

Field Trip #3: Patient No More

Definitions

Disability

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, a disability is: a.) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual; b.) a record of such impairment; or c.) being regarded as having such an impairment. (*Source: <https://www.cascw.org/community-engagement-2/dcwc/>*)

Special Needs

The Federal Government does not have an official definition of "special needs". This phrase is used to classify children who, for various reasons, have a harder time finding families willing to adopt them. Often special needs include factors such as age, background, and physical, mental, or emotional challenges. Typically, children who have special needs have been separated from their birth families, live in foster care, are school-aged, and may have physical or mental disabilities. (*Source: <http://www.lfapainc.org/specialneeds.php>*)

Adoption and Disability

A higher proportion of adopted children (11.6%) than of biological children (4.6%) have at least one disability. (*Source: Census 2010*)

The numbers of children who are waiting to be adopted show that from thirty to fifty-percent experience a form of developmental disability. (*Source: <https://www.disabled-world.com/editorials/disability-adoption.php>*)

Parents with disabilities are more likely to lose custody of their children after divorce, have more difficulty in accessing reproductive health care, and face significant barriers to adopting children. (*Source: <https://www.adoptuskids.org/adoption-and-foster-care/overview/who-can-adopt-foster/people-with-disabilities>*)

History

Systematic efforts to locate families for children who were “hard-to-place” did not really occur until midcentury. It was only after World War II that agencies began to test the feasibility of adoptions previously ruled out of bounds because they were considered

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difficult, risky, and likely to fail: African-American children and children of racially and ethnically mixed heritage, children with physical and mental disabilities, older children, and sibling groups. (Source: Adoption History Project)

Understanding disability as fundamental to human existence and shaped by society has become more widespread since the 1960's. (Source: EveryBody: An Artifact History of Disability)

Program Guests

Cathy Kudlick

<http://longmoreinstitute.sfsu.edu/pages/catherine-j-kudlick>

Corbett O'Toole

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corbett_O%27Toole

<https://www.reclapress.com>

Angela Tucker

<http://www.theadoptedlife.com>

Additional Resources

Leaving Evidence

This blog is written by Mia Mingus, a writer, educator and community organizer for disability justice and transformative justice. She is a queer physically disabled korean woman transracial and transnational adoptee from the Caribbean. (<https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com>)

Conversation with Corbett O'Toole

This podcast is a conversation with Corbett Joan O'Toole's whose memoir, "Fading Scars: My Queer Disability History", is arguably the best history to come out of the Disability Rights Movement of the past four decades. (<https://kpfa.org/tag/corbett-otoole/>)

Two Thirds of the Planet

They say that two-thirds of the planet has a connection to disability, be it through personal experience, a loved one or acquaintance. This is a site for those Two Thirds, by and for people with disabilities and their allies. (<http://www.twothirdsoftheplanet.com>)

EveryBody: An Artifact History of Disability

This online exhibition created by the Smithsonian National Museum of American History presents encounters with disability history through the material record of the people who lived it (<https://everybody.si.edu>)

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Disability History Museum

This online museum hosts a Library of virtual artifacts, Education curricula, and Museum exhibits. These programs are designed to foster research and study about the historical experiences of people with disabilities and their communities. (<http://www.disabilitymuseum.org/>)

The Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability

The Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University studies and showcases disabled people's experiences to revolutionize social views. (<http://longmoreinstitute.sfsu.edu>)