SENSE AND DEBILITY:

HOW DISABILITY FIGURES IN PROGRESSIVE SOCIAL POLICY

CATHERINE FRAZEE*

FOR THE

DR. RICHARD B. SPLANE LECTURE IN SOCIAL POLICY

LIU INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL ISSUES

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

NOVEMBER 28TH, 2016

After the excitement last spring of accepting this invitation to be with you today, came the heady rapture of honing in upon my topic, determining how I would introduce you, an audience of progressive thinkers and doers, to the world of disability. The challenge would be to present evidence of how disability figures in social, historical and political landscapes, and to nudge you toward an incontrovertible conclusion: any worldview inclined to overlook, avoid or underestimate disability requires revision. My task would be to ***make the case for disability*** as the missing link in progressive social policy.

I would have to do this carefully, knowing, as I do, that disability discourse easily tips over into realms of sentiment and pathos. But I'd appeal to your higher powers of reasoning, draw from the impressive

* *Catherine Frazee is Professor Emerita in the School of Disability Studies at Ryerson University, and an advisor to the Vulnerable Persons Standard. Some of her writing can be accessed at www.fragileandwild.com*

arsenals of disability scholarship, connect a few dots linking theory to lived experience and get the job done. Then we'd have questions and refreshments and the world would be changed. I would title my talk, with thanks to Jane Austen, "Sense and Debility", because it has a ring to it, because it anchors itself in sense, good judgment and will and because it plucks out the sticky stuff of sensibility and displaces it with the gritty reality of disability.

I was off and running.

And then came November 8. A night when, not to put too fine a point on it, things went sideways. Progressive social policy met its match in post-truth politics[1] and now stands poised – in America at least – for four years of serious drubbing. As a result, progressives in Canada and around the world are either dazed and confused, anxious and wounded, angry and defiant, or, as in my case, all of the above.

On the morning of November 9, I was jolted into the realization that this may not be not the best time for open and expansive thinking. It's probably not the time to jostle for stronger position on an agenda hovering perilously close to the flame of white guy rage. It's not the time to demand accessible seating on the freedom train, if the freedom train is screeching to avoid derailment. It's not the best time to demand to be heard, when everyone… is… just… holding… their… breath.

I get all of that. As the British historian Tony Judt reminds us, the "politics of insecurity are contagious"[2]. And frankly, I'm infected with that insecurity. My moral convictions are no less secure, but I'm feeling insecure about my authority to fill your screen for 50 uninterrupted minutes, as a white cisgendered woman whose biography tells a story of privilege and affirmation. My only hope is that this is the *good kind of insecurity*, a deserved insecurity, and one that my Splane lecture predecessors might have endorsed as a fitting point of departure for today's contribution.

So I've had to rethink things. Interestingly, for the literary scholars among you, it seems that Jane Austen also, in the course of writing her 19th century novel, gradually became less certain herself about whether sense or sensibility should triumph[3]. That pretty well sums it up for me as well. Accordingly, for today, my lecture title remains "Sense and Debility", but I'll be more tentative in my argument. For one thing, I'll be wary of both sense and sensibility, for common sense can pull as

capriciously as heartstrings toward unjust outcomes. More on that later, but upfront, I'll disclose this about my lecture. Rather than "***making the case***" for disability, holding progressives to account for getting it wrong in the past, I'd like to respectfully "***put disability on offer***", sharing a few thoughts about what can be gleaned about this moment in history from the vantage point of disability. A few thoughts, tentative and insecure, seem appropriate to the time. A few additional dots of ink on the messy canvas of history will be the sum total of my offering – I'll leave those dots for you to connect, or not, or for us to connect together as we map our way forward through the tangled brush of post-truth politics.

To recap – spoiler alert – this lecture has no answers.

That said, let's begin as this lecture did, on the morning of November 9. I have to say that just as the days and weeks leading up to America's electoral tantrum churned out a monstrous spew of hateful talk, the days immediately following November 8 were made bearable by a torrent of extraordinarily good writing. Authors, poets, historians, activists, journalists and social scientists across the globe turned their considerable powers to the task of interpreting for their gobsmacked readers what had just happened in America. From Angela Davis[4] to Cornel West[5] from Naomi Klein[6] to Noam Chomsky[7] to Samantha Bee[8] – I binged on every available commentary from Liberal and left-of-liberal media. And from all of these analyses, all of this astute parsing, three distinct but overlapping narratives emerged:

- **Narrative 1: "So Long, Neoliberalism".** This narrative was well distilled by Paul Mason, writing for the Guardian[9]: "Freemarket economics unleashed two forces that have now collided: the rapid rise in inequality, and a route to the top percentile for the [occasional] talented female, black or gay person." Mason continues, "As long as it delivered not just growth but a growth story, a foreseeable better future, those disempowered by neoliberalism could stand it." According to Mason, as that story of a better future rang hollow, the fragile liberal ideologies of fairness and hope were no match for the pent-up rage and resentment of those who felt their privilege slipping away, even, he observes, "among educated men in crisp, white shirts".
- **Narrative 2: "Hello white extremism".** Here I'll quote Doug Saunders, from the Globe[10], "This was a white riot – an angry, rejectionist turn by a deeply pessimistic majority within the white population against the far more hopeful and inclusive politics of the rest of the country." More than 90% of the Trump vote, was white. More than 90% of non-

white voters cast their ballots for Clinton or third-party candidates. Enough said.

- **Narrative 3: "Seriously? White women?"**. Referred to as "Donald's Trump Card"[11], 53% of white women voters were undeterred by their candidate's rabid racism and sexism, casting their ballots in a sweeping misogynist capitulation to the familiar but illusory protections of white patriarchy. As Lindy West wrote for the New York Times[12]: "white women will pawn their humanity for the safety of white supremacy". Or, put somewhat more kindly by Suzanne Moore[13], "If one grows up in a culture in which one's self-worth is measured primarily by one's desirability to men, then … One way to be desirable to men may be to align oneself with their interests in the hope they might protect you."

Now my truncations are crude, and if I have done injustice to your preferred narrative or left out an important variation, forgive me, but the real observation I want to make is this. Even if I were to read aloud, verbatim, the 50-odd post-mortem analyses that I have bookmarked from the mainstream liberal and progressive press, (Washington Post, New York Times, Guardian, Nation, Huffington, Globe and so on) you would not hear the word disability. Not once. The tsunami of racist, sexist, xenophobic expression that swept Donald Trump into power, it seems, left no trace of ableism in its wake.

Unless, of course, you know what to look for. Those of you who, like me, have worked in disability studies, understand that we spend much of our time like hounds on the hunt, sniffing out disability, sceptical of its every absence. It's almost always there, in history, ethics, politics, arts and letters. But it has to be teased out, recognized, and frequently, unpacked. And sometimes, paradoxically, even when it's obvious, it isn't.

Case in point: Serge Kovaleski. If you recognize the name, I'm impressed – you've been paying attention. If you do not recognize the name, you are not alone. But don't worry, I expect you know the headline: *November 26, 2015 – Donald Trump mocks reporter with disability* (The Guardian)[14]. The reporter, formerly of the Washington Post and currently at the New York Times, was Serge Kovaleski. A 15-second clip of video shot at a South Carolina rally in which Donald Trump mimicked – or perhaps did not mimic, we'll never know – a video in which Trump might have mimicked Kovaleski, became the centre of a Trump Tweetstorm and of two if not more very glossy Clinton campaign

ads[15]. If you Google “Trump reporter disability” you’ll get over half a million hits.

The story, if you’ll pardon the ableist metaphor, had legs. In August 2016, **nine months** after this incident, Bloomberg Politics[16] reported that “More than 6 in 10 [of the voters in their national poll were still] bothered **a lot** that Trump mocked a reporter’s physical disability, the highest level of displeasure” among all of the issues that might have made Trump’s supporters just a little uneasy.

So while disability was absent from post-election analysis, it was conspicuously present in the pre-election combat. I’ll take that as our invitation to do a bit of unpacking.

Donald Trump said a lot of outrageous, hateful things on his way to the Oval Office. But rather incredibly to me, this 15-second utterance really bothered people. When Trump flailed his arms and declared “Now, the poor guy, you ought to see this guy”, then launching into an exaggerated verbal performance of what Trump later explained to be groveling, “Ah, I don’t know what I said, I don’t remember”, apparently he crossed a line that racial slurs and *braggadocious*[17] talk about sexual misdemeanours did not.

What do we take from this? Well one explanation could be that a majority of voting Americans stand with their disabled countrymen, and will not tolerate the targeting or ridicule of Americans with disabilities, even in the raucous free-for-all of a tough election brawl? And that’s a good thing, right?

Let’s call this the **“Solidarity, I Don’t Think So” Narrative**. To unpack this narrative, I’d like to draw from a no-holds-barred analysis advanced by Kim Sauder, who blogs as “Crippled Scholar”[18]. Sauder begins from what prompted Trump’s attack on Kovaleski in the first place. To refresh your memory, Kovaleski would not substantiate for Trump the exaggerated, dog-whistle claim that on September 11, 2001 in Jersey City, “thousands and thousands of people were cheering” as the World Trade Centre collapsed[19]. She observes significantly that “The mockery of Kovaleski completely overshadowed the fact that Trump was in fact trying to fan the flames of Islamophobia at the time. He was doing that because he had already called for a registry of Muslims” and this fiction of Muslim glee in the wake of American tragedy would help to galvanize support. Sauder presses us with the tough question: “Why

is the mocking of an individual (even if that mockery is grounded in bigotry) worse than the Islamophobia Trump was defending and the actual suggestion of registering Muslims, an action that if taken would hurt millions?"

Well I don't think we have to do the utilitarian math here – harm to one versus harm to many. Harm is harm, and calculations of "lesser harm" are the baby steps of moral decline. The point of this narrative, however, and I believe the point of Sauder's critique, is that ***selective*** solidarity is a sham, at best opportunistic and at worst, diabolically divisive. Solidarity with one marginalized group does not permit the pointed ignoring of another.

Nor, of course, does solidarity find full expression in 140 characters, or the faithful retweeting of outrage or support. That's often a bold and generous start, and a critical, creative early gesture in the incubation of ideas, images, strategies and alliances from which powerful social movements emerge. But the operative word is "start", which by definition, demands more.

Sauder wonders, for example, whether support for Kovaleski will translate into massive waves of resistance to the dismantling of Affordable Care, an election promise likely to have devastating consequences for Americans with disabilities. Closer to home, we might find in that lecture I did not write for today, a substantial social and cultural agenda ripe and ready for the support of progressive allies. For now, perhaps, suffice it to say that conditions of structural inequality are deeply embedded within our social contract when it comes to disability. And as I believe Richard Splane would agree, it takes a village to renegotiate a social contract. The errors and omissions, exclusions and betrayals of an ableist culture – the zero-sum calculus of what everyone else gets for free or at least takes for granted – self-expression, social connection, identity, mobility, learning, growth, hope and meaning – the commitment to these as **everyone's** birthright – that is the stuff of a genuine Solidarity Narrative.

What's really going on in the Serge Kovaleski story, if not real solidarity, *may* instead be explained as a kind of innate fidelity to tribe. Let's call this the **"One of Us"**[i] **Narrative**[20, 21]. Kovaleski, after all, may be

[i] A deliberately ironic reversal of the ritual chant, "We accept her. One of us." from Tod Browning's classic horror film, Freaks, which featured "the abnormal and the unwanted".

protected from the bully Trump as I would be, by the colour of his skin and by his respectable affiliation with a major corporate employer – the New York Times. While his condition of arthrogryposis alters the shape and function of his arms, in demeanour, speech and manner, Kovaleski is otherwise a rather good match for the white norm, the neoliberal hope story of commitment and success. And that matters more than we are often prepared to acknowledge.

Now I don't know very much at all about Kovaleski, except that he is well-educated, well-traveled[22] and a Pulitzer Prize recipient[23]. It would be premature to draw conclusions about how his biography fits within the "one of us" narrative, but I can say from personal experience that once you master the secret handshake, a disabled person can be granted a kind of special pass to neoliberal success. For those of us – disability's 1% – who are comfortably insulated – perhaps by family fortune or importantly, by some marketable capacity to compete for a place in the world – we lucky ones can enjoy a small measure of comfort. We may not garner an *equal* ration of the perks of privilege – our disposable incomes whittled away not by luxury cars and bling but by comparable figures spent on personal care and life-sustaining technology. But to complain of this would be unconscionable. We are privileged.

The "One of Us" Narrative keeps some of us somewhat comfortable, and importantly, in the Trump versus Kovaleski context, it also keeps some of us somewhat safe. Kovaleski would not be easy prey, as America's soon-to-be *Predator-in-Chief* quickly learned on Twitter.

But what are the limits of that comfort and safety? Trump signalled one of those limits in his classic deflection of criticism: let's call it the "**Don't Get Uppity**" exemption to the protections of the "One of Us" Narrative. "*Kovaleski must think a lot of himself if he thinks I remember him from decades ago.… He should stop using his disability to grandstand and get back to reporting*…."

Now I don't think Kovaleski was grandstanding, and the main reason I believe that is because people with lifelong disabilities grow up with the **"Don't Get Uppity"** rule, pretty much coded in our DNA[24]. It is an experience that I believe we share with racialized people, indigenous peoples and the vast majority of women and girls. We know the tug of the collar when we stride too far ahead, sometimes the gentle gutting

of ambition when the counsellor deems our aspirations unrealistic[25]; other times the harsh slap of comeuppance when our thirst for justice is stronger than our allegiance to tribal etiquette. A disabled person I know of once dared to challenge the failure of an educational institution to provide needed accommodations. The instructor's response? *Don't get uppity*. Claiming to have experienced the charge of discrimination as an assault to reputation, the instructor filed a counterclaim of harassment. *Grandstanding will not be tolerated*.

I'd like to take a few more minutes to consider one final narrative interpretation of Trump's infamous Kovaleski performance. There are multiple other variants, I'm sure, but this one is important for me to offer because I believe there are untold dangers if we are careless in connecting the dots that fall from events such as this onto the map. We'll call this final narrative, simply, **"Nasty"**.

When Donald Trump stood accused of ridiculing Kovaleski's physical impairments, his first offering was a kind of solidarity narrative, Trump-style:

> "*I have tremendous respect for people who are physically challenged and have spent tens of millions of dollars throughout buildings all over the world on making them handicapped accessible and ADA compliant*."

When that failed to get traction, he invoked the "Uppity" exemption. He was already on record, briefly, with the "One of Us" narrative, having begun his 15 infamous seconds by acknowledging that Kovaleski was a "nice reporter". So Trump's grandstanding rebuke was presumably intended as a firm correction – sending Kovaleski to his room, back to his *nice reporter* place in the world.

When that approach failed, when hundreds or thousands of Kovaleski-sympathetic voters did not see grandstanding or otherwise uppity conduct, then hundreds or thousands of *Trump*-sympathetic voters upped their game. Pouring through hour after excruciating hour of archived Trump interviews and rally footage, they found definitive evidence that this particular flailing of arms and strange vocalization was indeed a recurrent feature of Trump's on-camera repertoire[26]. He had used very similar gestures and tones at the same rally to imitate a general who did <u>not</u> have disabilities. Hence, they argued, this performance was boilerplate mockery for any person whom Donald

Trump considered to be less smart, less competent or less honest than himself. That Kovaleski's impairment happened to align with Trump's simulation to any extent, however slight, was pure coincidence. Thus, they pronounced him not guilty of any culpable slur.

Now I have not had time to do the definitive research to confirm this hunch, but I'm guessing that when Trump flailed and stammered at the expense of an unnamed US General who had appeared on television, people did not rally to the General's defence. Spouse and kids, if they were watching, might have winced, and buddies in the *Generals-Only* locker room might have been angered by Trump's insubordination, but if anyone did rise to the boil of a tweet, they weren't retweeted over 100,000 times, as was the case with the outraged tweets on Kovaleski's behalf. As I say, I'm speculating, but it's a very strong hunch.

How shall we explain the massive difference in the number of people who flocked to the defence of the nice reporter, vis-à-vis the radio silence for the General? Chances are this isn't rocket science. A general is expected to have tough skin, and to be well equipped to take care of him or herself. A parody of sticks and stones won't break any General's bones. But broadly speaking, the same would hold, wouldn't it, for a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist?

Unless of course that journalist happens to have a disability.

Disability throws reasonable people for a loop. Kim Sauder suggests that Kovaleski receives special attention "because of the idea that disabled people are perpetual children who require coddling and protection." Indeed that is a recurrent theme in critical disability literature. Generations of cultural messaging have pegged us as vulnerable – not vulnerable in the way that all humans are vulnerable[27], but vulnerable in some ***special*** way. Our particular impairments are read as weakness rather than difference, and then generalized, so that weak in *body or mind* morphs to weak of *character and capacity,* which further morphs, in the ethical sphere, to a *weaker claim of humanity*.[28-31] Now that's a sweeping assertion that you probably shouldn't swallow whole, at least not until you read all the footnotes. But for our present purpose, for this particular unpacking, all we need to agree upon is that human beings – progressives and otherwise – respond in particular ways to the perception of weakness. Sometimes these responses are predatory; other times they are protective.

Disability scholar Dan Goodley[32] describes ableism as the "contemporary ideals on which the able, autonomous, productive citizen is based". Ableism is not so much what we think about disabled people or nondisabled people, but more deeply, how we think about things like strength and weakness, capacity, autonomy, citizenship and personhood. The roots of ableism, like those of racism, sexism and the whole xenophobic gang, are embedded deep in the soil of human history and consciousness. How they got there is beyond the scope of this lecture. How they remain there, alive and voracious, is largely through the contagion of law, policy, language and media. As Beth Haller writes, for example[33]: "cultural definitions within mass media have become the naturalized beliefs about disability that inform ableist ideology today." At its heart, ableism clings to the fossil conviction that disability is a lesser human state.

Progressives, of course, believing ourselves to be superbly capable of discerning thought, might respond that it's the generalizing that's the problem here, not the "common sense" naming of weakness. If Kovaleski's right arm is weaker than Trump's, that's not a judgment, but a fact. And if the two of them settle their differences in a tweet war rather than an arm-wrestling match, the contest is fair. But the problem with common sense, as Mark Kingwell wrote earlier this month[34], is that it "is a form of ideology… a myth of asymmetrical power disguised as the obvious." As long as we construct weakness and strength through the lens of ableism, strength will be good and weakness will be less good. Strength will be superior. Trump's right arm will be superior to Kovaleski's. Trump's entire body will be superior to mine. Even if human minds can somehow be restrained from generalizing, I'm still not comfortable with where these particular dots will ultimately connect.

Paternalism, I'll concede, can be benign, giving us a nicer version of the "Nasty" Narrative, as when hundreds of thousands of Twitter users rise up to stand with Serge Kovaleski in a mass if misguided roar of human kindness. But if we follow the logic of this narrative and begin down the road of considering some biological states to be better than others, I believe we are confronted immediately with the problem of supremacy, and fast on its heels, aversion. And I'm troubled by this, because it seems to me that if Trump's arm is better than Kovaleski's, and I am in the business of choosing an arm, I should choose Trump's. To say that I prefer Trump's arm, however slightly, might simply be a nice way of

saying that I have an aversion, however slight, to Kovaleski's arm – mightn't it?

Apparently I'm not the only person in the world obsessively concerned with Trump versus Kovaleski. Ann Coulter devoted a chapter of her book *In Trump We Trust*[35] to the Kovaleski incident. Coulter – the very mention of whose name always warrants a trigger warning – Coulter summed up Trump's defence in this way, veering sharply into the Nasty narrative. I quote with apology:

> "… Trump was not mimicking any mannerisms that Serge has. He doesn't jerk around or flail his arms. He's not retarded. He sits calmly, but if you look at his wrists, you'll see they are curved in. That's not the imitation Trump was doing—he was doing a standard retard, waving his arms and sounding stupid."

[AUTHOR'S NOTE:] This is not the first time that Ann Coulter has willfully used this hateful language. But it is the first time that I have spoken the R-word explicitly in a public presentation, and I am sorry to have done so. I hope you will accept my apology. I won't repeat the word again.

In Coulter's cruel and gratuitous statement, we hear a clear message of contempt for both people with intellectual disabilities and people with some degree of spasticity. At the same time, Coulter appears to affirm that Kovaleski is worthy of respect. Kovaleski, the "nice reporter", sits calmly and does not sound stupid, in Coulter's assessment. Evidently, in Coulter's moral universe, it is acceptable to invoke intellectual disability or spasticity as a standard gesture of ridicule. The ridicule of and derogatory language about intellectual disability and spasticity are normalized in Coulter's world. And beyond?

Is Coulter an anomaly? Well of course we mightily hope so. But how many anomalies does it take to launch a post-truth era? How quickly do anomalies of language and sentiment normalize themselves?

Over the past several years in this country, my work has focused almost exclusively on the issue of physician-assisted death, and in particular upon the risk that marginalized people will be induced by the forces of culture to seek death, when conditions for human flourishing are denied them[36]. In this work, I have observed with growing alarm how certain human states – the three D's for example – dependence, diapers and

drooling – how these states are now embedded in our language and discourse as shameful and subhuman.

In February of this year Dr. Derryck Smith, addressing Canada's Joint Parliamentary Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying[37], described his experience of visiting "a number of people who were in the latter stages of… dementia". His description to parliamentarians was graphic, "They are typically in bed, incontinent of feces and urine, in adult diapers 24-7. They do not know who they are or where they are. They cannot speak. … I certainly do not want to end my life that way.… dying in the sorry state of end-stage Alzheimer's and a year of living in a bed wearing an adult diaper….."

I do not know if Dr. Smith visited these people as a loving family member, a dear friend, or a caring health professional. I find each of these possibilities equally unsettling. I appreciate that he was arguing a certain point of view in his Parliamentary presentation. But I am still haunted at the deep aversion and seeming disdain expressed in his choice of images, language and tone for the human conditions of incontinence and cognitive loss. And that aversion reaches my ear with a strong undertone of supremacy. When aversion and supremacy become normalized, when they cease to be heard with jarring force, our relationship with certain conditions of disability will easily slide from aversion to contempt. How much farther, I worry, can we safely go?

"Hatred", according to Audre Lorde "is an… attitude of mind in which aversion is coupled with ill will"[38]. My translation: aversion gets us one step closer to hatred. And hatred and supremacy are a deadly combination. Now everyone I expect and hope will be quick to reassure me that we are a very long way from active ill-will toward disabled persons. Heavens, if we escaped the hatred machines of America in the last gruesome months, surely, we need not fear. But I do hear the voice of Hannah Arendt[39]: "we now know that moral standards can be changed overnight, and that all that then will be left is the mere habit of holding fast to something". And over Arendt's worldly wise voice, I hear too the very different voice of Ann Coulter. And yes, the combination is frightening.

To the extent that we are paying attention these days to what is going on south of our national border, Canadians have been rudely awakened to an understanding of what white supremacy looks like. I do not

suggest for a minute that ableist aversion produces anything like the horrors inflicted by white supremacy. When I am watched in a department store, it is for the spectacle of oddity, rather than the presumption of thieving intent. And as a white disabled woman whose comportment would meet the criterion of “nice”, I do not fear for my liberty or my life when I encounter an officer of the law. That I have been periodically shooed away from public or private property – once while eating a sandwich in an upscale condominium courtyard, and once while window shopping in a downtown Toronto Plaza – these can only be considered as momentary, garden-variety assaults to my dignity, not to my liberty or life.

But set me down, just as I am, white and nice, early in the last century, in any of countless American cities from New York to Los Angeles, when the so-called “ugly laws”[40] were actively enforced, and I might very well have been arrested for exposing my unsightly self to public view. Or turn the clock back just 50 years, load me up with an extra chromosome and deposit me in the midst of widespread anxiety about immigration, crime and economic decline, perhaps right here in BC, and I’d be just another statistic in Canada’s history of forced segregation and eugenic sterilization.[41, 42]

For some, it isn’t just history and speculation. Right here and now, for a young man in a mental health crisis in any kind of confrontation with police, far too often, the story ends suddenly and horribly.[43, 44]

The history of disability rides along the twin tracks of benevolence and aversion. And on those parallel tracks, it has taken some very dark turns. It’s a complicated, paradoxical and intricately intersectional history that barrels its way into the very present struggles of disabled people’s lives.

My attempt to make sense of debility does not spring from a peculiar fascination with the Trump/Kovaleski incident, but from the surprisingly rich bundle of social meanings to be traced from what happened afterward. The narratives that unravel each marker of disability’s past and present circumstance may not match precisely the dots on canvas that Donald Trump and Serge Kovaleski have permitted me to map out today. But when I look for common features, I find them in the absence of solidarity, the quiet cultural norm of aversion, the whisper of supremacy and the perpetual reality of social neglect. While for many

reasons these features of our landscape have not yet produced an alchemy of hatred, at least not without the ingredient of race, what matters to me is that their consequences can be the very same.

Even, I hasten to say, under our most progressive watch.

EPILOGUE: A FEW THOUGHTS AFTER-THE-FACT

I am thankful to Dr. Timothy Stanton and his colleagues at the Liu Institute for making a video copy of my lecture available online. I am thankful also to the many scholars and activists who contributed so thoughtfully to the discussion that followed this lecture. Your questions and observations have continued to provoke my thinking and to nudge me forward in helpful and constructive ways.

As promised, this lecture had no answers. But our current circumstance compels all of us to be constantly asking and answering the fundamental questions of ***where we stand*** and ***what we must do***. Our analysis, exchanges and reflections are never an end unto themselves, but must guide us to courses of action.

As we connect the dots of supremacy, self interest and injustice, and as we inspire and embolden one another for the struggles ahead, I believe that our most effective courses of action will be those that build solidarity and mutual respect. Disability politics, disability ethics, disability activism and disability culture have much to offer the progressive struggles of anti-austerity coalitions, Indigenous defenders of the land, transgender justice groups and revolutionary enterprises such as Black Lives Matter.

In an article written for Canadian Dimension in 2011, Harsha Walia[45] affirms the importance of working beyond “single-issues or lowest-common denominator politics” and working “through and across differences” to build “an inter-generational anti-oppression and radical politics”. Quoting Chris Hedges, Walia reminds us that “Hope is about existing in a perpetual state of rebellion, a constant antagonism to all centers of power.”

When we put disability on offer, we bring creativity, resilience and clarity to this bold hope.

ENDNOTES

1. Oxford Dictionaries, *Oxford Dictionaries Word of the Year 2016 is Post-truth*. November 16, 2016. https://www.oxforddictionaries.com/press/news/2016/11/15/WOTY-16 (November 27, 2016).
2. Judt, Tony, *Reappraisals, Refelections on the Forgotten Twentieth Century*. 2008, New York: Penguin Press. p Introduction.
3. Tomalin, Claire, *Jane Austen: A Life*. 1997, New York: Random House. p 155.
4. Dukmasova, Maya, "Advice from Angela Davis in the aftermath of the election", 2016. *The Bleader,* November 17, 2016. http://m.chicagoreader.com/Bleader/archives/2016/11/17/advice-from-angela-davis-in-the-aftermath-of-the-election (November 27, 2016).
5. West, Cornel, Goodbye, American Neoliberalism. A new era is here. (2016). The Guardian, November 17, 2016. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/17/american-neoliberalism-cornel-west-2016-election (November 27, 2016)
6. Klein, Naomi, It was the Democrats' embrace of neoliberalism that won it for Trump (2016). The Guardian, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/09/rise-of-the-davos-class-sealed-americas-fate (November 28, 2016)
7. *Noam Chomsky on the new Trump era*, in *UpFront*. 2016, Aljazeera English: YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jB54XxbgI0E (November 27, 2016).
8. *Samantha Bee: The Morning After*, in *Full Frontal*. 2016: samanthabee.com. p. 7:36 minutes, http://samanthabee.com/episode/30/ (November 27, 2016).
9. Mason, Paul, Globalisation is dead, and white supremacy has triumphed (2016). The Guardian, November 9, 2016. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/09/globalisation-dead-white-supremacy-trump-neoliberal (November 27, 2016)
10. Saunders, Doug, The real reason Donald Trump got elected? We have a white extremism problem (2016). The Globe and Mail, November 17, 2016. http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/us-election/the-real-reason-donald-trump-got-elected-we-have-a-white-extremism-problem/article32817625/ (November 28, 2016)

11. Samudzi, Zoe, "Donald's Trump Card: White Women", 2016. *BGD: Amplifying the voices of queer and trans people of color,* November 28, 2016. http://www.blackgirldangerous.org/2016/11/trump-white-women/ (November 27, 2016).
12. West, Lindy, What Happened on Election Day: Her Story (2016). The New York Times, http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/cp/opinion/election-night-2016/her-loss (November 27, 2016)
13. Moore, Suzanne, Why did women vote for Trump? Because misogyny is not a male-only attribute (2016). The Guardian, https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/commentisfree/2016/nov/16/why-did-women-vote-for-trump-because-misogyny-is-not-a-male-only-attribute (November 27, 2016)
14. Donald Trump mocks reporter with disability - video (2015). theguardian.com, November 26, 2015. https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/video/2015/nov/26/donald-trump-appears-to-mock-disabled-reporter-video (November 27, 2016)
15. Campbell, Colin, Donald Trump fires off epic statement, tweetstorm after being accused of mocking reporter's physical disability (2015). Business Insider, http://www.businessinsider.com/donald-trump-reporter-disability-statement-2015-11 (November 27, 2016)
16. McCormick, John. *Clinton up 6 on Trump in Two-way Race in Bloomburg National Poll*. 2016 [cited November 28, 2016]. Available from: http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2016-08-10/bloomberg-politics-national-poll
17. Stack, Liam, 'Braggadocious?' In Trump and Clinton Debate, Words that sent viewers to the dictionary (2016). The New York Times, September 27, 2016. http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/28/us/braggadocio-in-trump-and-clinton-debate-words-that-sent-viewers-to-the-dictionary.html (November 27, 2016)
18. Sauder, Kim, "The Problem with Paternalizing Disabled People to Protest Donald Trump", 2016. *Crippled Scholar,* November 19, 2016. https://crippledscholar.wordpress.com/2016/11/19/the-problem-with-paternalizing-disabled-people-to-protest-donald-trump/ (November 27, 2016).
19. Kessler, Glenn, Donald Trump's revisionist history of mocking a disabled reporter (2016). Washington Post, August 2, 2016. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2016/08/02/donald-trumps-revisionist-history-of-

mocking-a-disabled-reporter/?utm_term=.8bd2e09e7a47 (November 27, 2016)
20. Hawkins, Joan, *One of Us: Todd Browning's Freaks*, in *Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body*, R.G. Thomson, Editor. 1996, New York University Press: New York.
21. Karamanos, Hioni, *Film Review: Freaks.* Disability Studies Quarterly, 2005. **25**(3), http://dsq-sds.org/article/view/581/758 (November 27, 2016).
22. *Serge F. Kovaleski*, in *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. 2016, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serge_F._Kovaleski (November 27, 2016).
23. Zagursky, Erin. *Serge Kovaleski ('84) earns Pulitzer Prize*. 2009 [cited November 28, 2016]. Available from: https://www.wm.edu/news/stories/2009/serge-kovaleski-84-earns-pulitzer-prize-123.php
24. Clark, Erin, "I wanted that solo flight.", 2016. November 30, 2016. https://www.facebook.com/erin.clark.58367/posts/10157798230350321 (December 1, 2016).
25. Antle, Beverley, Catherine Frazee, et al., *Creating a Life of Your Own: Experiences of Transition to Independence Among People with Physical Disabilities*. 1999, West Park Hospital, Gage Transition to Independent Living: Toronto,
26. Catholics4Trump, "The True Story: Donald Trump Did Not Mock a Reporter's Disability", 2016. *CATHOLICS4TRUMP,* July 27, 2016. https://www.catholics4trump.com/the-true-story-donald-trump-did-not-mock-a-reporters-disability/ (November 26, 2016).
27. Frazee, Catherine, *"The Vulnerable": Who Are They?* Canadian Virtual Hospice, 2016, http://www.virtualhospice.ca/en_US/Main+Site+Navigation/Home/For+Professionals/For+Professionals/The+Exchange/Current/%e2%80%9cThe+Vulnerable%e2%80%9d_+Who+Are+They_.aspx (November 26, 2016).
28. Carlson, Licia and Eva Feder Kittay, *Cognitive Disability and its challenge to moral philosophy*. 2010, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
29. Singer, Peter, *Taking Life: Humans*, in *Practical Ethics*. 1993: Cambridge, MA.
30. Bickenbach, Jerome E., Franziska Felder, and Barbara Schmitz, *Disability and the Good Human Life*. Cambridge Disability Law and Policy Series, ed. P. Blanck and R.P. Malloy. 2014, New York: Cambridge University Press. www.cambridge.org/9781107027183

31. Vehmas, S. and B. L. Curtis, *Profound Intellectual Disability and the Bestowment View of Moral Status.* Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics, 2016. **25**(Forthcoming),
32. *Professor Dan Goodley, University of Sheffield Profile Page*. 2016 [cited November 26, 2016]. Available from: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/education/staff/academic/goodleyd
33. Haller, Beth and Sue Ralph, *Not Worth Keeping Alive? News framing of physician-assisted suicide in the United States and Great Britain.* Journalism Studies, 2001. **2**(3): p. 407-421,
34. Kingwell, Mark, Generation Snowflake? Not the millenials I know (2016). The Globe and Mail, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/generation-snowflake-not-the-millennials-i-know/article32879280/ (November 26, 2016)
35. Coulter, Ann, *In Trump We Trust: E Pluribus Awesome!* 2016: Sentinel. p Chapter 9.
36. *The Vulnerable Persons Standard* 2016 [cited November 27, 2016]. Available from: http://www.vps-npv.ca/
37. Smith, Dr. Derryck, *Presentation to the Special Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying*. 2016, House of Commons: Ottawa, http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Language=e&Mode=1&Parl=42&Ses=1&DocId=8082683 (November 27, 2016).
38. Lorde, Audre, *Eye to eye: Black women, hatred and anger*, in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. 1984, The Crossing Press: Trumansburg, New York. p. 145-176.
39. Arendt, Hannah, *Personal Responsibility under Dictatorship*, in *Responsibility and Judgment*. 2003, Schocken Books: New York. p. 45.
40. Schweik, Susan, *The Ugly Laws: Disability in Public*. 2009, New York: New York University.
41. *Eugenics Archive*. [cited November 27, 2016]. Available from: http://eugenicsarchive.ca/
42. Miller, Jordan, Nicola Fairbrother, and Robert A. Wilson, *Surviving Eugenics*. 2015. p. 44 minutes, http://eugenicsarchive.ca/film/ (November 27, 2016).
43. *Hold Your Fire*, in *Firsthand*. CBC Television, http://www.cbc.ca/firsthand/episodes/hold-your-fire (November 27, 2016).
44. CBC News, 5 key cases of police shooting deaths involving mentally ill individuals (2014). CBC News Online, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/5-key-cases-of-police-shooting-deaths-involving-mentally-ill-individuals-1.2748257 (November 27, 2016)

45. Walia, Harsha, *2011: Reflecting on Social Movement Successes in Canada* in *Canadian Dimension* 2011: Winnipeg, Manitoba, https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/2011-reflecting-on-social-movement-successes-in-canada (December 6, 2016).