing Impaired

Jane Hurst, Gallaudet University

Jane Hurst is the chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Gallaudet University, the world's premier university for deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing impaired students. She has taught there for nearly 24 years using sign language. She received her PhD from Temple University.

ON MY CAMPUS, a beautiful, bucolic oasis in Washington, D.C., all my students are deaf. This is how they describe themselves in our campus culture, though sometimes with a capital "D," Deaf. A high percentage of our faculty and staff are also deaf. This is how we view the world, through the eyes of deaf culture. In this environment I, a hearing person, am the one who is disabled. My eyes are sometimes slow to receive the language that is visually presented to me, my brain sometimes does not process fingerspelling well at all, I have trouble reading the various sign language "accents" of some of my students, and when I express myself I am not perfectly fluent. Worse, I think like a hearing person. I can be clueless to the deaf point of view. By virtue of my hearing status, I am always an outsider, I am always the Other, I am always somewhat marginal. In my nearly 24 years of teaching deaf students, I have had to become used to a more direct style of communicating than I was used to in the culture of my academic training. To share this acculturation with you, this essay is written in a style that could easily be translated into visual language.

At Gallaudet, deaf people do not consider themselves disabled, but rather as a cultural minority group within the larger hearing society. Gallaudet University sees itself as a deaf parallel to our neighbor Howard University, whose students and faculty are predominantly African-American and whose mission focuses on African-American culture and concerns. Deaf people use visual communication, and where this is readily available there is no disability. Our president, I. King Jordan, who was chosen after the powerful and peaceful weeklong "Deaf President Now" protest in 1988, has said, "Deaf people can do anything except hear," and the vast majority of deaf people agree with him. With advances in technology, such as TV captioning, Internet messaging, and text messaging, access to clear communication has opened up the wider society to what deaf people can do.

We do have disabled students on campus, and the Office of Students with Disabilities (OSWD) serves their needs. Those who have learning disabilities or have visual impairments are the most commonly served by this office. Students can take tests at the OSWD with extended time or with the size of the text magnified. OSWD also provides close vision interpreting so that students whose visual range is only a few feet have someone to sign the classroom conversation at that distance.

Based on my years of teaching in this environment, I have a few practical suggestions for those of you who are new to deaf, hard-of-hearing, or hearing impaired students. First of all, let the student tell you which designation from the above list he or she prefers. Like the terms African-American, black, and Negro, terms that describe hearing loss are culturally loaded and very political. As a hearing person you can stay out of the fray, as well as show respect, by letting each student self-identify.

Second, when I asked my students for their suggestions for hearing teachers of deaf students, they told me that it is most important to stay aware of visual communication in the classroom. A lifetime of habits of communicating only orally may have to be broken. Good visual communication means making eye contact when speaking to someone, and not talking while writing on the board or looking at one's notes. It means being open-minded to the deaf point of view and to the suggestions for better communication that your deaf students might give you.

In deaf culture, avoiding eye contact with someone during a conversation is inconsiderate and can be taken as an insult! I have gotten so used to eye contact in the classroom that when I gave a guest lecture at a hearing university nearby, I was shocked when the entire class broke eye contact and looked down at their notebooks. How had I offended them? Had I lost the whole class at once? I had to laugh at myself, because they were simply taking notes. In a deaf classroom, the lecturer should stop talking while students write notes. For this reason, I usually distribute copies of my own notes to the class to save time waiting for them to write everything down. This is also why deaf students may need hearing students to take notes for them: so you do not have to pause the entire class while your deaf student writes things down.

My third suggestion is to learn to use interpreters wisely. A sign-language interpreter serves as your eyes and hands. He or she will put into sign language your oral communication and voice the signed questions of your deaf students. You speak directly to the deaf person, not the interpreter, even though the deaf person will not be looking at you but at your "hands," the interpreter. In subjects such as religious studies, which are based not simply on a presentation of facts but are highly nuanced and abstract, it is important to have an interpreter who can work at this level. Students miss a great deal if the interpreter does not understand the subject.

For some students with hearing loss, interpreters may be useless if the student does not know sign language, but instead depends on lip-reading or other visual communication systems. Furthermore, not all signed communication is the same. Some students prefer American Sign Language (ASL), the native language of deaf people, which has its own grammar and syntax quite different from English, while others prefer Pidgin Signed English, which uses features of ASL but is based on English grammar and syntax. Still others might prefer directly signed English, which includes every article, pronoun, and verb ending. Because of this complexity, it is important to be sure that your student has the appropriate communication in the classroom.

Fourth, be aware that students can have multiple disabilities, and that you must do your best to accommodate all of these. I will not go into depth here, but will just point out that this is important to keep in mind.

Fifth, I suggest that you see the presence of disabled students in your classroom as an opportunity to develop mental flexibility on your part. You will have to change some habits, drop some assumptions, and adapt your teaching style to reach these students. What you did in the past in a classroom with homogeneous communication will certainly have to be adapted for those with different communication modes. This is a wonderful chance to rethink your approach to teaching. I have found, for example, that the professorial habits of speech that involve long sentences and a torrent of words to express a point do not work well in visual communication. Again and again I ask myself, what am I really trying to say? Can I express this more effectively by clarifying my own mental apparatus? Can I find clear examples that carry all the levels of meaning that I want my class to understand?

My final suggestion comes from the existential issues raised for me as a college professor who has devoted her professional career to teaching deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing impaired students. This is not what I expected to be doing! I was prepared for a traditional academic career, but the exigencies of the job market, and I must admit the challenge of the situation, led me to Gallaudet. I have not regretted this commitment, though I have experienced plenty of conflicting emotions about my career and my students. I have had to keep learning, which sometimes my aging self resists. For example, one visually impaired student would sign to me and point his finger within a foot of my face when he was signing the word "you." This seemed so rude to me until I realized that he had no depth perception, and had no idea how close his sign was to my bifocals. Still, I had to overcome my annoyance each time we talked.

As I teach what are perceived by the mainstream world as "disabled students," I have learned to go beyond conventional ways of thinking about the study of religion, especially the use of language. For example, I focus more on key concepts than a barrage of information, which can be visually exhausting in sign language, and is often better understood in written form. In the classroom, I use speech and sign simultaneously, which keeps my brain synapses humming and is mentally very challenging. Every abstract concept I introduce must be accompanied by many examples and interactions with my students to be sure they have understood. Here the basic interactive classroom approach, with much focus on discussion and small group work, will be helpful.

For example, in introducing the concept of *karma*, my students easily grasp the cause and effect nature of karma since the sign itself adapts the sign for "influence" or "cause" moving away from and then toward the signer. At this point someone usually asks, "But isn't karma punishment for the things you have done wrong in the past?" But the sign for punishment is quite different, and does not show a clear cause and effect relationship. Deaf students from Buddhist countries have an input here, since some of them have been taught this concept as children. Now we have an opportunity to come up with examples, and analyze them applying the sign concept. But we must take the time to find out where the students are coming from, rather than simply lecturing on the subject.

Most importantly, the flexibility required as I teach students who are so different from me in their experience has raised the question of who we truly are beyond our physical presence in this world. Is there a commonality that we share beyond our perceptions and self-understanding as deaf or hearing, blind or sighted, disabled or able-bodied? Can we extend this to understanding differences across the boundaries of race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation? I'm going to ask my students these questions on Monday. I expect a lively discussion. ❧

Past *Spotlight on Teaching* Topics

October 2004	Teaching with Site Visits
May 2004	Teaching about Religions, Medicines, and Healing
October 2003	Teaching about Religion and Violence
May 2003	Teaching about Material Culture in Religious Studies
October 2002	Teaching Religious Studies and Theology in Community Colleges
March 2002	Multiculturalism and the Academic Study of Religion in the Schools
Fall 2001	Issues in Teaching Religion and Theology in Great Britain
Spring 2001	Teaching Religion and Music
September 2000	Teaching about the Holocaust
May 2000	Theory Practice Learning: Models in Violence Studies and Conflict Resolution
November 1999	Teaching for the Next Millennium: Top Choices of Significant Works on Teaching and Pedagogy
May 1999	Syllabi Development
November 1998	Teaching the Bible: Initiations and Transformations
May 1998	Teaching Religion Using Film
November 1997	Insider, Outsider, and Gender Identities in the Religion Classroom
May 1997	Cases and Course Design
November 1996	Alter(ed) Sexualities: Bringing Lesbian and Gay Studies to the Religion Classroom
February 1996	General Issues of Teaching Religious Studies
February 1995	The Introductory Course
May 1993	Teaching African Religions
November 1992	General Issues of Teaching Religious Studies

Students with Learning Disabilities

Kent A. Eaton, Bethel Seminary San Diego

Kent A. Eaton is associate dean at Bethel Seminary San Diego. His publications, which focus on interfaith and interconfessional dialogue and conflict in Spain and Latin America, include the forthcoming article in Fides et Historia, *"A Voice of Reason amidst Christian and Islamic Jihad: Ramón Llull (1232–1316)." He is a member of the Religion and Disabilities Task Force.*

MY JOURNEY into disability concerns has been ongoing during most of my life as I worked in adaptive physical education and aquatics, later struggled in my attempts to grasp the implications of the disability issues faced within my own family, and consistently experienced rewarding friendships along the way with those who shared their lives and disabilities with me. Now as a seminary educator and administrator, it is ironic that my most personal and negative experience involving disability and religious studies should have taken place during my own seminary pilgrimage some 25 years ago. Having completed my first year of seminary, a longstanding battle with a deteriorating spinal injury finally required surgery. Six weeks after a double lumbar laminectomy and a spinal fusion, medical corset now firmly in place, I resumed my studies in the fall with this "temporary disability," which not only impeded mobility but also made sitting for long hours most painful. After my first class, I agonizingly became aware that supporting myself for two hours in the wooden chair was going to be more unbearable than the hour-long commute to school.

The logical solution to my dilemma was to approach the professor after that first class and ask to be reassigned to a seat on the back row so that I could stand and stretch as needed. Etched in my mind is his negative, bordering on degrading, response: standing to stretch during the study of Greek was a disruption to *his* class and not to be permitted. If I could not sit through class, I should not be in seminary and no accommodation would be forthcoming. There I stood, expecting to be included and embraced, perhaps even applauded for the extra effort to even be in class, but now excluded from the world of *regular* students.

Thankfully, the administrative structures of most universities and colleges now incorporate some form of student disability services so that situations as temporal as mine or as permanent as most can be addressed with reasonable accommodations, allowing for all students to experience success. In fact, the most important first step that can be taken in working with disabled students is to find out what services are available on one's campus. Depending on the size and resources of the institution, levels of service may differ greatly. The Office of Disability Services works with the student and the instructor to find ways in which the learning requirements for the class and degree program can be met by disabled students. Those services extend to students with learning disabilities, which are normally defined as a disorder that affects speaking, listening, reading, writing, spelling, or mathematical calculations. Some examples of these kinds of disabilities include dyslexia (problems in expressive or receptive, oral or written language), dyscalculia (barriers in doing arithmetic and grasping mathematical concepts), dysgraphia (difficulty in the formation of letters or writing within a defined space), and dyspraxia (troubles in a person's ability to make a controlled or coordinated physical response), as well as auditory, memory, and processing disabilities, which result in an impediment to understanding or remembering words or sounds because of the brain's failure to comprehend language correctly.

Learning disabilities are quite common. In the general population the estimate of those affected by learning disabilities ranges from 5 to 20 percent. These types of disabilities persist throughout life and present unique academic challenges. As noted by Eastwick Covington, "Educators must realize that a learning disability is not a disease, but a category that is useful to identify those who struggle to learn with traditional classroom techniques." (2004, 100). Understanding that a learning disability is not something to overcome through greater effort, the wise adult educator learns to follow the students, and to discuss with them a learning plan that will give them the strategies and skills needed to be successful in our class and beyond. After all, no one is better prepared to identify the accommodations necessary to perform the tasks required for an educational program than the disabled person himself. The end result is not unlike the intent of the Individualized Educational Program used in public education, which lists specific accommodations, communication needs, and the use of assistive technology devices, if any (IEP—Public Law 94–142, 1975).

> *"Etched in my mind is his negative, bordering on degrading, response: standing to stretch during the study of Greek was a disruption to* his *class and not to be permitted."*

The increasing number of disabled students accessing postsecondary education underscores the need for instructors to develop competencies in working with this population. While in 1978 only 2.6 percent of disabled students entered postsecondary programs, by 1996 that percentage had climbed to 19. Given trends in research, education, and public policy, one can safely conclude that the number of disabled postsecondary students will continue to rise and begin to approximate the 56 percent of students without disabilities who attend postsecondary institutions within the first two year of graduating from high school ("Research Finding Brief" 2000). The continuing trend of inclusion of learning-disabled students may be due to a more level playing field than in the past. Factors contributing to the improved situation include 1) civil rights protection from disability discrimination in training, testing, and employment; 2) research documenting the continuation of learning disabilities throughout adulthood; 3) continued development of technology, especially assistive technology, that has empowered disabled learners; and 4) the emerging population of successful learning-disabled adults who have opened the door for others to follow (Gerber 2003).

In spite of the improving prospects for educational success, the typical instructor can still feel overwhelmed in her attempts to understand the nature of learning disabilities. However, as Eastwick Covington points out, educators need not feel guilty when encountering a sharp learning curve: "Learning disabilities is a concept that has evolved into a complex web of ideas, the strands of which are constantly rewoven within the changing social and political contexts of our country. Because of these changes, as well as their heterogeneous nature, devising a framework for adult educators to use in the classroom has been difficult" (2004, 99). At the same time, and even taking into consideration their own possible lack of experience, instructors need to accept their share of the responsibility for the success of the disabled student. This is due in part to the fact that educational institutions are not obligated to provide accommodations unless the person with disability discloses his condition and provides documentation to verify that declaration. Otherwise, he may choose not to request accommodations. Identification involves the risk of self-identifying and being willing to face a wide range of uncertainties given the lack of understanding by the general public, which the learning-disabled student has faced all his life. "For many individuals with learning disabilities, the identification issue becomes a life-long concern and debate. The debate focuses on whether it is worthwhile to identity oneself as a person with a learning disability or to try to do the best one can without accommodations" (Young 1996). Any postsecondary class may include the adult learner who has successfully compensated for her disability in the workplace and has now returned to pursue a first or second degree. Perhaps this student is not sure whether or not to identify her disability, even though services are available to increase the likelihood of her success. As noted by Carpenter and Morgan (2003), the classroom can be a place of risk and an environment that "can generate confusion and personal trauma if the teaching and learning strategies are not explicit." As I experienced in seminary, if the instructor's first response to the student's request for accommodation focuses on the personal needs of the instructor herself or those of the nondisabled members of the class, the end result is increased confusion and personal pain for the disabled student.

Two suggestions can accomplish much towards reducing the "confusion and personal trauma." The first involves being willing to vary methodology to enhance the experience of the student. Although this might be as simple as allowing for alternative methods of feedback on assignments, the discussion of varied methodology exceeds the scope of this article. However, one important recommendation can be addressed: that of communicating goodwill and flexibility. In contrast to my opening story, the instructor needs to ask whether or not she is doing all that is possible to create a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment. Does the student know that I am interested in his special needs and that I am willing to do everything possible to encourage the success of the learning experience? Do I communicate that I am on her side and am not just one more obstacle to overcome in the pursuit of the degree? All students, and especially those with a learning disability, "respond to those who care about them and who take a genuine interest in them. . . . Educators must realize that no matter what new research produces, there is one classroom truth that has withstood the test of time for adults and children alike: teaching and learning include emotional practices, as well as cognitive ones. While this truth is fundamental to all classroom situations, it is central to those involving learning disabilities" (Eastwick Covington 2004). One basic yet important first step towards communicating inclusion can be a simple statement in the course syllabus, such as this one used by my colleagues and me: "Disabilities – Any student who because of a disability may require some special arrangements to meet course requirements should contact the instructor or the Access Coordinator for the Office of Disability Services by the second class period to discuss reasonable accommodations." When accompanied by an attitude of sincerity, such a statement opens the door for substantive dialogue regarding strategies for success. ❧

References

Carpenter, Barry, and Hazel Morgan. "Count Us In: The Role of Schools and Colleges in Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Young People with Learning Disabilities." *British Journal of Special Education* 30, no. 4 (2003): 202–206.

Eastwick Covington, Linda. "Moving beyond the Limits of Learning: Implications of Learning Disabilities for Adult Education." *Adult Basic Education* 14, no. 2 (2004): 90–103.

Gerber, Paul J. P. "Adults with Learning Disabilities Redux." *Remedial and Special Education* 24, no. 6 (2003): 324–327.

Mellard, Daryl F., Donald D. Deshler, and Amy Barth. "LD Identification: It's Not Simply a Matter of Building a Better Mousetrap." *Learning Disability Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (2004): 229–43.

National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Education. "Research Finding Brief." *National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Education Supports*, study area 4a, vol. 5. University of Hawai'i at Manoa, April 2000.

Young, Glenn. "To Tell or Not to Tell: Self-identification, Self-advocacy, and Civil Rights in Employment and Postsecondary Education." *LDA Newsbriefs* (July–August 1996). *http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/adult/young_tell.html.*

He Who Has Ears to Hear

Rebecca Raphael, Texas State University–San Marcos

Rebecca Raphael has been teaching at Texas State University–San Marcos since 1999. She received her PhD from the University of Chicago Divinity School. Her scholarly interests include prophecy, the history of biblical interpretation, poetry, and drama. She is currently working on a book on the representation of disability in the Hebrew Bible.

I HAVE HAD TWO teaching careers, one deaf and one hearing. Yes, in that order. I grew up with normal hearing. At 14, I developed a mild hearing loss that progressed slowly. From 15 until cochlear implant surgery at 34, I used hearing aids, lip-reading, and assorted adaptive strategies. When I completed my PhD, I was profoundly deaf. Unlike those who identify with the Deaf World and use American Sign Language (ASL) as their primary language, I experienced hearing loss as just that — a loss. English is my mother tongue. There was no day in my life when I crossed a line from hearing to Deaf and magically learned ASL. There was, however, a summer when I crossed a different line and heard again. Since my results with the cochlear implant are exceptional — one researcher called me "a happy accident" — I want to focus on teaching before I had the implant. It raises more searching questions for academia. E o a ea o ea e i ea.*

When I say that I couldn't hear my students, it doesn't mean that I heard nothing. I could hear voices, especially stress patterns. But speech is more than sound: it's phonemes. Vowels are lower-pitched, louder, and take longer to pronounce. Consonants are higher-pitched, softer, and shorter in pronunciation. The meaning of language lies primarily in the consonants. That's why we have languages with purely consonantal alphabets, but nobody writes only in vowels. With powerful hearing aids, I could hear stress and vowels: *Ea, ut o o ea*. Can you read that? I was trying to do the auditory equivalent. A classroom sounded like vowel soup. On the first day, I always told my students that I was basically deaf and explained what they would need to do to communicate with me. Still, I understood little to nothing of what my students said. They sounded/looked hesitant, disdainful, receptive, belligerent, confused. I asked for repetitions two, three, four times, and often didn't get it. Some people stopped talking. Others became louder and more persistent. When students talked to each other, I rarely understood any of the exchange. This was the case every day, in any room, all the time. When I got good teaching evaluations, the classroom still sounded like this. When my chair and I experimented with accommodations, it still sounded like this. When my first scholarly publication was accepted, it still sounded like this. Whether I was in a good mood or a bad one, it sounded like this.

From my first week of teaching, I trawled the Internet for other hard-of-hearing or deaf academics. I found a few people who had quit teaching, but no one who was currently working in academia. I found one or two science PhDs who wanted academic careers, but went into research because schools wouldn't hire them. Even in hard-of-hearing and late-deafened organizations, I didn't find any professors. There aren't many of us. The list-serve "Deaf Academics" has 165 members worldwide, and many of them are graduate students. (Yet deafness does not count under most institutions' diversity initiatives.) It was founded in 2002 and did not exist when I was looking for it.

A long experiment with accommodations followed. First, we tried what worked for me as a student: FM devices. These are personal radio transmitter-receivers. Designed for hearing a single speaker, they maximize residual hearing by delivering sound without background noise and by amplifying the speaker's voice. They do not assume that the hard-of-hearing person will be the one who has to hear 30 people. FMs gave me a small boost, but not much. One day after class, I picked up the table microphone from the other side of the room and noticed that someone had scrawled in pencil: HELLO! I didn't know who the graffitist was. Ou at o iut e dea.

> "I had to ask myself, 'Should I leave academics just because I'm deaf?' The ability to communicate in a classroom is essential to teaching. But is communication equivalent to a physical sense?"

After two semesters with FMs, I realized that I no longer had enough residual hearing to use them. This epiphany had three effects: I began to explore career changes, to consider a cochlear implant, and to use visual media for classroom communication. My second round of accommodations involved using students in the class to write down what other students said, and, later, hiring an instructional assistant to do this. Note-takers were agonizingly slow and conveyed only part of the communication. There was still a lot going on that I didn't know about. Anna, my Instructor's Assistant (IA), once told me after a class that some of the students were talking and laughing about my failure to hear something. I confronted the class in the next session and told them that talking about a deaf person in his or her presence was similar to a racial slur. Several students were in tears by the end of my speech. I a ike e ea, ear noig.

I considered learning ASL and using the university's interpreters. But ASL solves the wrong problem. I can't hear students, and *they* don't sign. Further, my audiologist expressed skepticism about mastering a new language in order to use it in such a demanding context. Finally, the staff interpreters are for students. While I would not want to take anything away from students who need it, the assumption that people with disabilities will not be in the position of authority is institutionalized, self-reinforcing, and illegal.

It took me over two years to find someone who knew about the accommodation I needed: CART. The same service and technology by which television is captioned also works on reality. I had one trial with it, a smashing success. It conveys everything; it doesn't impose someone else's judgment about what is and isn't important for me to know. The speed seemed natural to the students. CART providers are trained professionals who must be compensated. Department of Justice guidelines for ADA compliance list it as an effective communication for hard-of-hearing or deaf people. Around the same time I tried CART, I decided to have cochlear implant (CI) surgery and thus didn't need CART by the fall semester. (The medical professionals I consulted did not think that the CI would enable me to hear in a classroom; I chose it for other reasons.) Had my CI results been less spectacular, I would have needed CART to continue as an academic.

These nuts-and-bolts issues affect any deaf professor, but as we all know, religion is special. The Bible uses deafness as a metaphor for spiritual defect. I thought nothing of this until I read these passages before classes of fundamentalist Christians. Did my students see me in these metaphors? Once I asked Anna for her impressions. She told me that students found me intimidating, and deafness amplified the effect. "You seem to know everything, and they say, 'How can she be so smart if she's deaf?'" Apparently one isn't allowed to be both. Anna also said that students felt that my historical-literary approach attacked their faith, that they had to defend it to me, and that my deafness made this harder. This reaction shows a direct application of the biblical imagery, as I suspected. It also attributes their frustrated apologetics to my disability, rather than to my ability to answer arguments. It doesn't even consider that there may be weaknesses in their approach to the text. Finally, this view has historical precedent in early modern belief about deaf people. Without hearing, education was thought to be impossible; and without hearing or reading, one could not receive the Word. We were exempt from evangelization and its purported benefits.

For my part, I felt vulnerable to judgment and abuse, and incompetent as a teacher. After all, I didn't know what students were saying or laughing at, and was never sure that my meticulous responses to questions were even on the point. I couldn't tell if anything was getting across. For me, the biblical images of deafness applied ironically to my students. Nothing I said about historical and cultural context sank into some heads. They just knew what it meant, as effortlessly as hearing people hear. No labor of language-learning or lip-reading for them. O i bi bu my erat, o dea ike e essee I ed?

How the CI has changed and not changed my life is a story for a book. For now, I would like to raise the tougher question for my hearing colleagues. I had to ask myself, "Should I leave academics just because I'm deaf?" The ability to communicate in a classroom is essential to teaching. But is communication equivalent to a physical sense? Ask yourself whether your academic merit would change if you suddenly lost your hearing tomorrow. I don't think it would. So, let's generalize my question to "Should academia exclude deaf people?" I ask this in a provocative form because I hope that your instinctive answer is a resounding *No*. However, a simple feeling on the part of individuals will not, by itself, include deaf people. Concrete actions and policies are necessary. For example, I'm sure no one would say that deaf people should be turned away at the door of the Annual Meeting because of their deafness. However, in 2004, the first year in which the AAR provided any accommodations to deaf people, it consciously chose to provide only ASL and not CART. For me five years ago, this was like having the door closed in my face. Should the door to the classroom also be closed? If not, it must be opened by the understanding that communication and academic merit don't require physical hearing. The hearing academy will have to do something it has not done well before: listen to us. ❧

** The author kindly provides the equivalent of captioning by supplying the following key to the vowel sentences: in order, Mark 4:9, Is 6:9, Lv 19:14, Ps 38:14, Is 42:19.*

References

John K. Niparko, et al. *Cochlear Implants: Principles & Practices.* New York: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins, 2000. A hard-core textbook for scientists by some of the leading medical researchers on CIs.

Kathryn Woodcock and Miguel Aguayo. *Deafened People: Adjustment and Support.* Toronto: University of Toronto, 2000. In my opinion, this is the single best work on the experience of becoming deaf in adulthood, as opposed to being born into the Deaf community.

Department of Justice Americans with Disabilities Act ADA home page. *http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada*. Contains a wealth of information about the ADA, guidelines for compliance with it, and remedies available to disabled persons when the act is violated.

Deaf Academics. *http://www.deafacademics.org*. The page and list-serve provides networking for deaf academics and sponsors conferences on the inclusion of Deaf, late-deafened, and hard-of-hearing people in academia.

CART. *http://www.cartprovider.net*. A listing of CART providers by state.

IN THE NEXT

Spotlight on Teaching

Reflections on a Teaching Career in Religion

Edward Mooney, Syracuse University
Guest Editor

An Academic's Encounter with Chronic Illness: Teaching, Collegiality and Scholarship, and Students with Chronic Conditions

Mary Jo Iozzio, Barry University

Mary Jo Iozzio is associate professor of Moral Theology at Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida. She is the author of Self-determination and the Moral Act (1995) *and editor/contributor of* Considering Religious Traditions in Bioethics (2001). *Her research interests include disability studies, bioethics, and antiracist, feminist, and virtue ethics.*

CHRONIC ILLNESSES, like arthritis, asthma and emphysema, cancer, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, diabetes, COPD, Gulf War Syndrome, heart disease, HIV/AIDS and immune deficiencies, multiple sclerosis, neurological and neuromuscular diseases, and Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, to name a few examples, vary considerably from person to person in symptom expression and in severity — as is true of most illnesses, as well as most disabilities. This variability causes misconceptions on the part of observers about the incidence and progress of illness and disability, as well as significant periods of denial on the part of the subject-person with the condition about the extent to which the condition is self-defining. Further complicating these misconceptions and denial, on the occasion of more severe symptomatic episodes, the person with the condition often disappears, even though others continue to hold expectations that classes will be taught, committee work fulfilled, articles written and published, and assignments handed in on time. How can a person experiencing episodic symptoms meet these expectations and when is it appropriate for oneself or others to adjust those expectations? Many but not all of these conditions result from social, environmental, and viral factors to which all people are increasingly exposed, with which many will develop a disabling condition, and about which communities, broadly defined, must respond in a manner different from the dismissal, marginalization, and exclusionary practices predominant of the past and still in force today.

Academics, like any other professionals, will probably encounter chronic illness in themselves, in their colleagues, and in their students. Each of these encounters requires its own contextualized response to the questions of expectations, yes, and also to the questions of accommodation, solidarity, support, human families and friendship, a shared sense of human frailty, interdependence, common purpose, prosperity, and human flourishing. These latter questions permit explorations into the theological, philosophical, historical, sociological, psychological, economic, and scientific implications of illnesses and of disabilities. People with chronic illnesses and people with disabilities — and their advocates in disability studies — have only begun to expose some of the answers to these broader questions and the implications of practices that sequester or exclude them. People with chronic illness have fared only a little better in contemporary society and the modern workplace than their near cousins with mobility, sight, and sound disabilities. The teacher hospitalized for intensive chemotherapy will rightly be permitted a substitute teaching plan; the colleague undergoing coronary bypass surgery will rightly be given recuperative time from the office; the student undergoing physical therapy following a sport injury will rightly be excused from class attendance. Except for these temporary accommodations, what of their failure to return to the previous level of engagement, and how does "the academy" respond to a persistent encounter with chronic illness?

All teaching professionals and students face a wide range of challenges. From class preparation to class delivery and attention, to exam-making and studying, to grading and writing assignments, both the professional and the student engage in time-consuming and mental-labor intensive work. Chronic conditions may very well impede work progress, but they do not necessarily bring all work or productivity to a stop. Moreover, people with chronic illnesses, like people with disabilities, are protected under the guidelines of the ADA. And while accommodations characterize properly human ways of being with one another, accommodations are a civil right. Is "slow" progress an acceptable accommodation? How is the academy to reconcile seemingly disparate degrees of the fulfillment of obligations?

Accommodations and Teaching

In the earliest days of the Greek academies, at the time of Jesus's brief career instruction with the disciples, and at the medieval houses of study and universities, teachers conducted their lessons while sitting. Remnants of this practice are evident when royalty or the Pope, for example, take their place upon the throne or cathedra in order to pronounce solemnly law and doctrine that are subsequently imposed upon the citizenry or faithful to obey. The one who sits in these contexts exercises a magisterial teaching authority. By virtue of both credentials and employment, college and university professors are the magisters of today. I mention this sitting posture as one way of appropriating in positive fashion a symbolic gesture — the seated authority of the teacher and the chair from which authoritative teaching is promulgated — as an accommodation of fatigue for the teacher with a chronic illness. Likewise, teachers using a Socratic method of instruction not only invite their students to respond, they may also invite their students to lead class, to direct discussion, to compose examination questions, and to critique or evaluate their own and their student-colleagues' work. Interactive learning exercises, technologically sophisticated or otherwise, are a proven successful teaching methodology. In addition to classroom opportunities where students lead, distance and Web-based education provide significantly alternative methods from the traditional chalk-and-talk pedagogy of course delivery. Where graduate programs are offered, a graduate student assistant may be assigned to the teacher with a chronic illness and this graduate student, under the supervision of the faculty member, may be enlisted to conduct class, further developing her or his own craft as teacher, as well as responding to an episodic need. These methodologies may set in motion other creative and purposeful accommodations for the teacher whose chronic illness interferes episodically with course instruction.

Accommodations and Collegiality

Not unlike the accommodations proposed for teaching, accommodations for a colleague concern both a workplace ethic and expectations of productivity. Collegiality comes in many forms: as a social support system between peers; as an academic support system between the same or cognate scholarly discipline; and as an institutional/departmental infrastructure support system between faculty members sharing a corporate vision about the work that needs to be done. When considered from a collegial point of view, notions of "independent," "autonomous," and "exclusive" work lose force as the dominant features of standard operating procedures. The colleague with a chronic illness presents simply the paradigm conditions under which mutuality dominates workplace activities. Ask any administrator — anecdotal evidence suggests that productivity increases and/or remains stable where collegiality reigns and work is engaged in ensemble.

Social, academic, and infrastructure supports must no longer be considered a concession or a lowering of expectations but as accommodations. These support systems contribute to the success of everyone involved in the curriculum. Socially, peers provide outlets for leisure and frustrations — everyone needs friends. Academically, scholars provide an essential critique of, as well as a potential for, joint investigation and writing projects — academic colleagues need editor-collaborators. Structurally, faculty provide relief to each other in the burdens of committee work — faculty need faculty to discharge the work of higher education. Ideally, faculty members will be friends with one another, will comment constructively, and will smooth the progress of committees. Realistically, the academic workplace can be unwelcoming, colleagues may be hypercritical or gratuitous, and time-intensive committee work often falls on a single faculty member where full participation would be more productive.

Accommodations and Students

Students present all manner of reasons explaining their difficulty in meeting the demands of coursework. Some of these reasons have everything to do with procrastination and/or a lack of disciplined study habits. Others have a legitimate base, arising from child or adult care, a death in the family, a chronic condition, or a disability. These bases can be accommodated by reevaluating a strict attendance policy, by providing course lecture materials in more than one format (e.g., on a Blackboard Web site, or through handouts), by pairing students and assigning teamwork, and by alternating assignment methodologies from writing to presentations to oral examinations. Fortunately, most students with chronic conditions take their studies seriously; their very presence in the classroom indicates their determination to learn, to fulfill requirements, and to succeed.

The teacher of a student or students with chronic conditions ought to be informed by the student or by Disabled Student Services in order to begin to accommodate specific needs, especially in order to appreciate when the student experiences episodic symptoms resulting in excessive absence or delayed assignments. Teachers and administrators may want to reconsider the traditional duration of a semester's coursework, perhaps along the lines of European university models where coursework extends through an academic year. This accommodation would serve many students and would modify significantly Western industrialized notions of productivity to encompass the integration and appropriation of materials across a spectrum of studies. Until such time that personal/student development matters more than paper products, individual teachers can offer alternative ways for students to demonstrate mastery in the subject. Without knowledge of a chronic condition, however, teachers will presume willful negligence on the part of students.

Benefits

Imagine the failure of not accommodating Audre Lorde, Frida Kahlo, Flannery O'Connor, Virginia Woolf, Stephen Hawking, Ray Charles, Itzhak Perlman, and Stevie Wonder — how much poorer the worlds of arts and letters, astrophysics, and music would be. No more or less than "normates," people with chronic illnesses or with disabilities may be geniuses. Accommodating the teacher, colleague, and student with a chronic illness or disability provides other benefits that may go largely unnoticed. First, the teacher may be relieved of worries that accompany slow progress, widespread use of technological support, and/or episodic absence. Second, students with disabilities may be encouraged in their own pursuit of gainful employment and potentially a career in academe. Third, a graduate student teaching assistant will gain valuable classroom teaching experience. Fourth, colleagues in the teaching professions may learn to appreciate alternative methodologies and technology-enhanced course delivery systems that they may incorporate into their own course instruction. Fifth, colleagues who venture into collaborative projects, especially with senior faculty members, will find some of the pressures of the "publish or perish" dogma relieved and a fresh perspective gained from which to conduct subsequent work. Sixth, the college or university community that welcomes students and colleagues from diverse disability communities enhances the learning environment in ways similar to the campus that welcomes diverse national and cultural communities. Seventh, in addition to avoiding lawsuits, the college or university community that practices a policy of inclusion earns a reputation for justice. ❧

See **IOZZIO** p. xii

The Future of Disability in the Teaching of Religion: Views from the Next Generation

Deborah Creamer, Iliff School of Theology

Deborah Creamer is adjunct faculty at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado. She teaches courses on Religion and Disability and Feminist Theology. She co-chairs the AAR's Religion and Disability Studies Group. Her dissertation was entitled "The Withered Hand of God: Disability and Theological Reflection" (University of Denver and Iliff School of Theology, 2004).

MY COLLEAGUES HAVE shared with you their stories about places we have come from and places where we struggle and celebrate today as disability traverses theological and religious studies classrooms. It is our hope that these glimpses into life through the lens of disability will offer new ideas, insights, practices, and opportunities for teaching and learning that are inclusive and supportive of these and other varied experiences. My aspiration in this final article is to dissuade you from putting this paper in your desk drawer, planning only to pull it out later when a student (or colleague) with a disability intersects your teaching world. Regardless of whether or not you currently encounter disability in your own life or classroom settings, the time has come for attention to disability throughout the work of our field.

Woven throughout the preceding articles is the suggestion that *disability is not just an issue of access for people with disabilities*. Three claims are embedded within this statement. First, what is at stake is more than access. While access is important, we need to strive for full inclusion, removal of barriers of attitude as well as architecture, looking forward to a day when institutional systems and individual relationships see the presence of people with disabilities as not a burden but an opportunity, or perhaps as the simple presence of a variety of instantiations of human embodiment. Second, the study of disability is not simply about the inclusion of people with disabilities, just as the study of religion is not "simply" about the religious practices of people of faith, or as feminist theology is not "simply" about women gaining access to the pulpit. The discipline of disability studies explores assumptions, systems, and practices that go far beyond the specific day-to-day inclusion of people with disabilities. Third, for this very reason, this topic is not solely relevant to people with disabilities. Especially insofar as disability is established in contrast to the construct of normalcy, these issues raise questions of interest to us all. Thus, the appropriate argument is that disability is both an issue of inclusion and an exploratory lens relevant to people with disabilities as well as the temporarily able-bodied.

If you accept this claim, what comes next? First, as is evident from these articles, we must continue our struggles for access and inclusion for all people regardless of disability status. Those of us who have grown up with Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as the liberatory legacy of the feminist and civil rights movements, see access to the classroom as a right, not a privilege. It is clear that the work there is not yet done. Additionally, because disability represents a bona fide minority group (or groups), it should be consciously engaged when doing diversity work. We also see that students who are pursing religious leadership or teaching professions need to be better prepared to work with people with disabilities in their congregations, classrooms, and communities. Seminaries (and other institutions) ought to regularly offer courses on disability, and ableism (discrimination in favor of the able-bodied) should be addressed side by side with other isms.

These reflections also show that it is time for us to recognize disability throughout all of our courses, rather than just as an asterisk or as a special topics forum. Disability is relevant throughout the curriculum, even in places where it has been previously invisible or unnoticed. If we are attentive, we find its imprint in religious texts, church history, theology (particularly issues such as healing and suffering), congregational membership, and even popular culture. When we tell only the able-bodied part of the story and fail to draw on the resources offered by the lens of disability, we are remiss in our role as teachers.

More than just correcting a gap in our research or teaching, though, reflection on disability has a positive contribution to make to the work of our field. This is, for me, the exciting piece that lies ahead for my generation of teachers and scholars. The discipline of disability studies is a rich and exciting one, but until recently it has neither addressed religious topics nor been engaged by scholars of religion. There is much unexplored ground, and much to be gained all around. Let me highlight just a few of the ways our two fields can complement and challenge each other.

Disability studies, while still a young field, has the potential to offer valuable insights to the academic study of religion. Most significant is the way in which it challenges assumptions about what is normal and contributes a new depth of understanding to human diversity. For example, most of us tend to think of disability as both abnormal and clear-cut — either one is disabled or one is not, and one would prefer to be not. Yet in actuality, disability is an open category that exists on a continuum of both constitution and chronemics — all of us, regardless of our physical condition, currently experience some degree of limitation (or "handicap"), and all of us, if we live long enough, are likely to become disabled ourselves. Perhaps "normal" is not so much the norm we have assumed. This can be an important challenge to theological models that assume a healthy or ideal body as normative, such as accounts of creation or original sin. It complicates our understandings of what might be ideal (or even holy), accepting neither perfection nor average as suitable descriptions, and may even challenge ideas of what it is to be human. In these and other ways, disability studies offers new insights on the complexity, fluidity, and general messiness of embodiment.

Another contribution to our contemporary work in religious studies comes from the recognition that each instantiation of disability is unique. It is not the same thing to be blind, d/Deaf, a wheelchair-user, or to have a learning disability, yet all are typically lumped under the category of "disabled." Using a wheelchair from birth is a different experience than using it after a mid-life ski accident, and a different experience than using it for one week following elective surgery. Reflection on lived experiences of disability shows it to be a somewhat artificial (yet still functional and at times valuable) construction, an interesting model for other identity challenges within and beyond our fields. At the same time, examination of alliances between and across differences (for example, in particular disability rights movements) can be useful as we continue to explore how to live together in religiously (and otherwise) diverse worlds.

Still, the field of religion is more than a consumer of the insights of disability studies — we have essential contributions to make as well. As mentioned above, disability studies has paid little attention to the religious life, consideration which is long overdue. Disability has the potential to become the next liberation theology: uncovering the hidden, questioning the taken-for-granted, challenging established ways, and proposing new theological constructions. In addition to explicitly religious topics, we can also offer to disability studies our methodologies and vast experiences with tasks such as interpreting (religions and nonreligious) texts, uncovering lost histories, examining values and belief systems, and exploring issues of self, communal, and even theological identity.

The insights and methodologies of our discipline can also contribute to some of the disputes within disability studies today. One has to do with identity hermeneutics: must a person be disabled (or claim the label of disability for herself) to speak with authority or legitimacy about disability? This is a familiar struggle for us in the field of religion, reminiscent of our own insider/outsider debates, and we have valuable histories and perspectives to share. Another area of concern has to do with models of disability. Two are established at this point: the medical model (in which one is disabled to the extent that one's body cannot do certain things) and the minority or social model (in which one is disabled to the extent that one is treated as disabled, primarily through experiences of exclusion and oppression). The medical model has been rejected by disability studies for quite some time, and dissatisfaction is growing over the social model as well. Many (including this author) believe that it is time now for a third way, one that recognizes both bodily and social structures while simultaneously opening itself to the instabilities of a postmodern age. We need a model that begins by noting that limits are an unsurprising part of life, that conceptions or constructions of disability are far more complicated than we might once have thought, and that the values we inscribe on limits and limitlessness must be reassessed. This move is part of the larger postmodern challenge that destabilizes unifying theories and problematizes unity and wholeness, a move which (given the value placed on relationality) ought not be approached in isolation from other disciplines.

These are only a few of the ideas, questions, and projects that emerge when scholars of religion engage the work of disability studies. It is time now for a deeper and more complex understanding of disability, one that allows the discourse of disability to inform our disciplines just as it is simultaneously (and productively) informed by them. It is imperative that we recognize that disability within the context of the religion classroom is considerably more than just an issue of access for people with disabilities — it is an area of scholarship brimming with possibility and rich with potential connections to other projects. I invite you to join in the important and exciting work ahead. ❧

IOZZIO, from page xi

References

Block, Jennie Weiss. *Copious Hosting: A Theology of Access for People with Disabilities*. New York: Continuum, 2002.

Davis, Lennard J. *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body*. London: Verso, 1995.

Linton, Simi. *Claiming Disability*. New York: New York University Press, 1998.

Longmore, Paul K., and Lauri Umansky. *The New Disability History: American Perspectives*. New York: New York University Press, 2001.

Lorde, Audre. *The Cancer Journals*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1980.

Snyder, Sharon L., Brenda Jo Brueggemann, and Rosemarie Garland Thomson, eds. *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities*. New York: Modern Language Association, 2002.

Thomson, Rosemarie Garland. *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Disability in American Culture and Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

Townes, Emilie. *Breaking the Fine Rain of Death: African American Health Issues and a Womanist Ethics of Care*. New York: Continuum, 2001.

Walker, Margaret Urban, ed. *Mother Time: Women, Aging, and Ethics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.

Wendell, Susan. *The Rejected Body: Feminist Philosophical Reflections on Disability*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Willmuth, Mary, and Lillian Holcomb, eds. *Women with Disabilities: Found Voices*. New York: Harrington Park Press (Haworth Press), 1993.