

Editorial

A New Day

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Many of the works in this issue reflect the continued impact of the protracted global pandemic that, at the time of this writing, continues to shape our lives and professional practices. While not all are directly related to the pandemic, its impact surely shapes the ways we read them now. This editorial is written from my home, my current workplace, as I like many others across the globe continue to face workplace and public restrictions.

Earlier this month, marking the grim first anniversary of the onset of a global pandemic, President Biden put forth the “next phase of national strategy to put the pandemic behind us,” making all American adults eligible for vaccination by May 1, in this next phase of what the White House calls a “war-time effort.” While there are recent concerns about the capacity of companies to meet this, nonetheless, it surely signals some coming end to this long night.

While too soon to claim any victory, it certainly gives us some moment to reflect on what has been lost and what, if anything, may have been gained. Many folks with disabilities have been “de-prioritized” during critical times in the pandemic for those with “greater likelihood of survival” and subsequently denied critical care and resources. Similarly, there has been recent concern about the lack of accessibility of the essential websites one is required to navigate to receive vaccine appointments. Additionally, many underserved communities appear to have unequal access to what is promised to be a life-saving vaccine.

While the pandemic has surely highlighted long existing fault lines of inequity, at the same time many folks with various impairments, at least anecdotally, have found some unexpected benefits among the challenges. At times the restrictions of the pandemic have structured some predictability and uniformity to “meetings.” One needn't be concerned about the level of accessibility of new spaces, or the additional preparation time needed to navigate unfamiliar spaces.

Some have also wondered if perhaps this shared experience might engender greater understanding about the common sense need to have spaces and resources that accommodate our body and needs. Will the various constraints and challenges experience and this new hyper-consciousness of physical vulnerability help change how many who do not identify as disabled think about disability?

May we, as inter-lapping and interwoven communities, collectively emerge from this with greater communal understanding about our shared basic responsibilities to the body, and perhaps more mutually invested in ways that may translate into actual greater receptivity to necessary changes in policy and daily practice? May this time that we do not yet have a name for help tutor new generations of allies and advocates to *get on board* with the shared responsibility of making our spaces (public and digital) accessible to all of us?

In this issue:

- In the journal's continued commitment to expanding the voices that are part of this conversation, Sona Kazemi and Hemachandran Karah's Global Perspectives initiative considers the many ways various transnational spaces and disciplines and movements are all invested in disability studies, and the 'solidarity speak' as these voices are invited to dialogue together.
- Karly Ball's personal reflection considers unexpected ways she's found to structure her life and feel greater control living in the wake of the pandemic.
- Poems by Johnson Cheu bring attention to the continued role popular culture may play in the ways in which we imagine and live lives with disabilities.
- Michaela Oteri's imaginative portrayals of noted members of the disability studies community invite us to stretch what we think is possible for all of us.
- Kara Ayers' review of Allison C. Carey, Pamela Block, and Richard K. Scotch's *Allies and Obstacles: Disability Activism and Parents of Children with Disabilities* considers the sometime delicate relationship and fissures between these two groups.
- We return to the fictional narrative "The Engraved Lighter" by political prisoner Nibel Genc. It was shared in the previous issue in Turkish, appearing now in English.
- And Jonathan Erlen curates, with editorial assistance from Pat Morrissey, select dissertations and abstracts of possible interest.

Finally, we take this opportunity to also invite readers to make use of ‘The Notes from the Field’ section in the journal. It provides a space for the extended disability studies community to include notices and releases about items of interest. These may include conferences, events, book releases, etc. Items received should provide the basic *who, what, when where and why*, all the important information a reader might expect, with the final text provided carefully proofed and ready for review.



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