

Annotated Bibliography: Disability Studies in the Global South

Theoretical frame 1: Critical global disability studies through decolonial lens

- 1. Grech, S. (2011). Recolonising debates or perpetuated coloniality? Decentring the spaces of disability, development and community in the global South. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 15(1), 87-100.**

Grech (2011) highlights the inclusion of disability in the development agenda in the Global South to explicate the complex and ignored role of colonialism and coloniality in both these projects. He critiques the unquestioned transfer of Western/Northern disability studies to the South, as it ignores the context of social, economic, and cultural life in the South. Using Derrida, he argues that this transfer has homogenized experiences of disability in the South through oppositional binaries – the South is cruel and contains negative attitudes towards the disabled; the North has solutions and can intervene. He critiques the notion of disability rights, arguing that individual rights assume individualism as the basis of social relationships and that the South might require consideration of group/community/household rights.

He finds that the industry of development has created the South as a blank slate for development and intervention. He critiques the spread of community-based rehabilitation in the South, touted as an inexpensive way to ‘care’ for the disabled. He argues that this ignores existing knowledge within communities about disability (creating a people without history). Secondly, he finds that community is used to sideline loss in welfare and breakdown of traditional relationships as a result of neoliberal policies, which were forced upon countries in the global South by organizations like the World Bank.

He discusses how development and colonialism are tied together by examining the impact of colonialism on disabled people and the creation of disability through colonialism. Neoliberalism, he finds, hinders inclusion of disability in development through its narrow ideas of able-bodiedness and singular ideas of work (disabled, not productive); the commodification of public goods, and migration.

He concludes by making a case for ‘primacy of the local, that ‘universalizing, generalizing from North to South will lead to reductionist, flawed, and ethnocentric conceptions of disability’. There is a need to emphasize what he calls post-structuralist notions of uncertainty, decentering, and hybridity, and to go beyond disciplinary boundaries to undertake the project of intellectual decolonization (Meekosha, 2008)

- 2. Grech, S. (2015). Decolonising Eurocentric disability studies: why colonialism matters in the disability and global South debate. *Social Identities*, 21(1), 6–21.**
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2014.995347>

Grech critiques the marginalization of the global south in Northern disability studies discourse, what Alatas (2003) describes as academic neo-imperialism. He questions the use of the term 'colonial' as a metaphor within disability studies without considering the history of colonialism or how disability has been shaped in the North and South through the colonial encounter. Similar to other papers, he argues that colonialism and coloniality have not been examined within Northern disability studies and post-colonial studies have ignored an analysis of disability.

He argues that colonialism is the common thread across Global South, that "defines and constructs these spaces" (p.8). He provides several examples of how colonialism transformed social relationships and identities in the South. With regard to disability, he outlines how disease, violence, labor, and notions of productivity (economization of bodies), punishment, Christianity, construction of race and Othering, led to the construction of disability in colonial times. He outlines several paradoxes - racialized bodies were seen as physically able/strong and intellectually inferior; racialized bodies were disabled through violence, labor, disease, and punishment, disabled bodies were then considered unfit for labor and seen as a point of intervention through healing and Christian missionaries. Bodies were also sites of resistance.

He uses this historical narrative to advance a notion of 'neocolonised bodies'. The Othering of bodies continues through global North academia and organizations, casting a view of the South as a region where the disability is neglected, excluded, and killed, thereby justifying expert intervention without acknowledging disability exclusion within the North. Development is thus seen as "second wave of colonialism" (Nandy, 1988). For him, neocolonized bodies are maintained through immigration policies, neoliberal globalization, and trade policies that privilege productive, measurable outcomes. His key argument is that disabled people can be seen as neocolonised bodies which are the intersection of economic, cultural, political, racial, epistemological, ontological, local, global realities that require an interdisciplinary, and neocolonial disability analysis. For him, colonialism continues to shape the global South and the North - and cannot be ignored in our understanding of disability. He concludes by stating that decolonization cannot be a metaphor or abstract (without citing Tuck and Yang), discursive practice but requires a historical understanding of resistance, of questioning academic/disciplinary epistemologies, and a need to engage with Southern subaltern voices.

overall or
in the South?

3. Grech, S., & Soldatic, K. (2015). Disability and colonialism: (dis)encounters and anxious intersectionalities. *Social Identities*, 21(1), 1–5.

This article serves as an introduction to a special issue on disability and the global south, which then led a book 'Disability and the Global South: A Critical Handbook'. The article lays out what Grech and Soldatic (2015) consider problems within disability studies and post-colonial theory. For them, disability studies is "hegemonic North disability studies" (p. 2), which ignores the historical, cultural, discursive, material realities of disability in the Global South. On the other hand, they demonstrate how post-colonial theory has ignored or side-lined disability in its analysis of race, gender, and ethnicity in the colonial condition. Anita Ghai (2002), for example, argues for the need to incorporate postcolonial theory into disability studies to destabilize Western discourses of disability. A fundamental assumption is that how disability is theorized, constructed, and lived can be examined as a post-colonial/neocolonial condition. They provide examples of authors such as Erevelles and Parekh within critical disability studies who have examined the intersection between disability and colonialism to some extent.

They provide historical examples of how disability was constructed through the colonial experience and the contemporary reality, which Grech calls neocolonised bodies. They call for a need to decolonize disability studies to develop national and transnational solidarities across oppressions.

4. Grech, S., & Soldatic, K. (2014). Introducing Disability and the Global South (DGS): We are critical, we are open access. *Disability and the Global South*, 1(1), 1-4.

This paper lays out the agenda for a new journal on critical disability studies in the Global South. This journal supports theoretical and empirical work that is grounded within the South, as they find that disability studies does not adequately address issues outside the UK or the US. When it is, Northern epistemologies are transferred uncritically to be applied in the South, without consideration of culture, context, history, voices and epistemologies that exist there.

They anticipate resistance from dominant discourses existing within development and disability studies. However, they persistently argue that, “We need to challenge the epistemic and academic neocolonisation we continue to witness, as global North epistemologies and their practices, imbued with imperial historicity weave themselves into a stable future of ‘uncertainties’ that needs more illuminated perspectives” (p.2) This journal fits within their agenda to decolonize disability through a platform for North-South and South-South collaboration.

5. Soldatic, K., Melbøe, L., Kermit, P. S., & Somers, K. (2018). Challenges in global Indigenous-Disability comparative research, or, why nation-state political histories matter.

Soldatic et al. (2018) question the assumptions underlying nation-state level comparative research, particularly in the context of disability and Indigeneity. The paper does this by comparing outcomes for Norway and Australia, which are both ranked 1 and 2 respectively in the United Nations Human Development index. She argues that these numbers hide the differential experiences, histories, and outcomes for Indigenous people in both countries. The HDI index examines Indigenous people and disabled people separately and does not provide disaggregated data to compare what lies at the intersection of disability and Indigeneity.

The authors argue that even though disability studies has criticized disability counting as a process of objectification, these discussions are important since policy is constructed based on these national datasets. These datasets have the power to define boundaries of who is included within a nation, and how funds will be distributed towards them. The process of counting, is thus political – who has the power to define group boundaries? How are they counted? What information do people disclose? What do they hide? What are the consequences of that?

As per the authors, counting and comparative methods using these data enables understanding of state-citizen relations, processes of differentiation and marginalization, and material and cultural inequalities that persist within nation-states. The HDI data, for example, ignores how impairments were a result of colonial violence against Indigenous groups and require a closer examination of colonial history. Historical analysis allows an understanding of the intersection of disability and Indigeneity. Being counted is important for citizenship, but it also constructs identities in a way that may not be in line with the group’s socio-cultural positioning or ignore violence against those groups. This paper calls for a need to examine methodologies of statistical categories to take into account, “historical processes of political differentiation and that without such critical considerations, direct comparisons are limited by national socio-political trajectories and the historical processes of internal population management of colonial conquest.” (p. 1466)

6. Grech, S., & Goodley, D. (2011). Doing Disability Research in the Majority World: an Alternative Framework and the Quest for Decolonising Methods. *Journal of Human Development, Disability, and Social Change*, 19(2), 43–56.

Grech and Goodley outline the lack of research on disability in the majority world, their exclusion from disability studies, and the export of Western ideas of disability across the world. They find this to be ""academic neo-imperialism/neo-colonialism"" (Alatas, 2006). This leads to the rejection of contributions from the Global South. To disrupt this, they propose a decolonizing (Tuhiwai- Smith) open framework that is informed by poststructuralism, post/neocolonialism, and the Empire to develop a research approach that is ""culturally, contextually, historically, and power sensitive"" (p.44-45)

In this article, they articulate these theoretical positions and explain their relevance in the context of disability research in the majority world.

One aspect of their framework is poststructuralism, which seeks to disrupt grand meta narratives to emphasize uncertainty, contingency and a more tentative, reflexive, local views of the world. Next, they unpack post/neocolonialism. According to them, postcolonialism marries poststructuralism with Marxist political economy to focus on issues of ""representation, identity, history, decentering, suspicion of metanarratives and questioning of authority"" (p. 50) Postcolonialism is focused on the material and discursive legacies of colonialism and can help examine global and local phenomena. A key concept is hybridity, which seeks to unsettle essentialized views of culture. Neocolonialism views globalization and neoliberalism as means to perpetuate coloniality – and in expanding Eurocentrism, allows for an examination of transnational power.

For them, “decolonizing research necessitates attention to complexity, heterogeneity, and the dynamic nature of these spaces, because the transference of epistemologies and methodologies from the West to the rest will not do, because the starting point is the decolonization of research, but this necessitates first the decolonizing of our own epistemologies, perhaps our own minds”

7. Goodley, D. (2013). Dis/entangling critical disability studies. *Disability and Society*, 28(5), 631–644. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2012.717884>

Goodley outlines five insights from critical disability studies: theorizing through materialism; bodies that matter; inter/trans-sectionality; global disability studies; and self and Other. According to Goodley, critical disability studies views disability as the space to examine political, theoretical, and practical issues. CDS aims to examine disability outside the social model, view insights from psychology and other field outsides DS, and aims to challenge theoretical dogmatism. The aim is to be reflexive and appraise the direction and history of the field.

- i. By theorizing through materialism, CDS questions the dominance of materialist social model of disability by examining insights from psychology, education, social work, and humanities, to look at the cultural, discursive, and relational aspects of disability.
- ii. Bodies that matter: This view questions that impairment/disability divide within the social model to focus on the experiences of the disabled body through phenomenology or carnal sociology (body as the space of self and society). Bodies are thus, ""a field

- where intersecting material and symbolic forces converge; a surface where multiple codes of sex, class, age, race, and so forth, are inscribed.""
- iii. Inter/trans-sectionality: This feature refers to the interaction of disability and disability alliances with other categories of difference to examine "how each supports or unsettles the constitution of one another." Thus, it examines how different forms of marginalization are othered in spaces "founded upon ableist, heteronormative, adult, white European and North American, high-income nation's values"
 - iv. Global disability studies: Goodley argues that critical disability must question the dominance of Northern, Eurocentric models of disability and consider how disability intersects with post-colonial identities. For him, a global CDS balances local contexts of oppressions with globalized forms of disability
 - v. The self and the Other, that is to shift the analysis to disrupt able-bodied normativity, instead of focusing on re-inscribing able-bodied privilege.

Goodley aims for CDS to be a space for activism and theory to co-exist.

Theoretical frame 2: Southern theory/ontoformativity

- 8. Connell, R. (2011). Southern bodies and disability: Re-thinking concepts. *Third World Quarterly*, 32(8), 1369–1381. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2011.614799>**

Connell bases her argument on social embodiment and the ontoformative. She argues that there is a false separation between biomedical and social sciences in the study of the body versus the study of society. These ideas were challenged in the 1980s and 90s across disciplines. This was also related to the emergence of the social model in disability studies. Theorists demonstrated how social process "create hierarchies of bodies." However, social determinism (as opposed to biological determinism) does not translate to global South - biology and society need to be understood together.

She introduces the concept of social embodiment - which explores bodies in social dynamics (disability) and social dynamics in bodies (impairment). Bodies are seen as agents - in their physical form but as well as their power in social relationships.

She critiques the static view of social processes - and puts forth an ontoformative view of social processes, that is, "the power to create social realities through historical time". Thus, social structures come forth through historical dynamics. Social embodiment, thus, creates possibilities through time, "we need to understand disability as emerging through time. Disabled people are indeed, involved in a political rediscovering their own histories"

She critiques the universality assumption underlying science, such that, "universal form of knowledge cannot be based on the experience of a privileged minority." She provides different examples of how this plays out within disability- including colonial violence, global capitalism, and modern global patriarchy. For her, there are three ways to deal with this - to name and unpack Northern power as in postcolonial studies; to learn from non-Western knowledge, as in indigenous knowledges; and to look at knowledge developed in the South that is, southern theory.

Overall, she argues that social processes must be understood in how they impact bodies. In the North, this has involved critiquing the medical model and the role of the state as provider of services. Internationally, and in the South, understanding the role of state is more complex, given the

nexus of NGOs, international UN-related bodies, and Northern funders. Politics of disability varies in the South, not just because of culture, but because of the history of social embodied as a result of colonization. The medical model might be useful in the South, for example (Australia FAS, China). Local communities and indigenous groups are sources of knowledge whose politics evolves over time.

9. Meekosha, H., & Soldatic, K. (2011). Human Rights and the Global South. Third World Quarterly, 32(8), 1383–1398. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199606078.003.0017>

The UNCRPD was seen as a victory for the disability movement, sparking hope amongst disabled peoples that states will take actions to support disability rights. Positioning disability rights as human rights has been key to this movement and has served to unify North and South disability rights movements. However, Meekosha and Soldatic argue that the UNCRPD is not enough to bring about change in North or South and that human rights may worsen problems for disabled people in the South. They base this argument on the limitations of Northern conception of human/disability rights to a Southern context. This is crucial because disability rights have given, what is a debated and contested concept, universal recognition and have made disability a part of development agenda in the South.

They make this argument using Connell's concept of ontoformative to emphasize "social dynamics in the body", such that bodies *embody* global power. They serve to "bridge the politics of impairment with the politics of disability".

While the UNCRPD has led to the politicization of a disability identity, Meekosha and Soldatic elucidate the paradox of human rights. The first is the role of nation states - states are both guarantors but also violator of human rights. The second is the universalization of human rights, which is viewed as a "grand narrative from the North". Some scholars argue that human rights discourse furthers colonialism by ignoring global power imbalances and creating a progression for developing countries to achieve Western liberal democracy and individual rights. That is, individual rights are not a universal concept, but reflect a particular kind of social configuration and vision of liberation (industrialized versus agricultural societies). Additionally, it creates a dichotomy between modern and traditional - the Eurocentrism creates discourses of savages, victims, and saviors.

Given their hegemonic influence, human rights can also hide power imbalances between North and South, particularly related to colonialism, poverty, and globalization and are seen to serve political interests of the North. (through IMF, World Bank, and WTO)

For the authors, human rights disability discourse is in opposition to ontoformative conception of disability. The Northern discourse focuses on creating a binary between disability and impairment, such that disability is viewed as social/political "artificial" creation, viewing impairment as a separate, medical, "natural" issue, thereby, ignoring the social/political consequences and production of impairment. It thus denies how impairment is created by state and geopolitical violence.

While there has been a pushback against medicalization of disability in the global disability movement, researchers have demonstrated how, in the Global South, the medical model has served as a helpful tool for empowerment and mobilizing for access to services. Amy Salmon's work shows

how mothers of children diagnosed with fetal alcohol syndrome in indigenous groups use medical explanations to distance self from "disempowering moral discourses" that blame mothers.

Meekosha and Soldatic argue for the need of Southern voices and impairment discourses to be included in global disability discourses,

"Connell's argument for ontoformativity, that is understanding social dynamics in bodies, shows remarkable potential to deepen global disability politics, where impairment and Southern mobilizations around impairment against the North need to be not only recognized by the disability rights movement in the global North but, more significantly, actively supported"

10. Soldatic, K., & Grech, S. (2014). Transnationalising disability studies: Rights, justice and impairment. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 34(2).

11. Karen Soldatic (2013) The transnational sphere of justice: disability praxis and the politics of impairment, *Disability & Society*, 28:6, 744-755, DOI: [10.1080/09687599.2013.802218](https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2013.802218)

I will be discussing these papers together because they have identical arguments and theoretical frameworks. The 2014 article adds some dimension of coloniality, which are implicit in the 2013 article.

Both papers argue towards a transnational frame of justice for disability using Fraser's theory of justice, Derrida's boundaries of visibility and Connell's work on social ontoformativity. Social ontoformativity distinguishes between impairment and disability. Impairment is the result of social dynamics within bodies, while disability is how difference between bodies and minds is situated within "social dynamics of power".

The UNCRPD is examined as an example of the global disability rights movement for transnational justice. The movement for the CRPD established/mobilized many international civil society orgs and movements. However, Soldatic makes several arguments that highlights the limits of this transnational project.

1. Disability justice is framed within the modern territorial state (Fraser), that is, rights are realized by nation states and require citizenship. This works against disabled refugees, who are discriminated against by immigration policies.

2. Claims for disability justice cannot be made against other countries, transnational organizations, or global corporations. These constraints framed within "limiting social protections to attract global capital" - locks out particular minds/bodies from work and denies them protections.

She also critiques the framing of disability within the CRPD. The CRPD views disability as natural, fact of human life. This ignores how impairment is produced in the South, through the "bio-politics of geopolitical power." She mentions cases filed around Agent Orange in Vietnam and the Bhopal gas tragedy, which were the result of geopolitical powers acting on Global South, as examples of how the current rights-based framework prohibits action against global actors or global North actors. Additionally, the CRPD views disability as ahistorical, abstract, decontextualized, and disembodied through a kind of universalism. This ignores the differences between disability and impairment (p. 750)

She argues that disability justice must undertake a project similar to that undertaken by feminism, which is to acknowledge the subaltern transnational sphere. This, for her, requires a process of

re-identification to decolonize its boundaries. By this, she means that we must emphasize democracy, cosmopolitanism, and pluralism in our understanding of disability.

She describes the work as a “double move” - acknowledging the production of impairment through transnational relations of power and the recognition that disability is an important aspect of lived experience and embodied within nation states.

12. Meekosha, H. (2011). Decolonising disability: Thinking and acting globally. *Disability and Society*, 26(6), 667–682. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2011.602860>

Meekosha argues that a global understanding of disability requires acknowledging power relationships between Global North and South. She critiques disability studies for ignoring southern theorists and experiences and highlights the one-way transfer of ideas from the North to the South. For her, this includes two key issues - production of impairment and prevention of impairment in the South, as it relates to geopolitics of the North.

Meekosha presents a broad definition of Global North and South. North countries are industrialized, rich, with military power; Southern are those that were conquered or controlled. The North is the global metropole and economy centers in Western Europe and North America. She nuances these dichotomies - but that this distinction is helpful to understand the relationship between disability and colonialism. Since disability studies does not cite or build theory from outside the North, her focus is to understand how colonial power and coloniality influence understandings of disability.

Using Connell, she describes the consequences of Northern dominance:

(i) Claim of universality; (ii) reading from the center, that is ignoring Southern experiences of disability. For example, she argues that in some cases, instead of disability and impairment, the concept of social suffering may be more appropriate to understand contexts. Southern experiences are usually understood by anthropologists or use the North as the point of reference. (iii) grand erasure in theory and writing

She argues for the centrality of colonialism in its attempt to disable populations through colonial violence. She argues that northern differentiation between disability, chronic illness, and impairment is not applicable to explain experiences of indigenous peoples. Additionally, she argues that race and disability are fluid concepts in the South such that, ""The idea of racial and gender supremacy of the Northern Hemisphere is very much tied to the production of disability in the global South and racialized evolutionary hierarchies constructed the colonized as backward, infantile and animal-like. We cannot meaningfully separate the racialized subaltern from the disabled subaltern in the process of colonization." The underlying ideology, she highlights includes eugenics, institutionalization, and immigration restriction. She demonstrates how impairment is produced in the South through disease, violence, war, the arms trade, nuclear testing, sweatshops, and the pharmaceuticals business.

She argues that given that there are many tensions between Northern and Southern experiences of disability, "too confronting to deal with the continuing disabling of people in the global South because in trying to claim the positives of a disability identity it becomes difficult to acknowledge the

overwhelming suffering that results from colonization, war, famine, and poverty. Thus, there exists an intellectual and political tension between pride, celebration and prevention.

Given these factors, she argues for the need of a Southern disability studies that challenges values and concepts of northern theory. This requires solidarity between Northern and Southern theorists (like that in feminist theory). There is a need to acknowledge that there are many ways of describing disability and impairment, including traditional and indigenous knowledge that must not be dismissed. "

She concludes by calling for intellectual decolonization, to counter to universalizing tendencies of disability studies such that only few voices and perspectives of disability are not privileged over others.

Theoretical frame 3: Decolonial disability studies

13. Imada, A. L. (2017). A Decolonial Disability Studies? *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 37(3).

This is a short article that seeks to bring together disability and colonialism to bring forth discussions about the creation of the abnormal. She argues that the creation of colonial others is tied to creating the other as disabled. She uses examples from an American missionary in Hawaii, who believed that Hawaiians were a disabled people due to their culture. She uses this example to question how decolonization efforts should position themselves with regard to disability, "'If colonists tied able-bodiedness to compulsory productivity and racialized heteronormativity, then how might decolonization projects differ in their relationship to disability?

She provides a counter example of disability treated as a gift(?). She questions whether a decolonial disability studies can examine "spectrum of abilities, embodiments, and decolonizing practices"

14. Reed-Sandoval, A., & Sirvent, R (2019). Disability and the Decolonial Turn: Perspectives from the Americas. *Disability and the Global South*

This paper serves as the introduction to a special issue, which seeks to bring to fore how disability interacts with race, gender, and sexuality within Western modernity and coloniality. They seek to bring forth how coloniality of power can help understanding ableism and marginalization of disabled voices and bodies. They are asking questions about who gets to define disability and the stakes attached to it, how coloniality renders disability invisible, body normativity, humanizing disability with decolonial studies, disability as site of knowledge, and historical/colonial formations of ability/disability binaries.

They focus on the work of Anibal Quijano who describes coloniality beyond economic dominance and dependency to include the coloniality of power, i.e., decolonization of the mind, knowledge, imaginary, and being. That is, moving colonial exertion beyond the political and the economic to the epistemic. Another concept they describe is totality, which makes other ways of knowing, experiences, art invisible in front of Eurocentric standards. They move on to Lugones' (2007) work that can help link disability and decolonization in how colonial/modern gender system creates disability and disabled bodies. Coloniality of power needs to examine multiple and intersection

oppressions. Decolonization, thus, requires listening to the oppressed, to include social and political activism, and to decolonize research practices.

I am curious how decolonial theory tackles agency and resistance of the colonized, and shifting identities of the colonized and colonizers, as perhaps Parekh tackles – is that a function of indigenous groups writing in settler colonies? As opposed to *post*colonial subjects writing to the center. It may also be a question of who decolonial theory is responding to versus postcolonial theory. Decolonial theory appears to be responding to development studies, economics, political science, and social sciences more broadly, while postcolonial theory seems to be responding to cultural and literary studies.

Theoretical frame 4: Postcolonial disability studies

15. Ghai, A. (2012). Engaging with disability with postcolonial theory. In Disability and Social Theory (pp. 270-286). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Ghai argues that postcolonial studies (Said, Spivak, and Bhabha) can offer insights to disability studies. She begins her analysis by examining disability in India through karma, a belief system that views disability as a result of sins in one's past life but also contains within it potential for change. She argues that disability from a karmic or just world perspective sees disability as either sin or opportunity for resilience - within this framework, she believes there is "a dignified negotiation of difference". Overall, disability is viewed as a lack or deficit and there is negative social response to disability in India. Through these arguments, she trying to underline the contested notion of binaries and disability in India - "fixed permanent, internal homogenous and oppositional" views of ability/disability are problematic. She looks for postcolonial theory to escape these binaries - and examines the political purpose of binaries. She finds that postcolonial theory offers a way to disturb these binaries, such that identity is viewed as fluid and contextual. For her, postcolonial theory is a means to understand the other. She is, however, cautious of discursive essentialism within postcolonial theory. She writes about unlearning privilege - at the same time, her analysis is concerned with Bollywood (discursive realities?) and is extremely dense (can the subaltern listen?) She ends by invoking bell hooks' views on colonialism to argue that colonizing is a shifting process, "apartheid is always subject to constant revision"

16. Parekh, P. N. (2008). Gender, disability and the postcolonial nexus. Wagadu: Journal of Transnational Women's and Gender Studies: Intersecting Gender and Disability Perspectives in Rethinking Postcolonial Identities, 4, 173-195.

Parekh develops a postcolonial feminist disability theory and praxis to build upon Thomson's (97) feminist disability studies. She interested in understanding complex identity formations, which may be cultural, geo-political, socio-economic, or ideological. Her aim is to use this frame to highlight matrices of oppression, hierarchy, and discrimination. Her intention is to emphasize shifting colonizer-colonized interactions and relationships through an intersectional lens to understand policies and practices that empower and oppress. The aim is to challenge the ""oppositional frameworks of colonial and postcolonial""

Parekh examines how these concepts play out in literature and in the law. She looks at the PWD 1995 Act as an example of how disability was now defined in homogenous ways. In the British era,

for example, disability existed within caste categories such as low caste status was seen as disability and passed legislation to protect Christian converts from what they saw as punitive Hindu and Muslim law. At the same time, disability and race were tied together.

She provides several examples to show how identity categories in India are fluid - and have "competing, complementing, and conflicting relationships" such as hijras and widowed women. Furthering Ghai, it is not just disability that is seen as a result of karma, but low caste, widowhood, and gender as well. "

She concludes by arguing for "culturally grounded, historically contextualized exploration of the expressive culture of peoples with disabilities" and to understand subjectivity of disability people through intersectional and shifting social, political, and economic processes.

Theoretical frame 5: Transnational materialist disability studies

17. Erevelles, N. (2011). Disability and difference in global contexts: Enabling a transformative body politic. Springer.

- Introduction: Bodies That Do Not Matter
- Of Ghosts and Ghetto Politics: Embodying Educational Policy as if Disability Mattered
- Embodied Antinomies: Feminist Disability Studies Meets Third World Feminism

Erevelles is critical of the heavy focus on discourse and text within disability studies, which has ignored class analysis within disability studies and feminist disability studies. The focus of the book is to examine the relationship between disability and other forms of difference (race, gender for e.g.) within transnational capitalism. She argues how disability is used to construct forms of difference given the economic and social relations produced within transnational capitalism, that is, the distinctions between which bodies do and do not matter. She draws on historical materialism to complement intersubjective phenomenological and post-structuralist thought to put forth the idea that we cannot ignore social and economic histories and current conditions in explaining individual experience. Thus, she sees a relationship between bodies and the political economy. She aims to undertake this analysis in the context of colonialism, postcolonialism, and neoliberalism and how these have shaped disabled bodies. She lays out 4 key goals of her text:

- “1. explore the implications for theorizing disability at the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality within both the United States and global contexts;
2. describe the critical tensions and possible alliances that exist between third world feminist theory and disability studies;
3. describe the concrete ways in which globalization has impacted disabled people in both the “first” and “third” worlds; and
4. discuss the implications of retheorizing disability as a materialist construct in the context of radical democracy and global citizenship.”

Her text provides useful definitions and applications of, embodied policy analysis, postcolonial ghettos, and Third World.

Postcolonial: "The verb form of post (emphasis in text) as in "keep someone posted" refers to keeping someone informed of the latest development or news. Post + colonial studies then announce the latest development on colonialism. Or the noun post is a place where an activity or duty is carried out. Post+colonial then refers to the place, people, or cultural arena where colonial activity or duties are carried out . . . [P]ost + anything in academic jargon signifies that things are much more complicated than previously thought. At the very least, post + colonial refers to our complicity in empire, in our own colonization, and in that of others. It refers to how the categories colonizer and colonized are no longer distinct."

Third World: "On the other hand, the conceptualization of the Third World that I take up is not restricted to national boundaries, but instead refers to the "colonized, neocolonized, and decolonized countries (of Asia, Africa, and Latin America) whose economic and political structures have been deformed within the colonial process, [as well as] to black, Asian, Latino, and indigenous peoples in North America, Europe and Australia" (Mohanty, Russo, & Torres, 1991, p. ix). In other words, I deploy the term "Third World" in a much more expansive way to expose how the social, political, and economic conditions of global capitalism produce spaces of extreme exploitation and oppression in both the imperialist states and their former colonies."

She aims to coalesce what has been seen as differences between exogenous and settler colonialism (Tuck & Yang, 2014). This may be challenged by some decolonial scholars such as Eve Tuck (Tuck & Yang, 2014; Yang & Tuck, 2012), who argue that settler colonialism functions as a structure, that decolonization efforts must look different in these contexts and that decolonizing efforts in settler colonies are deeply intertwined with occupation of land.

Embodied policy analysis: "An embodied policy analysis from the critical standpoint of a materialist disability studies foregrounds the absence of analyses regarding the actual materiality of bodies in educational contexts (student, teacher, and/or administrator) and how educational policies serve to control, shape, regulate, and reproduce them."

18. Erevelles, N., & Minear, A. (2010). Unspeakable Offenses: Untangling Race and Disability in Discourses of Intersectionality. *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*, 4(2), 127–145. <https://doi.org/10.3828/jlcds.2010.11>

In this paper, the authors make the argument that disability needs to be incorporated in intersectionality discourse within disability studies and Critical Race Theory. For them, disability, like race, class, and gender, is a social identity. They argue that CRT has ignored disability, despite the key role disability plays in constructing ideas of normativity and difference.

They provide an overview of the changes in understanding identity. Identity has evolved from being viewed as an essentialized static notion of a catch-all characteristic that ignores tensions within a group to a view of multiple oppressions at the intersection of race, class, gender, sexuality, and disability. However, this view of multiple oppressions brings to question whether there is a hierarchy of identities - does one matter more than the other? Intersectionality argues that these ""systems mutually construct one another" They highlight two modes of doing intersectionality. The first, anticategorical framework argues from a post-structuralist perspective of social construction of reality - all identities are created fictions. However, we cannot deny the impact of these fictions. Those using the intracategorical framework focus on "particular social groups at neglected points of

intersection of multiple master categories"- with an aim to build coalitions across categories. However, it is difficult to incorporate all forms of differences within this framework. A third approach is Yuval-Davis (2006) constitutive approach to multiple differences balances lives of those at the intersection of multiple categories with the structural conditions within these categories are constructed within particular historical contexts. They describe this as an intercategorical framework (McCall, 2005).

They argue that the continued ignorance of disability within CRT stems from a view of disability as a biological rather than a socially constructed category, like race, which "derives meaning and social (in)significance from the historical, cultural, political, and economic structures that frame social life." Other points of contact between CRT and DS include views of disability and race as relational concepts, use of narratives and life-stories of individuals. They argue that, "disability could also be used to interrogate the normalizing discourses of racism, sexism, and heteronormativity— all of which generate the institutional exclusion of the deviant (read “disabled”)"

19. Erevelles, N. (1996). Disability and the Dialectics of Difference. Disability & Society, 11(4), 519-538.

Erevelles is arguing for disability to be treated as a theoretical category that can explain other constructs of difference, such that disability can be understood as product of capitalist exploitation that structure other forms of difference such as race, caste, class, gender, and sexuality. Thus, for her, the construction of disability has been used to justify social hierarchies within capitalist systems. She questions the biological/natural view of disability by arguing that disability is constructed through historical and material conditions, and critiques other theories of difference that have used this argument to reify disability (e.g., socialism ignores disability as a form of being human). She argues that these humanist discourses within liberal humanism do not apply to disability - and thus, disability needs to be theorized differently. On the other hand, while post-modern theories offer multiple ways of being human - this has led to identity politics and hierarchies of difference. Additionally, the focus on the discursive ignores the material challenges and conditions of the lives of disabled people. Thus, she calls for a historical materialist reading of disability that "Historical materialism rejects the populist understanding that disability is produced and maintained as a result of 'bad attitudes' (liberalism) or 'oppressive meaning systems' (post-structuralism), but instead seeks to expose the concrete material conditions that have produced these attitudes and meanings systems about disability, in the first place" Capitalism seeks to control the distribution of surplus and uses disability to maintain social hierarchies by emphasizing productivity of labor.

She bases her argument on a case study of care work at a voluntary organization for disabled people in South India. In the Indian context, she views the state as both, developmentalist and interventionist, that is focusing on capitalist expansion and redress social inequities. Her central argument questions the othering of disability, "how would our analyses be transformed if disability is conceptualized not as an alien category, among the other categories of difference, but as structured by and upholding the same exploitative material conditions that have produced oppression on the basis of race, class, caste and gender?"

Topic specific view of disability

- 20. Buckingham, J. (2011). Writing histories of disability in India: Strategies of inclusion. *Disability and Society*, 26(4), 419–431. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2011.567792>**

Buckingham finds that history has been used as a tool for advocacy by various social groups in India and in the West. While caste and gender groups have done this in India, a disability analysis of history is warranted.

In the West, the shift from the medical to social model has led to an increase in disability used as an analytical category in understanding history. Disability history in the West has not incorporated non-western, non-Christian contexts. This dominance of a Judeo-Christian view of disability stigma has travelled to interventions in Asia and Africa.

An Indian history of disability has been written from a largely Brahminical perspective. Within the caste system, Hindus are excluded because of their perceived incapacity to perform familial duties and rituals. However, this reading excludes stories and narratives from other historical traditions. Buckingham argues that disabled individuals have been excluded from the academy, from educational opportunities and women with disabilities are doubly disadvantaged.

Disability studies is slowly emerging in the Indian context, with disability history as massively underdeveloped. She categorizes three current areas of disability history - services for disabled people, memoirs and personal histories, and within history of medicine. Within the first area, much of the reading of Hindu and Muslim practices are based on accounts of Europeans.

Buckingham argues that disability history can help document and critique present and historical conditions of individuals with disabilities and can be used as a powerful tool of advocacy, as has been used by Dalit and tribal groups.

- 21. Singal, N., & Muthukrishna, N. (2014). Education, childhood and disability in countries of the South – Re-positioning the debates. *Childhood*, 21(3), 293–307. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0907568214529600>**

This article serves as the introduction to a special issue in this journal which seeks to enable how North/South relations affect the "construction and understanding of disabled children's childhood and education in the global South" by examining points of convergence and divergence. They define the North as former imperial powers that continue to serve as centers of global capitalism. The South is viewed as those conquered or controlled by these nations, which has resulted in a "'legacy of inequality'" (p. 294). However, they recognize the existence of wealth and poverty across contexts. They argue that international agencies do not support development of knowledge in the South that recognizes and is critical of these inequitable distributions.

They find that representations of disability in the South are monolithic, backward in order to sustain the civilizing work or help or international agencies - hence, they are largely deficit oriented.

Citing arguments made by Meekosha and Soldatic (2011), the authors critique the impairment-disability divide created by the social model of disability in the North. The individualizing discourse around disability in the North ignores the relational and networked nature

of the lives of people with disabilities in the South. They argue that the notion of individual rights is often not compatible in contexts with collectivistic cultures, where notions of the self are tied to the collective and may threaten collective social mechanisms. They view disability as a "a collective experience – hence the significance of collective agency and collective rights."

They define a Southern theory of disability as one that recognizes how impairment in the South is intertwined with colonialism, capitalism, and globalization. Within inclusive education, the authors find a dominance of a Northern hegemonic discourse, which has failed the realities of Southern context, highlighting the need for "localized construction of educational policies and programs" They argue that scholars are yet to critique how Northern debates have shaped global policies within inclusive education. That is, there is a need for greater criticism of "naïve transfer of toolkits and indexes, developed by Northern-based academics, funded by international organizations, who have little experience of realities of schools in the remotest and rural parts of deprived communities in many developing economies" The view that inclusion must be enacted in the same way everywhere disempowers local contexts and creates an exclusionary discourse around inclusive education. For them, a "locally situated inclusive education approach" looks at the capacities of indigenous communities and "makes tentative" Northern conceptualizations. That is, an "integration of a rights based inclusive education agenda with indigenous inclusive ethics and values with a key eye on "inclusion into what and inclusion for what purposes."

Methodologically, they call for participatory research with children and an emphasis on disabled peoples voices. They caution that while we must critique the hegemony of Northern discourses, emphasizing local knowledge does not mean an unthinking adoption, but instead critiquing these knowledge sources for their exclusionary practices.