

Carleton University

Infernal Liberation? Emancipatory Research and the Social Model of Disability

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Thomas Abrams, B.A. (Hons.)

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Abstract

Disability Studies, as a discipline, has from its inception maintained a close link to the activist community. This relationship has had a direct impact on the theoretical developments within that discipline. In this thesis, I examine the extent to which the imperatives of the UK disability rights movement have influenced discussions of oppression in academic discourse. Specifically, I look at the emphasis placed on the notion of social oppression, which is seen as the *sine qua non* of disability within the so-called ‘Social Model of Disability.’ I argue that this formulation of ‘disability as oppression’ significantly impairs the employment of theoretical developments from adjacent areas in Sociology. Looking at the work of Michel Foucault, the Sociology of the Body and Bruno Latour’s challenge to social theory, I discuss the costs that are paid to maintain Disability Studies’ *a priori* obsession with oppression.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
Prelude: An Unlikely Hero	1
1: History that Hurts: The Litany of the Social Model.....	6
2: Foucault on Foucault on Disability	16
3: Who's-there? Heidegger and Embodied Being post-Social Model	40
4: Bruno Latour and a Re-Tarded Disability Studies	62
Emancipation.....	76
Works Cited	78

Prelude: An Unlikely Hero

The winter of 1880-81 was known as the ‘winter of the deep snow’ in Minnesota. Michael Dowling—just fourteen at the time—was lost in an October blizzard. Thankfully found and brought home by a farmer, Dowling would lose both legs and portions of his arms as a result of the cold. Having immigrated from Massachusetts a year earlier, Dowling was no stranger to hard work and struggle; working since the age of ten, he promised the state of Minnesota he would never become a ward of the state, so long as he was provided prosthetic limbs and two semesters at Carlton College. His later résumé would continue to display this working spirit. Dowling would become a teacher, administer to all Renville county schools, have a school named after him, be elected mayor of Olivia, Minnesota (the corn capital of the world, if the town’s motto is to be believed), become speaker of the Minnesota House, and U.S. education commissioner (Parker, 2006).

We might think of Michael Dowling as the type of icon which Disability Studies would want to celebrate. *The Lancet* provides an account of Dowling speaking to men who had lost their limbs in the Great War, demanding they not lose hope with their appendages. The language used to describe Dowling might be seen by some—we will name some names in the initial chapter—as ‘disablist’: that journal noted that though he had lost his limbs he was “able to do everything an able bodied man could, except tie a bow-knot in his tie. In spite of his disabilities he won his bride against two whole-limb competitors, and is the father of healthy children.” (Anonymous, 1919, 210) However, regardless of such terminology, Dowling can be celebrated as a man who was not

restricted by his impairments; indeed, he was lauded by both Prince Albert and President William McKinley.

Despite his noble character, critical Disability Students will not celebrate the likes of Dowling. Let's look to his politics. Dowling would serve as secretary of the National Republican League for three years, and was a firm believer in capitalism, eventually becoming the head of the largest bank in Minnesota (Curtiss-Wedge, 1916, 697). Regarding his marriage to Jennie L. Bordewich in 1895—following the pre-marital combat discussed above in *The Lancet*—Dowling would remark: “To marry is to take on trouble sometimes, but in my case I want to “fess up” that with the exception of some suffragette work that Mrs. Dowling does, we have gotten along very nicely.” (Dowling, 1918, 49) Simply, Michael Dowling had little interest in the emancipation of himself or others. For those who declare themselves the vanguard of the Disability Rights Movement—or any other social movement seeking civil rights—Dowling looks to be part of the reactionary bulwark, rather than a trailblazing crusader.

* * *

The argument that follows is decidedly simple. The UK disability rights movement has a close connection with the academic study of disability. This close relationship has formed around the so-called ‘Social Model of disability’ (Oliver, 1983, 15). This model seeks to promote ‘emancipatory research’, discourse that highlights and combats the social inequalities, ideologies and power relationships which exclude the disabled from modern society. As we will see, the emancipatory project, which sees social oppression as the *sine qua non* of disability, has come to dominate most discussions in the sociology of disability. Succinctly: the social model has become a

procrustean bed, and has arbitrarily established what I term the ‘oppression a priori’ in disability studies. Taking the UK experience as my primary site of investigation, I argue that the a priori presumption of social oppression has warped the ways in which several key theorists and theories from adjacent areas of sociology and social philosophy. This is not to say that it is impossible to study the oppression of the disabled, or that it is an illusion. I maintain that oppression *can* be studied, and *can* exist. However, ‘can’ implies that we—‘we’ sociologists and ‘we’ disabled—can only know the disability-oppression connection a posteriori. *If we fail to chart oppression as part of (and not prior to) the experience of disability, then we provide a faulty characterization of disability—this is poor sociology.*

In Chapter 1, I present an academic ontogeny of the social model, and show its relationship with the UK disability rights movement. I will discuss the work of Michael Oliver—the ‘father’ of the social model—at length. Here we will see the link which the radical social study of disability creates between disability and capitalism. Further, we will see that the emancipatory imperatives become so deeply entrenched that even after the social model leaves the academic spotlight, subsequent theoretical attempts suffer from its deficit.

Chapter 2 focuses on those contributions which Michel Foucault can offer to discussions of disability, and how his work has been co-opted by the emancipatory project. We will see that the Foucault that often appears in UK Disability Studies and the Foucault that appears in other areas of sociology are not symmetrical. Here I illustrate some potential areas of investigation which have not been undertaken by Disability Studies’ Foucault, due to the presumption of oppression. While I focus mainly on

Foucault's contributions to epistemology, I also look to his work in other areas, and to the work that has been undertaken by others he has influenced—particularly Ian Hacking—in adjacent contexts.

Next we turn to the sociology of the body. Chapter 3 demonstrates the way in which the legacy of the social model has tempered the introduction of 'somatic sociology' to Disability Studies. Focusing on the adoption of the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, I show how the oppressed body has been formulated in Disability Studies. In contrast to this, I investigate research that has been undertaken from a Heideggerian perspective, discuss corporeality in his corpus, and relate it back to the emancipatory imperative. Also to be discussed, Heidegger's perspectives on technology lead us to the final chapter.

Chapter 4 looks at the work of Bruno Latour, and his fundamental challenge to both mainstream and critical sociology. This is directly applicable to Disability Studies. Here I provide a more robust discussion of technology, which will in some part build on the views of Martin Heidegger. These views will be related to some recent work in the field of Disability Studies (outside of the social model), and will provide some conceptual tools for inquiry into the relationship between technology and the social experience of disability. Here we will find that, rather than deliver us to sociological nihilism, Latour encourages more rigorous disability studies.

While each of these avenues of research may seem to be fragmented, I believe they share a great deal in common. They challenge the division of the social study of disability from its biomedical counterpart. Ever since the introduction of the social model, disability has lost a great deal of its interdisciplinary fungibility. Hopefully, I can

contribute to some remedy to this situation. Each of these investigations illustrates the potential danger in a direct link between activist designs and academic inquiry; what costs does the latter pay in this case? Nietzsche proclaims: “In order to think, one must already possess, by means of imagination, what one is seeking—only then can reflection judge.” (Nietzsche, 1999, 29) If emancipatory researchers wish to find oppression they surely will—but what else might they be missing along the way?

1: History that Hurts: The Litany of the Social Model

Coming to fruition in the 1980s, the social model of disability has been called the ‘big idea’ of UK disability studies (Hasler in Oliver, 2004, 9). The purpose of the present chapter is to provide an intellectual ontogeny of this ‘big idea’, and propose—despite the existence of some arguments to the contrary (Vestraete, 2009, 270-1)—that the social model remains a dominant influence within UK disability studies to this day. While this latter component will be fleshed out further in the following chapters, it is still pertinent to provide a litmus test of the degree to which the social model’s influence remains. The goal here is not to provide a comprehensive discussion of *all* aspects of the social model, but rather to focus on those elements which emphasize social oppression as the *sine qua non* of disability. I refer to this tendency as the ‘oppression a priori’, or the ‘emancipatory imperative’ in Disability Studies. Before I flesh out these two terms, we turn first to the origins of the UK disability rights movement.

The social model’s academic ontogeny begins when Paul Hunt published *Stigma: The Experience of Disability* (1966), a collection of essays outlining the lived experience of disabled people in the UK, with the aim of likening the experience of disabled people to other types of stigma—like that affixed to minority racial status. Though not a sociologist, Hunt’s introduction to that work attempts to locate disability as a sort of superstructure which exists ‘on top’ of the particular medical conditions to which individuals were subject.

I want to look at [the disabled] largely in terms of our relations with others, our place in society. This is essentially related to the personal aspect of coping with disablement, which I hope it will at the same time illuminate, since the problem of disability lies not only in the impairment of function and its effects on us individually, but also, more importantly, in the area of our relationship with ‘normal’ people. If everyone were disabled as we are,

there would be no special situation to consider. ... I think the distinguishing mark of disabled people's special position is that they tend to 'challenge' [the normal] in their relations with ordinary society. (Hunt, 1966, 3)

This challenge takes five main forms: as unfortunate, useless, different, oppressed and sick. All these are only facets of one situation.” (Hunt, 1966, 4) Only one of these facets is of any importance to the emancipatory project—oppression. Within *Stigma* we see the first signs of a way of thinking of disability as external to the physical body of the disabled subject. Indeed—and this is perhaps the most pioneering aspect to his work—Hunt goes so far as to say that there is no such thing as a disabled person, rather there are only people with disabilities. These disabilities, it follows, are not naturally-appearing, but rather conferred through routine social interaction with ‘the normal’.

Paul Hunt's penmanship plays another role in our story. As he had done earlier to collect the essays for *Stigma*, Hunt penned a 20th September 1972 letter to *The Guardian*. There, he declared his intention to establish a consumer group, with the charge of bringing to the national stage the interests of people with placed in social service facilities, labelled as the "successors to the workhouse." (Hunt, 1972). With the 1972 letter, the UK focus on disability becomes one entrenched in political economy. This proposed group, the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (hereafter UPIAS), becomes a major influence in UK disability literature, and grounds the tight bond between the relevant academic and activist communities. From its outset, the union focused on access and barriers faced by those with disability.

We find ourselves isolated and excluded by such things as flights of steps, inadequate public and personal transport, unsuitable housing, rigid work routines in factories and offices, and a lack of up-to-date aids and equipment. (UPIAS in Shakespeare, 2006)

Thus far, one can recognize the formulation of disability quite similar to that established within *Stigma*, as presented above. But the UPIAS plays more than just a role restating Hunt's earlier viewpoint. UPIAS would come together with the Disability Alliance—a group of existing organizations, seeking a 'comprehensive income scheme'—to produce the social model's Rosetta Stone: the 1975 *Fundamental Principles of Disability* (Shakespeare, 2006, 12). Though initially focused on physical impairment, as the name of the activist group would suggest, the *Principles* would be extended to all forms of disability, and repeated in almost every major work of UK disability literature since (Finkelstein, 2001, 4).

The *Principles* would herald 1975 as the 'year zero' of the UK disability rights movement (Shakespeare, 2006, 10). This is undeniable. Though the document is unprecedented for numerous factors, for our present purposes, one is primary: *the dichotomy between disability and impairment*.

[Disability] is a situation, caused by social conditions, which requires for its elimination, (a) that no one aspect such as incomes, mobility or institutions is treated in isolation, (b) that disabled people should, with the advice and help of others, assume control over their lives, and (c) that professionals, experts, and others who seek to help must be committed to promoting such control by disabled people. ... In our view, it is society which disables physically impaired people. Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments, by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation from society. Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society. (UPIAS, 1975, 3-4)

While Hunt suggested that 'there is no such thing as a disabled person', the UPIAS suggest that disability, as a category, reflects the arbitrary social location of the impaired. From this point of reference, the *Fundamental Principles* establish the dichotomy within the definition of disability:

Thus we define impairment as lacking all or part of a limb, or having a defective limb, organism or mechanism of the body and disability as the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organization which takes no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities. (UPIAS, 1975, 14)

The importance of this historical moment cannot be overstated. It heralds the arrival of two major themes. The first is evident, and alluded to above: in their definition of disability, the members of the Union placed social oppression as its *sine qua non*. Secondly, the union introduces another, subtler, theme: that of the relationship between 'disabled' and 'non-disabled' people (to which we will return below). The impact of these two facets becomes more noticeable as we include Michael Oliver in our story.

Though not a member of the UPIAS, Oliver quickly becomes the central figure in the UK disability community. Picking up on the themes of the UPIAS debate and his training in Sociology, Oliver coins the term 'social model of disability' in his *Social Work with Disabled People*: "this new paradigm involves nothing more or less fundamental than a switch away from focusing on the physical limitations of particular individuals to the way the physical and social environments impose limitations on certain groups or categories of people." (Oliver, 1983, 23)

What is pioneering about the way in which Oliver formulates the social model is the inclusion of a historical political economy of disablement. The relationship between disablement and capitalism had been examined before (see Finkelstein, 1980), yet Oliver blends previous analysis with his sociological training (which, for the most part, focused on deviance). Building on the UPIAS dichotomy, Oliver argues that this new social model of disability should be considered in opposition to the 'individual tragedy' notions of disability endemic to previous social work and medical practice. The 'individual

tragedy model' is effectively one which presumes the deficiencies associated with impairment explain all of the negative experiences encountered during disabled existence (Oliver, 1983, 15). Expanding on this distinction:

The genesis, development and articulation of the social model of disability by disabled people themselves is a rejection of all these [individualizing] fundamentals. It does not deny the problem of disability but locates it squarely within society. It is not individual limitations, of whatever kind, which are the cause of the problem but society's failure to provide appropriate services and adequately ensure the needs of disabled people are fully taken in its social organization. Hence disability, according to the social model, is all the things that impose restrictions on disabled people; ranging from inaccessible public buildings to unusable transport systems, from segregated education to excluding work arrangements and so on. Further, the consequences of this failure do not simply and randomly fall on individuals but systematically upon disabled people as a group who experience this failure as discrimination institutionalized through society. (Oliver, 1996, 32-33)

I wish to emphasize two themes in Oliver's work. The first relates to the 'individualizing fundamentals' of the 'personal tragedy model of disability.' Heralded in his *Social Work with Disabled People*, and intensified within his later corpus, Oliver argues that the social model and individual medical model of disability are resident in two distinct systems of thought (Oliver, 1983, 24-25; Oliver, 1986, 6). Utilizing Thomas Kuhn's terminology, Oliver argues that individualizing conceptions of disability are incommensurable (not measurable by the same standards) with his sociological approach. This effectively brackets previous inquiry outside Oliver's political economy of disability, further contributing to the idea that the UPIAS 'parented' the UK Disability Rights Movement. The individualizing paradigm is directly related to the capitalist mode of production, and its demand for the commodified labourer.

The requirements of the capitalist economy were for individuals to sell their labour in the free market and this necessitated a break from collectivist notions of work as the product of family and group

involvement. It demanded nothing less than the ideological construction of the individual. [...] Hence, individuals always existed but only as part of larger social groupings whether they be families, clans or communities. It was only with the rise of capitalism that the isolated, private individual appeared on the historical stage. (Oliver, 1990, 44)

Oliver argues that an institutional culture of disablement serves as a reproductive disabling apparatus—again derived from the ideology of individualism—which marginalizes and excludes those individuals who do not fit the normative able-bodied mould.

The role of the medical profession is given particular importance in the control of the disabled, and the perpetuation of the ideology of individualism. While Oliver concedes that significant medical advances have been made in the elimination of particular impairments, these practices ignore—or even maintain—institutional disablement (Oliver, 1990, 48). A repeated example is the process of 'adjustment' through which a recently impaired individual is subjected, arbitrarily based on an individualizing model of disability (Oliver, 1983, 17-18; Oliver, 1990, 53). Departing from that viewpoint, the role of 'rehabilitation' is not, then, to attempt to have particular oppressive barriers removed, but rather to prepare the impaired subject to manoeuvre within them. Similarly, the psychological component of 'adjustment to a disability' is one which forces the disabled individual to accept their disability as one which is ever-present and eternal, rather than as an arbitrary condition maintained through social exclusion. 'Rehabilitation' thus serves to implant those with impairments within the status quo of disablist society.

Oliver summarizes his views in the following passage:

personal tragedy theory has served to individualise the problems of disability and hence to leave social and economic structures untouched. Social science in general and social policy in particular have progressed far in rejecting individualistic theories and constructing a range of

alternative social ones—let us hope that personal tragedy theory, the last in the line will soon disappear also, to be replaced by a more adequate social (oppression) theory of disability. (Oliver, 1986, 16)

The second important theme to be found in Oliver's work, related to the first, is that of the relationship between disabled and non-disabled individuals. More specifically, Oliver argues that resistance to the revolution represented by the social model's 'social oppression paradigm' has come primarily from non-disabled individuals and their respective social agencies: "regardless of terminology, it is true to say that able-bodied academics have worked almost exclusively within the first [personal tragedy] perspective while disabled people have sought actively to promote the second [UPIAS, disability as oppression, model]." (Oliver, 1986, 6) The powerful role which medical expertise plays within society, coupled with the pervasive nature of a disablist capitalist political economy, entrenches the individual tragedy/medical model perspective. This view was shared by Shakespeare and Watson (who have since reversed their opinions. See Shakespeare and Watson, 2002; Shakespeare, 2006):

While its details and implications may be contested within the disability movement, there is a broad and vigorous consensus around the social model which should be translated into a renewed attempt to achieve understanding and win acceptance and application of the model within wider society. The views that have to be debunked are not those of other disabled people, but those of the non-disabled academics and commentators who continue to view disability as a personal medical tragedy. (Shakespeare and Watson, 1997, 293-294)

In this sense, for Oliver and supporting authors, the 'ideology of individualism' serves not only to reproduce those marginalizing structures which unnecessarily prohibit the inclusion of disabled individuals in everyday life, but also exists within academic discourse (see Barnes, 1998). Disabling barriers thus exist within the discipline of sociology itself, which has hitherto ignored the Social Model on the main.

The 'current issues' section of the journal *Disability & Society*—edited by Mike Oliver until his retirement—often entertains debates relating to this dichotomy between non-disabled and disabled people. Though the section contains a plurality of viewpoints—including the social model at varying intensities—one can find 'strong' applications of the social model; positions even more extreme than Oliver's. Take Fran Branfield, for instance.

'Non-disabled' people, no matter how 'sincere', 'sympathetic' or whatever, are always in the position of being 'non-disabled' people and all that carries with it—domination, oppression and appropriation. [... Whilst] disabled people are not necessarily politicised to our oppression by virtue of being disabled alone, the disability movement reflects a socio-political reality. For disabled people this reality is immediate, growing out of our lived experience and producing a direct knowledge for change, for action. 'Non-disabled' people cannot fully know this. For them, their experience, their history, their culture is our oppression. (Branfield, 1998, 143.)

In another piece, Branfield continues this line of thought, extending her epistemological claims, linking to the work of Michael Oliver directly:

Much research has been devoted to this and the work of disabled academics, such as Abberley, Barnes, Morris, Oliver and Shakespeare, has shown that it is an irrefutable fact that disabled people are an oppressed group. ... Once disability theory is hijacked by academic discourse it is in danger of being neutralised and rendered invalid as an emancipatory movement. Our non-disabled 'allies' have not inherited a world of exclusion and oppression, based on their corporeal being; they do not have the lived experience of being historically denied the status as subject as a direct consequence of their 'difference'. Thus, most of them fail to grasp the specificity of disability and disablism, in terms of articulation of theory and practice, of thought and life. (Branfield, 1999, 399-400)

Certainly for Oliver and Branfield, (perhaps even for Hunt) one can see a fundamental epistemological claim. While a non-disabled person can have knowledge about impairment—via proficiency in the medical sciences, etc—they cannot have true knowledge about the experience of disablement. As disabled individuals are socially

situated, so too is their experience: knowledge of disability is accorded only with the lived-experience of the systematic social oppression implied by that term. Attempts by those external to the social space of oppression to 'know' the reality of disability are seen as futile. 'Emancipatory disability research', the social model's philosophy of praxis, cannot be conducted by oppressors (Danieli and Woodhams, 2005, 283). Effectively, for a 'strong' social model position, we find an 'oppression binary': a relationship defined in terms of the able-bodied (or able-minded) versus their victims.

Oliver reminds us that while the social model is not a comprehensive theory or explanation of all aspects of disability, it represents the basis on which that theory could, and should, be constructed (Oliver, 1986, 16; Oliver, 2004, 9). Indeed, as Carol Thomas introduces the field of disability studies—and this will conclude my brief examination of the ontogeny of the social model—its influence is clearly evident:

[Disability Studies] proponents assert the inability of people with impairments to undertake social activities is a consequence of the erection of barriers by the non-disabled majority. These social barriers—both physical and attitudinal—limit activity and constrain the lives of people with impairment. In short, these barriers socially exclude and work to oppress those with a socially ascribed impairment. The term 'disability' now refers to a type of social oppression, and disablism enters the vocabulary alongside sexism, racism and other discriminatory practices. (Thomas, 2002, 38)

For the present purposes, the prototypical social model can be described via these attributes:

1. A dichotomy between impairment and disability
2. The equation of disability and oppression of the impaired
3. A dichotomy established between 'disabled' and 'non-disabled' individuals
4. The epistemological exclusion of the 'non-disabled'

One should not fall victim to the belief that all UK disability students accept the social model at its word (as Branfield does). The influence of the social model surely has waned in the past twenty years, and even during its heyday it had several detractors. I maintain, however, that if one were to suggest that there has been a ‘second wave’ of UK Disability Studies—apart from the first, formed around the social model—one would fail to understand the residual conceptual influence that model maintains to this day. As we shall see concretely in the following chapters, the social model still continues to haunt the academic study of disability. The single most apparent legacy of the social model is the degree to which its adherents—in either direct or residual form—present the sociology of disability as the sociology of oppressive disablement. As we will see, this presentation has a price-tag. Now that we know what to listen for, we will be able to draw its spectres from the theoretical woodwork.

2: Foucault on Foucault on Disability

Michel Foucault's contribution to the academy has been immeasurable, touching on all aspects of the human sciences. My goal in this chapter is to present a few of Foucault's main concepts, and apply them to the way in which the oppression a priori—presumption of the social oppression of the disabled, as elaborated in Chapter 1—has tempered his application in Disability Studies. This analysis will be restricted to Foucault's contribution to epistemology, which may not entail any restriction at all: Gilles Deleuze suggests that besides thinking, Foucault "never dealt with any other problem." (Deleuze, 2007, 246)

I do not want to be so crass as to suggest that there is a single, correct way to read Foucault and an incorrect method dominant within disability studies. Indeed, even Foucault's corpus contains several notable stages—if taken as a homogeneous entity, the reader would be presented with several irreconcilable aporias. An excellent example can be found in Foucault's approach in his *History of Madness*: Ian Hacking posits that Foucault's initial Kantian influences led to the suggestion a sort of pure, madness-in-itself, of which we experience the phenomenal side (Hacking, 2002c, 75). This is a view which Foucault would quickly dismiss in his later genealogical period (for the best description of this approach, see Foucault, 1998). Effectively, beginning with *The Order of Things*, Foucault argued that each way in which we come to think of ourselves comes from a fractured lineage. That is, there is no singular human origin uncovered after rigorous historical analysis. (Hacking, 2002c, 83)

Despite multiple Foucaults and multiple Foucauldians, I will attempt to present a general discussion of some of the major concepts of his work, both directly from Foucault himself and from some of his prominent commentators. Ian Hacking is of particular importance. The goal here is not to produce a definitive account of Foucault's work, but rather to suggest a potential space of exploration, and compare it with the Foucault that has been employed within the Sociology of Disability. Although there is not a *single or best* reading of Foucault, differences in readings may prevent conversations *between* Foucauldians. Here I suggest the oppression-centered outlook of the social model comes at a cost: preventing conversations between Foucauldians in disability studies and those in other areas in social theory.

There are three theoretical tools in Foucault's work which I will discuss here. They are, in no particular order, the notion of the *dispositif*, the 'truth regime', and—not entirely external to these first two notions—Foucault's particular interpretation of power. Due to its penetration of the two other concepts, I will start with the latter.

Alike much of the adjacent post-war French intellectual climate, Foucault owed a great debt to the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. Starting from these Nietzschean influences, Foucault's 'power' can best be described as a series of asymmetries; not as a property, not as an agent, not as a fetishized commodity which one can own and exchange, but rather as a relationship of forces, as a series of tactics—both past and future—emanating from and penetrating subject to strata, strata to strata, and subject to subject. 'Forces' should be thought of not only in their repressive, constricting, pejorative form, but in their positive, productive and enabling forms as well. Indeed, for Foucault,

the relationship of forces is the domain in which the subject unfolds: it is the *sine qua non* of the thinking, speaking, seeing agent.

Concrete examples of the articulation of power and the constitution of subjects abound in Foucault's work. The 1973-1974 lecture series *Psychiatric Power* contains a simple instance of the regime of forces constituting (perhaps more appropriately: reconstituting) the subject of mental health: this is the case of King George III. Foucault invokes the iconic Pinel:

[King George III] falls into a mania, and in order to make his cure more speedy and secure, no restrictions are placed on the prudence of [the doctor. The doctor] tells him that he is no longer sovereign, but that he henceforth must be obedient and submissive. Two of his old pages, of Herculean stature, are charged with looking after his needs and providing him with all the services his condition requires, but also with convincing him that he is entirely subordinate to them and now must obey them. [...] One day, in a fiery delirium, the madman harshly greets his old doctor who is making his visit, and daubs him with filth and excrement. One of the pages immediately enters the room without saying a word, grasps by his belt the delirious madman, who is himself in a disgusting and filthy state, forcibly throws him down on a pile of mattresses, strips him, washes him with a sponge, changes his clothes, and, looking at him haughtily, immediately leaves to take his post again. Such lessons, repeated at intervals over some months and backed by other means of treatment, have produced a sound cure without relapse. (Pinel in Foucault, 2006b, 20)

The above case represents two notions of power which Foucault employs (though the first often negatively). First is 'sovereign power:' that regal, absolutist, embodied, kingly power, representing the 'state apparatus' and its delegates. Sovereign power is the brute and brawn found expressed in the regal soma, the image and icon of the very state itself. This is the power of cameralism, of empires. This characterization of power is no longer singly dominant in 'societies such as ours', says Foucault; in political theory "we still have not cut off the king's head!" (Foucault, 2003, 88-89)

The second form of power is found in Foucault's *disciplinary power*. Disciplinary power is silent, monotonous power, established through repeated invocations—like the faceless rebuffing of the King seen in Pinel's account. Disciplinary power is a micro-power; it is the stuff of repeated exercise and training, of conditioning and moulding. Let me expand: above we see two types of 'treatment'. First, like that of a reverse window treatment: the king is stripped of all regalia, titles and splendour. He is reduced to a meagre lump of flesh before the might and brawn of the 'Herculean' pages at his doctor's whim. The second type of treatment, as in subjection, inserts the once-king into an asymmetrical regime of practices, and subjects him to the network of proto-psychiatry that—at least according to Pinel—'returns' him to a state of health. In this vein, one must critically assess the extent to which we can liken the regal manifestation of George III with his 'disciplinary double'; different regimes of power produce different human subjects.

There are, of course, multiple readings of disciplinary power, and I will return to the particular interpretations located within disability studies following my discussion of Foucault's relevant concepts. For the moment, however, I would like to draw the reader's attention not to the antithesis dividing these conceptions of power, but rather to the transition between them. Note that it is simply a relation of forces which divides the former and present 'selves' of the King—the direction of the chain of command, the orientation of tactics, the filth and fabric (re)placed on the royal corpus. Here we see that the transition between the regimes of forces is itself a constitutive process, not simply one of denial (as common connotations of 'discipline' would suggest). In this sense, Pinel's legendary removal of the madman's chains does not represent a 'humanistic turn' in

psychiatry as much as the creation of new humans by and for psychiatric practice. This is not, of course, restricted just to the subjects of mental health practice, but of humanity in general:

What I call Man, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is nothing other than the kind of after-image of this oscillation between the juridical individual which really was the instrument by which, in its discourse, the bourgeoisie claimed power, and the disciplinary individual, which is the result of the technology employed by the same bourgeoisie to constitute the individual in the field of productive and political forces. From this oscillation between the juridical individual—ideological instrument of the demand for power—and the disciplinary individual—real instrument of the physical exercise of power—from this oscillation between the power claimed and the power exercised, were born the illusion and the reality that we call Man. (Foucault, 2006b, 58)

Foucault links—returning to *The Order of Things*—the subjects of inquiry to changes within the *episteme*, the 'table of ordering' on which likeness, measure-ability and sameness between things come to be, 'Man' included: “the history of the order imposed on things would be the history of the Same—of that which, for a given culture, is both dispersed and related, therefore to be distinguished by kinds and collected together into identities.” (Foucault, 1973, xiv) However, abstraction to general shifts in the *episteme* is not my goal here. For now, what needs to be understood is that *shifts in the way of knowing things provokes a shift in practices. These epistemic shifts inform a different regime of power penetrating individuals, and thus result in the creation of new human subjects.* “In short, man only exists on a stratum depending on the relationships of forces taking place on it.” (Deleuze, 2007, 259)

Though it serves as a good introductory example, the George III instance might suggest that Foucault only engaged with minute practices of power and subject formation; this conclusion must be avoided if Foucault's legacy is to be accurately

analyzed. Shifts in power—and thus 'subjectifying' practices—do not simply occur at the micro-physical level, but occur at the macro-level as well. These macro-physical concerns of power are labeled by Foucault as 'bio-power': power exercised by government *vis-à-vis* population, then seen as an entity onto itself. As he outlines in his lectures of 1977-1978, bio-power refers to “...the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species become the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power[... ;] how, starting from the eighteenth century, modern Western societies took on board the fundamental biological fact that human beings are a species.” (Foucault, 2007, 1) As such, the entity 'population' becomes an object, and gains a observable status of health; a site of intervention at which mobilizing power regimes influence both subject and state formation (Curtis, 2002, 506). Nikolas Rose takes this so far as to say that medicine “has played a formative role in the *invention of the social.*” (Rose, 1994, 55; emphasis in original)

Bio-power and government are inherently linked. 'Government' here should not be thought of singly as a state or municipality—though they clearly should be included in this category—but as any organization involved in 'the conduct of conduct' (see Gordon, 1991). An effective example can be seen in the government of alcohol. While alcohol is indeed regulated directly by Government proper—in the form of taxes, juridical structures, etcetera—it is also regulated through other agents and agencies: through philanthropic groups like Mothers Against Drinking and Driving and Alcoholics Anonymous; through business associations when the sale is monopolized (as it is in Ontario); by medical professionals and their adjacent institutional networks. This regulation is not simply reducible to negative restriction. Alongside the government of

alcohol arise new labels: the alcoholic, the intoxicated driver, the underage drinker. This formulation is a story of what Ian Hacking calls 'making up people': more than just labels, human classifications shape, and are shaped by, the way alcohol is governed and the way its consumers govern themselves; in this way, "making up people changes the space of possibilities for personhood." (Hacking, 2002b, 107)

Government, classifications and human kinds present a good segue to the two other Foucauldian concepts. As is the case with power, neither the *dispositif* nor the *truth regime* can be effectively described in isolation. Here I will accept their contingent relationship as presented by Lorna Weir:

truth formulae acquire effects of power through their attachment to specific *dispositifs* (power apparatuses such as discipline and sexuality) in a truth regime. Truth formulae in contemporary societies have variable relations with power rather than the single function of assisting power. (Weir, 2008, 368)

Weir's above use of 'truth formulae' implies that the notion of a *truth regime* should refer to a heterogeneous politics of truth; a complex of relationships between multiple veridical regimes and networks of power. These politics of truth are bound to *de facto* subjectifying practices which form a *dispositif*. From Foucault's *Birth of Biopolitics*:

The point of all these investigations concerning madness, disease, delinquency, sexuality [...] is to show how the coupling of a set of practices and a regime of truth form an apparatus (*dispositif*) of knowledge-power that effectively marks out in reality that which does not exist and legitimately submits it to the division between true and false. (Foucault, 2008, 19)

The 'truth regime' then, deals with the relationship between the practices of a particular agent or agency and their interaction with an object of intervention. This relationship is in part tempered by the relation to the wider *episteme*, and more local veridical

knowledge regimes (for an enlightening discussion of Foucault's interrogation of situated epistemologies, see Delaporte, 1998).

An example may be instructive. Consider 'sexuality'. In the first volume of his *History of Sexuality*, Foucault argues that rather than existing as an oppressed characteristic of contemporary human societies (a view epitomised in the 'repressive hypothesis'), the abstraction 'sexuality' is a residual product of a deployment originating in Victorian-era society (Foucault, 1978, 72-3). That is, rather than representing an irreducible component of what it is to be human, sexuality itself is historical:

nearly one hundred and fifty years have gone into the making of a complex machinery for producing true discourses on sex: a deployment that spans a wide segment of history in that it connects the ancient injunction of confession to clinical listening methods. It is this deployment that enables something called "sexuality" to embody the truth of sex and its pleasures. (Foucault, 1978, 68)

Here, sexuality exists as a link between population and individual flesh. There are, in this instance, multiple technologies of power at work—judicial statutes, the confession, psychoanalysis, medical discourse, and what Foucault calls 'technologies of the self': practices of self-subjection and activation—each accorded a particular rubric of 'true' sexuality (see the eponymous chapter in Foucault, 1988). We can see (at least) two truth regimes at work here. First, technologies of the self are related to the greater public discourse surrounding sexuality, while, secondly, the link to the governance is itself informed by the greater biopolitical economy of population, one subject to the 'internal laws' of the market and the liberal art of government.

The deployment of sexuality entails the advent of new 'human kinds'; the hysteric woman, the masturbating child, the sexual deviant. This is of particular importance to the task at hand, as we see that the precursors to many of the mental illnesses

problematized today have—here I use Hacking's term—a 'historical ontology'; these classifications are intrinsically linked to the formulation of the object 'sexuality' and both the inter-subjective and intra-subjective cultivation of its truth (Hacking, 2002a, 5). The behaviour of those so labeled causes the classifications themselves to be reformulated, producing the 'looping effect of human kinds' (Hacking, 1995, 368). In the above formulation, the terminology becomes clear: sexuality is itself a historical concept, which has congealed at multiple intersections of power. Governing practices form a *dispositif*, informed by respective truth regimes.

Further clarification comes from engagement with external criticism. Anthony Giddens' *The Transformation of Intimacy* (1993) contains a telling exegesis of Foucault's notion of sexuality. There are several vectors to Giddens' critique; the first is of a causal nature. Giddens suggests that while Foucault's history provides a capable explanation of the *initial* deployment of sexuality, “we cannot accept Foucault's thesis that there is more or less a straightforward path of development from a Victorian 'fascination' with sexuality through to more recent times.” (Giddens, 1993, 23) Thus, it is argued that Foucault's macro-historical trajectory glosses over major changes in the way in which sexuality operates within society, those which cannot be seen in the 'tedious medical texts' which informed his viewpoint. As such,

Foucault puts too much emphasis upon sexuality at the expense of gender. He is silent about the connections of sexuality with romantic love, a phenomenon closely bound up with changes in the family. Moreover, his discussion of the nature of sexuality largely remains at the level of discourse--and rather specific forms of discourse at that. Finally, one must place in question his conception of the self in relation to modernity. (Giddens, 1993, 24)

Taking Giddens' arguments seriously, I believe that he commits two errors in his reading of Foucault. First, Giddens conceptualizes the role of Foucault's subject *vis-à-vis* power inaccurately. Secondly, Giddens' shallow reading of 'discourse' glosses over much of the practical infrastructure on which that concept—and thus Foucault's argument—operates.

First, the subject and power. In Giddens' essay "Foucault, Nietzsche, Marx" he suggests that Foucault epitomizes the post-1968 French intellectual tradition, one which substituted the 'radicalization of property' in Marx for the 'radicalization of power' in Nietzsche (Giddens, 1995, 261). This clearly has some truth in it, and Foucault attests to the requisite familiarity with both authors in the French academy in his preface to *Anti-Oedipus* (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983). However, it is as though Giddens deploys a third 'radicalization'—this time of the subject—into Foucault's writing. He does so by taking the somatic transformations discussed in *Discipline and Punish*—whereby disciplinary techniques operate on 'docile bodies' and essentially 'produce' the disciplined subject body—to be a reflection of Foucault's entire project regarding the subject (see the chapter of the same name in Foucault, 1977). The relationship established between the subject and power through this reading is essentially a linear one: power mobilizes the subject. Giddens suggests that his, alternative, theory of 'structuration' attempts to eliminate a view where "human social affairs are determined by forces of which those involved are wholly unaware." (Giddens, 1995, 265)

As suggested above, this reading is problematic. Giddens over-extends this concept of the subject by abstracting a general theme from a book on *prisons*—a container for those who are clearly removed from the tactical direction of constitutive power—and applies it to society everywhere. Thus, his reading of Foucault's subject

effectively places individuals within the 'shackles of sexuality', the 'chains of madness', and the 'iron maiden of medicine'. This interpretation accepts Foucault's transcendence of the 'repressive hypothesis' yet fails to see power outside constraint, and thus misses the point. Further, Giddens happily replaces Foucault's notion of the subject with his notion of 'the self becoming a reflexive project', without considering the similarities shared with the space left open by 'technologies of the self' (Giddens, 1991, 52). If Foucault's subject is seen as the locus at which technologies intersect, as well as the source *through which* human agents operate, both on themselves and their environments, then these two conceptions of the self are not antithetical. On the contrary, they are complementary; this is precisely the project Ian Hacking proposes in his "Between Michel Foucault and Erving Goffman" (Hacking, 2004).

Giddens' focus on Foucault's 'discourse' is troubling: the attempt to bracket that concept from the real practices through which discourse is realized is one which mischaracterizes Foucault's project. Foucault did indeed pioneer a series of concepts which situated the enunciator and the enunciated within regimes of truth and power, yet also abstracted the human speaker from the act itself. This is not the annihilation of the human social agent, as Giddens takes it to be, but is rather a necessary step in establishing that the process of linguistic interaction—either through physically immediate or 'inscribed' forms—constitutes speakers as much as speakers constitute language. This line of argument is taken up by Nikolas Rose:

If language is organized into regimes of signification through which it is distributed across spaces, times, zones and strata, and assembled together in practical regimes of things, bodies, and forces, then the 'discursive construction of the self' appears rather differently. [...] This is not to turn one's back on language, or on all the instructive studies that have been conducted under the auspices of a certain notion of 'discourse' or have

deployed the analytics of rhetoric. But it is to suggest that such analyses are most instructive when they focus not on what language *means* but what language *does* (Rose, 1996, 178; emphasis in original)

This view of language as practice is quite similar to that espoused by Wittgenstein in his *Philosophical Investigations* (coincidentally, the work that contained the 'theory of action' on which Giddens built his aforementioned theory of 'structuration'; Giddens, 1979, 49-50). If we are to be true to 'the later Wittgenstein', we cannot divide language from our form of life, nor think of our form of life without language (Wittgenstein, 2001a, section 41). Giddens' attempt to isolate Foucault's discourse from the practices that constitute 'the sayable' seems to be a return to the 'picture theory of meaning' that was presented in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (Wittgenstein, 2001b). As Wittgenstein's later 'language games' would show, language relies on more than type and parchment (for an example, see the 'bricklayer game' in Wittgenstein, 2001a, §3-10). Thus, to extract essential extra-textual practices from discourse—labelled by Deleuze as 'enunciative support'—is improperly to reflect the nature of language, and the conceptual underpinnings of discourse itself (Deleuze, 2007, 249).

The 'detached view of discourse' seen in Giddens shows a common trait shared by many readings of Foucault. As Ian Hacking laments, many have frantically applied Foucault's 'discursive formation' as an all-encompassing entity, which represents action in its entirety, and the whole of Foucault's textual accomplishments.

Foucault carved numerous turns of phrase into ice sculptures which had, for a moment, sharp contours. Then he walked away from them, insouciant, and let them melt, for he no longer needed them. His less gifted readers put the half-melted shapes into the freezer and, without thinking, reproduce these figures as if they glistened in the midnight sun and meant something. (Hacking, 1998, 85)

Hacking, of course, maintains a great theoretical debt to Foucault, but employs his concepts without borrowing terms. Accordingly, Hacking employs the concept 'ecological niche' to refer to the situated nature of a particular concept—initially regarding transient mental illness—and those physical and linguistic practices, attitudes and technologies which allow for the very possibility of that concept's existence. It is not Hacking's words, but rather the spirit of his argument which is crucial to my understanding of Foucault; simply: "...discourse does not do the work." (Hacking, 1998, 86) We must look to the nurturing environment fully to understand the constitutive role played by language and consequential 'discursive production.'

This should be enough of a preliminary look at Foucault for the present purposes. The next task is to look at the Foucault which has been mobilized within the Sociology of Disability. Again, I must state that the intention is not to abstract a 'true Foucault' outside, and a 'false Foucault' inside, that sub-discipline. Rather, I am suggesting that the oppression a priori has established a truth regime within disability studies which employs a reading of Foucault that attaches a great deal of importance to notions of control, domination and exclusion—conceptually, the same notions which are given primacy within traditional social model analysis—at the expense of technologies of the self and the constitutive role played by bio-power.

First I will discuss the adoption of Foucault's work in Oliver's *The Politics of Disablement* (1990). As discussed in Chapter 1, Oliver formulates the contemporary concept of disability within a historical materialist framework, which uncovers the production of the 'core ideology of individualism' (Oliver, 1990, 44). It is within, rather than alongside, this ideological analysis that Foucault's work is invoked.

How disability came to be conceived within the core ideology of individualism as an individual problem, can be understood by reference to the work of Foucault in general and his work on madness in particular. [...] The idea of disability as individual pathology only becomes possible when we have an idea of individual able-bodiedness, which is itself related to the rise of capitalism and the development of wage labour. [...] [Disabled] people could not meet the demands of individual wage labour and so became controlled through exclusion. (Oliver, 1990, 46-7)

Here the disabled are seen as residual to the accumulation of capital, and individuals with impairments who are subsequently institutionalized. Oliver uses Foucault to suggest the link between the ideology derived in capitalist production and the institution, linking his 'punishment of the mind' with the thesis that the "institution was successful because it embodied both repressive and ideological mechanisms of control. In the institution, the state found a successful method of dealing with the problem of order, and in the workhouse, a successful mechanism of imposing discipline on the potential workforce." (Oliver, 1990, 32)

I believe Oliver's adoption of Foucault is problematic for various reasons, though only two will be isolated here. The first relates to the rationality through which individuals became institutionalized during what Foucault calls 'the great confinement' in his *History of Madness* (2006). While Oliver suggests that a single economically-derived ideology was the cause of the delegation of problematic individuals to the institutional setting, this mischaracterizes the view put forward by Foucault. Yes, Foucault does indeed admit that confinement, beginning in the mid 17th century, maintained both an economic and ethical dimension. Despite this, he established a caveat against potential over-extension of the argument.

From here, believing that the meaning of confinement can be reduced to an obscure social mechanism that allowed society to expel heterogeneous or harmful elements is but a step away. To that way of thinking, confinement

was merely the spontaneous elimination of the 'asocial'. [...] [However, it] is not even certain that in this repetition of the ancient gesture of segregation at the threshold of the classic age, the modern world was aiming to wipe out all those who, either as a species apart or a spontaneous mutation, appeared as asocial. The fact that the internees of the eighteenth century bear a resemblance to our modern version of the asocial is undeniable, but it is above all a question of results, as the character of the marginal was produced by the gesture of segregation itself. (Foucault, 2006a, 78-9)

While supposedly convenient for the causality established in *The Politics of Disablement*, Foucault's thesis is, instead, that epistemological changes resulted in the alignment of what is now regarded as madness with a variety of other conditions linked, for a variety of moral, religious and, in cases economic reasons, to unreason. To equate today's conception of mental illness with past likenesses is to ignore those truth regimes against which each of these notions were formed. If Oliver's intention is to use Foucault to suggest that the unreasonable of the 18th century and the contemporary mentally ill person are socially constructed through processes identical in more than just name, then he is misrepresenting him. This convenient reading almost certainly stems from Oliver's relation to his theoretical progeny: the social model.

The second problem with Oliver's characterization is linked to the first. Oliver aligns Foucault's conception of the government of the (social and individual) body via biopolitics with the 'ideological underpinning' for the state apparatus presented by Althusser (see Althusser, 1972; Oliver, 1990, 45). Unfortunately, this is to apply Foucault's method within the very paradigm against which Foucault directed much of his early intellectual effort. This second point may be less a signifier of the oppression a priori's influence in the reading of Foucault than a simply misreading of the intentions presented in his work. However, taken together, the first and second points should at

least show that there are important points of contention between the tenets of the social model and Michel Foucault's intended project. This same trend can be seen in the employment of Foucault vis-à-vis the sociology of the (disabled) body, to which we turn next.

Bill Hughes and Kevin Paterson discuss Foucault within their arguments for a 'somatic turn' in Disability Studies. This encounter is characterized by a particular reading of the 'Foucauldian body'. Though some overlap is inevitable, here I am interested in their negative description of Foucault and the body, and will deal with their characterization of the disabled body vis-à-vis the sociology of the body in the next chapter. A brief introduction is necessary: within "The Social Model of Disability and the Disappearing Body" (1997), Hughes and Paterson suggest that the body has been displaced by the social model, and in an 'internal critique', review the recent somatic developments within social theory as they could benefit Disability Studies. It is here they engage 'post-structuralist' theory and Foucault.

For Foucault, the human subject in modernity is constituted by disciplinary techniques of bio-power which structure, produce and optimise the capabilities of the body, enhancing its economic utility and ensuring its political docility. Clearly, a Foucaultian history or genealogy of impairment/disability would be a valuable vehicle for mapping out the parameters of the social construction of impairment and examining the ways in which 'regimes of truth' about disabled bodies have been central to their governance and control. (Hughes and Paterson, 1997, 332)

Hughes and Paterson see Foucault's notion of the body outside biological essentialism, viewed as an entity that has a history, as laudable. They suggest that other authors within the post-structuralist camp could present further theoretical dividends: Judith Butler is highlighted as a figure who—through her notion of performativity—allows an escape from the problematic disability/impairment dichotomy (Hughes and Paterson, 1997, 333).

However, here the praise ends. Hughes and Paterson see Foucault's approach as overly-discursive, one which—if wholly and nonreflexively adopted—would be disastrous to an embodied disability studies.

Although post-structuralism provides a serious attempt to integrate the social nature of the body and may provide useful insights for a sociology of impairment, the nature of the body it promotes is, on close investigation, something of a phantom. [...] Post-structuralism replaces biological essentialism with discursive essentialism. [...] Foucault's concept of bio-politics robs the body of agency and renders it biologically barren. The body becomes a surface to be written on, to be fabricated by regimes of truth. (Hughes and Paterson, 1997, 333-4)

Clearly, Hughes and Paterson see this tyranny of discourse as a threat to the emancipatory goal of Disability Studies. They liken Foucault's philosophy to that of Baudrillard and Lyotard, establishing a unified post-structuralist/post-modernist pothole which must be avoided at all costs. “The theoretical elimination of the materiality of the body seems of little value to the disability movement.” (Hughes and Paterson, 1997, 334)

This characterization of the 'post-structuralist body' is deficient. The suggestion of 'discursive essentialism' and the robbery of somatic agency (via bio-power) made by Hughes and Paterson comes from their adoption of the arguments of Scott Lash. In his “Genealogy and the Body”, Lash suggests:

in the corpus of Foucault's work, in each case and in each period, bodies are acted upon in discursively constituted institutional settings. This bodily passivity, this pessimistic vision of agency, is perhaps even more pervasive than elsewhere in *The History of Sexuality*. (Lash, 1984, 3)

Lash is, I believe, over-extending the argument presented by Foucault (and discussed above). Foucault's notion of the 'deployment of sexuality' should not be taken to mean that each individual body is being directly subordinated to the will of the sovereign. Rather, Foucault is suggesting that once the social body is 'bio-politicized', a particular

truth regime is established—in this case through 'sciences of sexuality' and other methods of health provision—which creates a backdrop against which bodies operate. In this light, we should not say that the body is 'constructed' by the deployment of sexuality, but rather that somatic practices operate in a post-deployment regime. Discourses are 'essentializing' insofar as they are essential to the formulation of the *dispositif*.

The suggestion that Foucault's body is rendered 'biologically barren' due to bio-power is similarly misleading. If Hughes and Paterson mean to imply that Foucault denies the possibility of a biological analytic of the body which transcends all historical formations and epistemological breaks, then they are correct. To read Foucault otherwise would be untrue to his project. However, to suggest that the body is 'fabricated' by regimes of truth is to take the argument to an extreme. We should be wary of suggesting that truth regimes physically 'construct' the body. As Deleuze suggests, regimes of visibility plays a significant role in Foucault's philosophy. "When we neglect this theory of the visible, we mutilate the conception which Foucault had of history[.]" (Deleuze, 2007, 249) To substantiate this, we can turn to Nikolas Rose's discussion of the transformation of medicine following the advent of 'the clinical':

The technology of the clinic brings together three elements of different provenance: vitalism, dissection and case histories. None of these was particularly new. [...] While pathological anatomy enabled the gaze of medicine to penetrate from the surface of the body to the depths of its tissues, bodies had been dissected before. But when these heterogeneous elements—a mode of inscription, a kind of philosophy of life, a practice of cutting and looking—were assembled together in a particular configuration in the hospital, a clearing opened up in which something new could appear. (Rose, 1994, 61)

While bodies may not have physically changed a great deal over the course of Foucault's period of analysis, what is elucidated has. The question then becomes: "*to what extent do*

we see a perceptive transformation in medicine's engagement with human anatomy?" It is here that Foucault's instruction by Canguilhem should be remembered (for a discussion of Canguilhem's influence on Foucault, see Osborne, 1998). Foucault does not deny the 'reality' of the biological body; rather, he argues that the human body has been interrogated historically with reference to multiple truth regimes, one of which is modern anatomy. We must not mistake fluid interpretation for absence.

In their 'internal critique' of the social model, Hughes and Paterson clearly reproduce much of its rigid nature when reflecting on Foucault. That their reading of Foucault is conditioned by the emancipatory truth regime illustrates how pertinent it is that we maintain Foucault's 'theory of the visible' in our hermeneutic approach. We now turn to the final piece analyzed in this chapter.

Helen Liggett's often cited "Stars are not Born: an Interpretive Approach to the Politics of Disability" (1988) provides an introductory discussion of the dividends which a Foucault-inspired 'interpretive' approach might provide for the Sociology of Disability. Liggett's use of Foucault is limited to two notions: those of 'the carceral network' and 'the normalizing society', which she sees as the primary lens through which Foucault analysed the constitution of subjects in modern society. In her appropriation of Foucault, Liggett suggests we may apply the terms 'subject' and 'identity' interchangeably (Liggett, 1988, 265).

In talking about the 'normalizing society', Foucault means to emphasize that disciplinary practices qualify identities both inside and outside the walls [of the prison]. He uses the phrases "instruments of personal assessment" and "the carceral network" to describe our society. This is his way of talking about the universal participation in discipline. [...] He also shows how inescapable the normalizing society is. The so-called normal identities are just as much products of discipline as are deviant identities. [...] The

normalizing society is a structure of dominance that involves all its members.
(Liggett, 1988, 265)

Liggett goes on to suggest that the application of Foucault's concepts allow us to avoid the direct link between capitalist production and the creation of disability "as vulgar Marxism would have it." (Liggett, 1988, 267) She suggests that the 'interpretive approach' allows researchers to transcend the shallow contemporary political economy of disability by deconstructing the heterogeneous network which produces 'the disabled identity'. In particular, Liggett argues that one must attend to the language through which disability is articulated, as definitions "constitute identities and in so doing, participate in the maintenance of relations of dominance." (Liggett, 1988, 265) Further, "if the practices which constitute disability are part of the carceral network that Foucault talks about, then they operate as relations of domination[.]" (Liggett, 1988, 268)

I believe that Liggett's approach can be heralded as 'vulgar Foucauldianism' for two reasons. First, she falls into the 'detached discourse' trap; similarly occupied by Anthony Giddens. While she rightly identifies the fact that language participates in a productive capacity, contributing to the formulation of the disabled identity, in this case 'productive' only implies the production of exclusion: thus, "the price of being heard is understanding that it is the disabled who are speaking." (Liggett, 1988, 273) In this sense, she correctly takes Foucault's point that the subject should not be seen a priori to the conditions within which speech is (in)formed. The disabled subject is produced following the influence of the truth regime, where iterative activities are performed. However, Liggett takes this to mean that the speaker is only able to operate within an immutable set of relations, where language is taken as a universally irreducible given.

The linguistic identifier 'disability' is indeed citational—in that it is a vehicle for previous regimes of signification—but it need not reify 'disability' in the same identical manner within each iterative milieu. The use of the term in policy agendas is not the same as that within the annals of *Disability & Society*, nor in practical medicine. We must understand that utterances within each of these diverse environments are inscribed within the amalgamation 'disability', and then in part re-inscribed following the iterative articulation of disabled individuals, in both restrictive/destructive and inclusive/productive contexts. Some may be reduced to 'minority group status' while identifying as disabled within a civil-political regime, yet inflated to 'emancipatory researcher' or 'organic intellectual' within the academic (disability studies) environment. It is evident that Liggett ignores the latter at the expense of the former, burying those positions which are not commensurable with the demands of the emancipatory truth regime.

This leads to the second problem, quite closely related to the first: one of agency. As we see above, since the only theoretical tools which Liggett borrows from Foucault are the stuff of 'discipline' and 'normalization,' she excludes the potential for the disabled speaker to reframe or redefine the conditions in which 'the disabled' operate. It is as though disabled subjects are wholly constituted within rather than (even partially) constitutive of that identity. Take Liggett's focus on the 'carceral society.' Like most readings of Foucault (see Giddens' above), most of the theoretical meat comes from Foucault's exegesis on Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, found in *Discipline and Punish* (1977). Briefly summarized, the Panopticon is an architectural model of an ideal prison, in which a rigid hierarchy is established between the surveyors and the surveyed.

Prisoners are placed in cells which allow them to be surveyed, but not to see their surveyors. Thus, at any time, prisoners may be being watched, and in turn assume that this is the case at all times. External monitoring becomes internal monitoring, and the principal director of discipline is the ward, not warden. Here the only real role of the carceral subject is to be disciplined into submission.

Recalling the discussion of sexuality above, we see that Foucault's notion of subjectivity should not be seen only in the repressive sense. As Liggett correctly identifies, Foucault's later work becomes focused on subjects speaking truth about themselves (Liggett, 1988, 273). Through 'technologies of the self', we can see that Foucault's interests in self-to-self subjectivity transcends discipline. From a workshop with Foucault, Rabinow and Dreyfus:

There is a technology of the constitution of the self which cuts across symbolic systems while using them. [...] Just as it is necessary to study and compare the different techniques of the production of objects and the direction of men by men through government, one must also question techniques of the self. (Foucault, 1997, 277)

While technologies of the self must certainly include adherence to external influences, as seen in the Panopticon, they are manifested in other ways which are further removed from violent and repressive *dispositifs*.

The inclusion of 'technologies of the self' begins to bridge this agency gap. Extrapolating from the work of Foucault, Ian Burkitt suggests an inflation in the meaning of 'technology', to represent "a matrix of practical reason, [which] forms both the practical aspects of the self that can operate non-reflexively, and the reflexive aspects of the self that can discourse upon and attempt to change the self and its practices." (Burkitt,

2002, 224) Evidence for the applicability of technologies of the self can be found within Liggett's argument itself.

The politics of disability need to take into account the findings of the interpretive perspective. One way to do this is to investigate further how the perpetuation of disabled identities helps ensure that the disabled participate in the normalizing society as victims without crimes. [...] Political action should be a reflective undertaking in which both the costs and benefits of accepting disabled identities and the available strategies in a given political system are weighted in each situation. [...] Individual counter-politics to accepting denigrated identities means paying attention to the kinds of practices we allow to go on. (Liggett, 1988, 273-4)

Above we can see that Liggett departs from the 'personal is political' maxim to establish a normative trajectory for disabled emancipation. In Liggett, the individual experience of disability is to be reflexively gauged against the emancipatory truth regime. Succinctly: here we have the origins of a morality dimension to disabled subjectivity. Individual relations to this moral code and truth regime form a link with agency, via ethics. This should not be mistaken for structural determinism.

There is a significant gap between the 'potential Foucault' that has been realized outside Disability Studies and the reading that has occurred within that discipline. The arguments in this chapter should be taken in context. While I feel the works considered above do not present Foucault in a manner which adequately reflects the 'productive' elements within his body of work, there are several authors within Disability Studies who do not read Foucault against the oppression-centred emancipatory rubric (for a telling example, see Tremain, 2005). However, even within many productive-Foucault readings, there is a tendency to place his work within, or alongside, the 'postmodern' camp. This is, of course, not restricted to Disability Studies. Many have been known to conflate the two. Yet, perhaps this does show how Foucault has been viewed in the discipline—in the

works viewed above at least—as theory to be accepted *following* the adoption of the social model, in part or in full. This arrangement comes at a price: those readings of Foucault which do not align with the emancipatory imperative are forgotten, in light of those which emphasize oppression and marginalization. As will be seen in the next chapter, this same ‘social model before social theory’ trend has occurred *vis-à-vis* recent developments in the sociology of the body.

3: Who's-there? Heidegger and Embodied Being post-Social Model

Within the past thirty years, the body has become a central theme in social theory. Though it has never been *completely* absent from the social sciences (see, for instance Mauss, 1973), a marked 'somatic turn' has been taken toward an 'embodied' sociology (Turner, 1997b, 103). Howson and Inglis isolate three components of this turn: first, an attempt to 'bring the body in' to sociology's purview; second, an attempt to 'rediscover the body' in classic social theory; and third, an attempt at establishing the body as a 'conceptual centre-piece' in sociology, with the intention of avoiding the subject/object, nature/society dualisms endemic to the sociological project from its outset (Howson and Inglis, 2001, 300).

Disability Studies has been slow to follow mainstream sociology's lead. The influence of the social model's disability/impairment dichotomy had been so deeply entrenched that interrogation of the body was almost wholly eclipsed by the preoccupation with social barriers exogenous to impaired individuals (for an early attempt at a sociology of impairment, very much within the social model's tenets, see Abberley, 1987). This neglect is not without its rationale—many were worried that a focus on impairment would define disability as it had been within the 'medical model' (Oliver, 1986, 11). However, the social model's influence has waned over time, and there has been a definitive attempt at reconciling an embodied sociology with the social theory of disability (see Turner, 2001; Hughes, 2002). Here my goals are relatively limited; I do not intend to chart an embodied disability studies. Rather, in this chapter I will review the *introduction* of embodiment within disability studies, and will show how—despite dulling over time—the social model's residual influence has delivered a porous version of

embodiment to Disability Studies' doorstep. Specifically, this means that the search for oppressed bodies, dictated by the tenets of the social model, has been exacted at the cost of a nuanced discussion of disability qua embodiment.

My intentions are fourfold. First, this chapter will briefly discuss social theory's somatic turn. Secondly, I will discuss the chasm which developed between the sociology of the body and disability studies, with particular emphasis on the social model of disability. Next I will discuss the influence which the oppression a priori thesis (identified in Chapter 1) has played in the reading of embodiment which was formed after Disability Studies' somatic turn. Finally, I will conclude by sketching out potential areas of somatic disability research—with a focus on Martin Heidegger and successive Heideggerians—as yet undiscovered by mainstream sociological disability scholarship.

A brief introduction to the sociology of the body is in order. As Turner states, modern society is 'somatic society' (Turner, 1992, 1). That is, contemporary regimes of governance—'governance' in the extended sense discussed in the previous chapter—have embraced the body as a central site of regulation. The body is now an entity to be moulded and controlled, figured and inscripted, according the 'contours of high modernity' (Giddens, 1991, 7-8). As alluded to earlier, this 'somatic turn' has involved a decided reconsideration of the basis of the sociological project: the fundamental subject/object, nature/society dichotomies—which have allegedly underpinned the majority of the western social sciences—have all been questioned throughout the course of this manoeuvre (Howson and Inglis, 2001, 302).

Maurice Merleau-Ponty has become a peculiar idol in this sociological transformation. Though seldom thoroughly engaged in Disability Studies, his

Phenomenology of Perception (1945) has been hailed as the pioneering text of the turn (for an 'exceptional' engagement—in both the 'superior' and 'peripheral' uses of that word—see Crossley, 1995). I summarize its argument as follows: departing from Koffka and the Gestalt school, Merleau-Ponty takes inter-war empiricist and neo-Kantian psychology to task for their mechanistic explanations of perception. Merleau-Ponty concludes that perception is an irreducible given, and that individuals always encounter the phenomenal world through the body, as it is the basic unit of sensation.

When we come back to phenomena we find, as a basic layer of experience, a whole already pregnant with an irreducible meaning: not sensations with gaps between them, in which memories may be supposed to slip, but the features, a layout and a landscape or a word, in spontaneous accord with the intentions of the moment, as with earlier experience. (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 25)

The body, then, is not simply an *intermediary* between the mind and the world, but rather, it is a *mediator*; an inescapable entity which guides, informs, encompasses (thus in some part *prepares*) all experience. That is, the body's horizon is symmetrical with that of all phenomena. “Our own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism: it keeps the visible spectacle alive; it breathes life into it and sustains it inwardly, and with it forms a system.” (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 115) Succinctly: *there is no experience more primary, more immediately knowable, than embodied experience.*

Merleau-Ponty's adoption has been 'peculiar' for two reasons. First, the *Phenomenology of Perception* has become the *vade mecum* of the somatic turn. This status has consequences. While phenomenological psychology and philosophy have both made significant scholastic advances in the past half-century, Merleau-Ponty's work is adopted with its own essential irreducibility. Engagement with more recent work—with the possible exception of Simone de Beauvoir—in phenomenology is often forgone, and

Merleau-Ponty's position is usually accepted axiomatically (Van Wolputte, 2004, 251). The debates to which he himself attempted to contribute are often accepted as closed, effectively 'bracketed' from the sociological examination of embodiment, which I will discuss next.

Merleau-Ponty's dominance clearly does not characterize the *entirety* of sociological theory's somatic investigations, but as far as the adopted existential and phenomenological discussions are concerned, the citational prominence is undeniable. Evidence of this can be seen in the work of the sociological forefather of embodiment, Bryan Turner, where the synthesis of governmentality and phenomenology relies heavily on the dual *oeuvres* of Foucault and Merleau-Ponty (see Turner, 1982; Turner, 1997a; Turner, 2001). Though Anthony Giddens employs a plurality of phenomenological views in his somatic discussions, apart from the particular reading of Foucault discussed in the previous chapter, a majority of the cited existentialist and phenomenologist texts—those of Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Husserl—were written before 1960 (this also applies to his inclusion of a non-phenomenologist: Wittgenstein. Giddens, 1991, 50-1; see also Giddens, 1979). Howson and Inglis paint a similar picture of the work of Pierre Bourdieu (Howson and Inglis, 2001, 308). All this is not to say that there is anything *wrong* with the prominence of Merleau-Ponty regarding the sociology of the body, but rather to suggest that his work may overshadow other investigations. We must not get ahead of ourselves, however; I turn next to the second peculiarity.

'Embodied' sociology places a significant emphasis on its ability to transcend the dualisms which have supposedly plagued the sociological project since its outset (Crossley, 2001). Likewise, as a phenomenologist, the subject/object dichotomy is of

little importance to Merleau-Ponty; Husserl's principle of 'intentionality' presupposes that *consciousness is always consciousness of something*. It is of little importance to the project whether or not a mental object exists 'in reality' outside subjective experience: existential consciousness is always *directed* (Askay, 1999, 31). As such, states of emotion are just as experienced, just as *real*, as the perception of material objects. They are all present as phenomena.

Here we must take a brief foray into metaphysics. Intentionality represents a decisive break from the Western philosophical traditions of both rationalism (Descartes) and transcendental idealism (Kant). The former starts from the principle of radical doubt, where the fundamental point of departure is the certainty that he, as a thinking agent, exists; famously stated: *cogito, ergo sum*. All further speculation relies on this first principle. For Kant, his idealism is 'transcendental' in that the only entity to which we have direct and unmediated access is the thinking subject. Here is the *only* location where we can transcend the world of phenomena. When looked upon from the phenomenological vista, both authors rely greatly on a subject/object dualism, from which the principle of intentionality allows an escape. In this sense, the dualism is transcended.

Here is where things get tricky. What, exactly, do we mean when we say we have 'transcended' something? If we take the term to mean 'surpass', then it clearly applies to both Descartes and Kant. Kant 'surpassed' the world of experience to the realm of pure reason. Descartes 'surpassed' categorical doubt by providing a rational case for the certitude of his own being. Caesar 'surpassed' the Rubicon. Problems are 'surpassed' by

solutions. Nothing wrong here. But, returning to intentionality, to what extent is the subject/object dualism 'surpassed', let alone 'transcended'?

Allow me to be Merleau-Pontyan. Some conceptual objects of thought are in order. Looking upon a bowl of fruit, we see both an apple and an orange. We are conscious of both of them. They are both objects of thought. We might even go so far as to associate a similar emotional response to them. Both the perceptive object (the fruit) and the emotional response are experienced similarly as objects of consciousness. But have we 'transcended' the subject/object dichotomy in this process, as the Kantians and Cartesians had? We have not 'surpassed' fruit, and the differences that are meaningless at first sight may be of more importance when we return to them with different intentions. 'Transcending' apples and oranges might even suggest that we are able to conflate the two!

What does all this mean for embodied sociology? A great deal. It is perfectly fine to suggest that we have avoided a troublesome confrontation between the subjective experience of the body (referred to in the literature as the German *Leib*) and the objective experience of the body as a corporeal thing (German: *Körper*). But avoiding a confrontation is not the same thing as transcending it. Further, 'avoiding' implies that the two conceptualizations are not directly opposed. This is unlike the 'confrontation' metaphor. *The subject/object state of affairs may not even constitute a dichotomy at all.* Even if it *were* possible, why on earth would anyone *want* to 'transcend' this dichotomy at the outset? This is akin to saying that one can 'transcend' the gap between a first-person and third-person point of view. Both perspectives are of importance and utility to a sociology of the body. I will return to similar questions in the next chapter.

The second important 'dualism'—I am similarly sceptical here—is the nature/society or biological/social dichotomy. Whereas traditional social theory took itself to be 'outside' or 'on top' of biological/natural concerns, medical sociology and the sociology of the body have begun to interrogate the body as more than simply a biological given. Just as the boundaries of perception are extended to all experience in Merleau-Ponty, so too are the boundaries of the body extended to the social realm. No longer a closed, corporeal thing, the body is a malleable product of the human 'ecological niche'; part and parcel of reflexive action (Giddens, 1991, 98). The 'natural state' of the human body is found not in the dusty pages of medical textbooks nor sitting in the stirrups in the examining room. The body is the primary extension into the social world. Not being a sociologist, Merleau-Ponty does not deal as extensively with this second dichotomy, though the extent to which social structure factors into Merleau-Ponty's work has been a source of debate within social theory (Crossley, 2001, 319-20; Howson and Inglis, 2001, 309). I do not intend to transcend this debate. I will simply suggest that Merleau-Ponty's Heideggerian influences see the human being as a 'being-there'—the literal translation of the German *Dasein*—with 'there' referring to the everyday world of human experience. *Succinctly: human being qua being is necessarily social.*

This brief exegesis on Merleau-Ponty has encountered most of the basic elements of an embodied sociology, which I will briefly review:

1. Embodied sociology is viewed as a 'way out' of the subject/object, nature/society dualisms.
2. Resulting from point 1, a distinction is made between the *Leib* (lived) and *Körper* (corporeal thing) conceptions of the body.

3. The way in which bodies have been engaged over time has changed; bodies are subjected to differing regimes of governance. The human being can quite literally be described as *zoon politikon*.

With this brief summary, my next goal is to discuss how changes in sociology's interpretation of the body have informed recent discussions in the field of disability studies.

As seen in Chapter 1, the social model's initial intention was to divide the biological properties of impairment from the socially constructed barriers which impaired individuals face. As Hughes and Paterson suggest, by “focusing on the ways in which disability is socially produced, the social model has succeeded in shifting debates about disability from biomedically dominated agendas to discourses about politics and citizenship.” (Hughes and Paterson, 1997, 325) This seems quite reasonable, considering the politics which characterized the environment within which Michael Oliver and others were writing. By arguing that the impaired body and disabled body were essentially distinct—one produced biologically, the other by (capitalist) society—a radical political economy of disability exclusive to the work of medical professionals could begin (Oliver, 1998, 1447-8; Oliver, 2004, 12). Thus, the social model's early formulation contained an implicit ontological divide between the reality of impairment and that of disability (Hughes, 2007, 674). Here it is easy to see why the social model and the sociology of the body had differing corporeal conceptions: political praxis dictated that in order to root out arbitrary oppression, disability studies must distance itself from medicine as much as possible. Ideology and biology were distinct by necessity (Hughes, 2009, 400).

Some began to question the utility of the divide (Shakespeare and Watson, 1997, 298). Clearly there was *some* link between the experience of disability and the biological considerations of impairment. Even a devout social modelist must implicitly accept that differing impairments beget differing forms of oppression. In an attempt to 'recapture' the ground lost to biomedicine—often seen as a homogeneous thing—Hughes and Paterson began to employ the phenomenological lens to analyze the embodied experience of impairment in their “Disability Studies and Phenomenology: The Carnal Politics of Everyday Life” (Hughes and Paterson, 1999). However, even though the rigid corporeality of the social model was dulled in this analysis, the emancipatory designs of the authors skewed the adaptation of recent developments in the sociology of the body. They take visual impairment as their example:

It is not the exclusion from social space (which has been the central concern of the social model of disability), which is at issue here, but ostracism from opportunities to participate in the everyday, mundane, sensate minutiae of the lifeworld. [...] Oppression and prejudice become embodied and become part of the experience of everyday life. Oppression is not simply an abstract structure manifest, for example, in exclusion from the labour market—it is felt in the flesh and the bones. (Hughes and Paterson, 1999, 605-6)

This point is well taken in the right circumstances. Imagine a disabled parking spot: though a logistic barrier has been *physically* eliminated, the surrounding social climate may not be very fair to the user. “Is that person disabled *enough* to use that spot?” “How dare you use that parking spot for commerce!” In this case—and surely countless others—it is not disabled *entry* but rather disabled *existence* that is the primary concern. That is, disablement is not simply overcome when barriers to access are. Further challenges surely await the impaired *even after* they are incorporated into routine social life. This is all well and good, but the analysis takes a risky somatic manoeuvre when the

authors try to abstract a general theory of disabled embodiment, which I will now address.

In discussing Bryan S. Turner's contribution to the *Handbook of Disability Studies* (Turner, 2001), Hughes argues that Turner makes an error by attempting to create a humanist theory of embodiment based on universal frailty.

The transformation of the argument that disabled people are 'defective' into the argument that we are all 'defective' is a triumph of philosophical egalitarianism that leaves the concept of disability with no teeth and suggests that the concept of impairment is, although not completely devoid of sociological import, most important as a biological dictum that should teach us all to be humbled by our own vulnerability. (Hughes, 2007, 679)

There are two problems with Hughes' argument aside from the ridiculous suggestion that Turner is uninterested in the sociology of impairment. Primarily, the notion of embodiment is to be taken as a universal given. *All human being is embodied being*. The extent to which bodies are governed—and the ways in which they are 'known'—surely has changed over time (as the last chapter suggested). But fundamentally, despite multiple formulations, we have always been embodied. Hughes' position recalls that of the swine in *Animal Farm*: “*all humans are embodied. But some humans are more embodied than others.*” This is a problematic conflation of classifiers and the classified; disability as a *category* and disability *as a lived experience* are not the same thing (though Hacking's lesson—that the two are directly related in praxis *via* 'looping'—is well taken). Indeed, the very fact that we are *all* embodied is one of the most fundamental ways in which individuals without the disabled signifier can connect with their identified counterparts. This is not simply an extension of the 'personal tragedy model', of super-structural ideology, but rather a profound emotional state—something of great interest to

phenomenology!—that escapes analysis so long as the legacy of the social model radicalizes disabled embodiment.

Secondly, and related to the above deficiency, Hughes fails to take into consideration that disabled embodiment not only spans the *longue durée*—if one follows the argument about 'work' being a state of affairs that has created somatic barriers to the impaired—but also differs on a day-to-day basis for many of the categorized. Indeed, the categories themselves also have a deep impact on the embodied experience of disability. Monica Greco's work on 'somatizing disorders' is concrete evidence of this. There Greco analyzes the impact which differing forms of categorization and subsequent intervention can have on the experience of mental illness throughout the course of the engagement with a medical professional. Here the only factual symptom empirically provable by the doctor is that the patient *believes* there is something wrong with them (Greco, 1998, 235). Are such individuals more embodied on days when they are under examination, but less so when pumping gas, or parking illegally in a disabled spot? Hughes' radical phenomenology presents an ideal-type disability sufferer incommensurable with Greco's work; one which is more trouble than it is worth.

As can be seen above, the Social Model's search for social oppression has skewed discussions of embodiment towards a focus on the body singly as a site of oppression. If Hughes and Paterson are to be taken at their word, then the embodied experience of disability is wholly a negative one. I suggest that the work of Martin Heidegger provides several conceptual tools which can overcome the deficiencies of Hughes' (and others') attempts at an embodied disability studies. My goals are twofold. First, I will provide a brief description of Heidegger's project. Second, I will introduce two aspects of his

philosophy that are of crucial importance to disability—the body and technology—through examination of the *Zollikon Seminars* and his essay “The Question Concerning Technology”.

First an introduction to Heidegger's work. Heidegger's intellectual project, alike Foucault's, can be divided into multiple stages. It is the later stages which will be of specific interest to disability studies, yet they cannot be fully grasped without an introduction to the earlier. In the first stage, characterized best by the ambitious and incomplete project presented in *Being and Time*, Heidegger's goal is to displace the 'substance ontology' endemic to western philosophy since Plato and Aristotle (Frede, 1993, 46). Since this time, 'being' has ceased to become a subject of serious inquiry:

It is said that “being” is the most important universal and the emptiest concept. As such it resists every attempt at definition. Nor does this most universal and thus indefinable concept need any definition. Everybody uses it constantly and also already understands what is meant by it. (Heidegger, 1996, §1)

However, for Heidegger, despite its banality and everydayness, the complexity of 'being' is far from understood.

Everyone understands, “The sky *is* blue,” “I *am* happy,” and similar statements. But this average comprehensibility only demonstrates the incomprehensibility. It shows that an enigma lies *a priori* in every relation and being towards beings as beings. The fact that we live already in an understanding of being and that the meaning of being is at the same time shrouded in darkness proves the fundamental necessity of repeating the question of the meaning of being. (Heidegger, 1996, §1)

It is precisely the existence of *beings as being in the everyday world*, as Dasein, from which Heidegger begins his hermeneutic phenomenology. As Aho suggests: “it is only *on the basis of* our being-in-the-world that phenomena can come into being in the first place.” (Aho, 2008, 251; italics in original) That is, rather than bracket common

assumptions and dispositions about the world in the search 'for the things themselves' (as Husserl's project supposed), Heidegger's analysis of the experience of beings occurs as they exist in the course of life experience, of 'being-there'. Here it is easy to see the influence which Heidegger had on Merleau-Ponty, which we will see more decidedly in his work on the body.

As indicated above, Heidegger's attempt to revolutionize the basic tenets of Western ontology is not of *direct* importance to disability studies (any more than it is to anything else that *is*). However, the analysis of the existence of beings as beings-in-the-world is a central point of departure in the two texts which I will analyze next. Both came to be following the *Kehre* (translated as 'the turning') which demarcates *Being and Time* from Heidegger's later writings (Olafson, 1993, 97). Where in the first period, Heidegger intended to elicit a fundamental ontology of all beings, everywhere, his later writings show a tendency to discuss our contemporary understanding of being; they are in this sense *anthropological*.

First I will deal with *The Question Concerning Technology*, as its contents will be useful in the examination of the second text. Heidegger attempts to discuss the role which technology has come to play in the modern age. However, in attempting to find its 'essence', he warns us not to look singly at technology *qua* technology.

Technology is not equivalent to the essence of technology. [... We] shall never experience our relationship to the essence of technology so long as we merely represent and pursue the technological, put up with it, or evade it. (Heidegger, 1993, 311)

Just as in his early writing period—where Heidegger investigates the capacity of beings as they exist as being-there-in-the-world—technology is to be examined as it exists within our contemporary way of being. Heidegger links the object of technology with the

notion of 'bringing-forth'. Not forth as in mobility, but as something bringing itself into fruition, like “*the bursting of a blossom into bloom, in itself.*” (Heidegger, 1993, 317) With technology, we speak about bringing-forth as both the operation and existence of the technological apparatus, but also in the intention and designs of the—for lack of a better word—*technologist*. The way beings are brought forth in part determines their worldly appearance—effectively, their ‘presence’; through “bringing-forth the growing of things of nature as well as whatever is completed through the crafts and the arts come at any given time to their appearance.” (Heidegger, 1993, 317) Thus, we must think of technology both as a craft and what is crafted.

Through etymological investigation of the word technology, Heidegger comes—as he often does—to the ancient Greek. He warns us not to think of technology in the restricted sense which we use today, but in a relatively more ubiquitous fashion. Pointing back to the ancient Greek *techne*:

We must observe two things with respect to the meaning of this word. One is that *techne* is the name not only for the activities and skills of the craftsman, but also for the arts of the mind and the fine arts. *Techne* belongs to bringing-forth, to *poiesis*; it is something poetic. [...] The other thing we should observe with regard to *techne* is even more important. From earliest times until Plato the word *techne* is linked with the word *episteme*. Both words are terms for knowing in the widest sense. (Heidegger, 1993, 318)

Here we come to see the benefit of what seems to be a rather obscure way of looking at technology. After suspending the tendency to view 'technology' as a single technological noun—a computer, a manual, a wheelchair—and rather viewing it as part of the process through which things themselves are *known*, Heidegger's argument becomes much clearer. “Technology comes to presence in the realm where revealing and unconcealment take place, where *aletheia*, truth, happens.” (Heidegger, 1993, 319; emphasis in original)

The essence of technology comes to the fore, for Heidegger, when revealing, bringing-forth, and knowing come together. Modern technology is isolated as that which reveals the objects of nature as links in a chain which it can order about with the goal of the extraction of energy; it establishes the 'standing reserve'. Heidegger employs the Rhine river as an example. While previously the Rhine was revealed as an object of beauty, it now is revealed as a source of hydroelectricity; indeed, even its beauty is revealed as a source of income for the vacation industry. It is here, in the 'enframing' (German: *Ge-stell*) of the objects of nature, including humanity itself, that Heidegger's position is of critical importance to the study of disability:

when man, investigating, observing, pursues nature as an arena of his own conceiving, he has already been claimed by a way of revealing that challenges him to approach nature as an object of research, until even the object disappears into the objectlessness of standing reserve. (Heidegger, 1993, 324)

For Heidegger, types of revealing, of bringing-forth, are often rival. One can come at the expense of the other. Just as the revealing—one could go so far as to say the 'knowing'—of the Rhine river dictates the type of infrastructure which will be built (condominiums, power-lines, etcetera) the enframing through which disability is questioned in part dictate the actions through which it will be engaged. Let's return to the social model.

If we recall the positions which Oliver put forth in *The Politics of Disablement*, (discussed in the first chapter) the social model places particular emphasis on the 'ideology of individualism' which has informed a great deal of both disability policy, and everyday understandings of disability.

Under capitalism [...] disability became individual pathology; disabled people could not meet the demands of individual wage labour and so became controlled through exclusion. [...] This process of exclusion was facilitated by focusing on the body of individuals and populations, and with the rise of

capitalism, the main group who came to focus their gaze on the body, was the medical profession. (Oliver, 1990, 47)

Oliver's theory of medicalisation established a simple causality between the demands of wage labour and the control of disability. However, if we turn to the work of Heidegger, the story becomes significantly more complex. The ways in which disability is revealed do indeed involve the greater political economy, but notions of sympathy, fear and dread cannot be explained in such a cut-and-dry manner. Furthermore, whereas Oliver assumes 'medicalization' to represent one single process or manner of examining disability, the Heideggerian position provides a nuanced manner to examine the multiplicity of ways through which medical professionals treat disability.

To this end, Kevin Aho uses the example of the difference between pharmaceutical and dialogue-based psychiatric approaches to some forms of mental illness as a case for Heidegger's insights. While the former is based on eliminating pathological symptoms, the latter approach involves a comprehensive attempt to bring the underlying causes of the patient's suffering—themselves situated *in-the-world* like all other phenomena—to become revealed (Aho, 2008, 253). Rather than simply dismissing both as 'medicalized' or 'ideological' (as the social modelist might), more comprehensive Heideggerian analysis provides relatively more productive alternatives. I will continue to discuss Heidegger's views on technology, by contrasting them with those of Bruno Latour, in the next chapter. For the time being, however, this discussion of Heidegger and psychiatry provides a good segue to the *Zollikon Seminars*.

First a brief introduction. The recently translated *Zollikon Seminars* represent ten years of discussions (1959-1969) which occurred between Martin Heidegger and a set of medical practitioners and students in Zollikon, Switzerland. The principal organizer was

Medard Boss, a Swiss psychoanalyst, whose hermeneutic *Daseinanalysis* relied heavily on Heidegger's *Being and Time* (see Boss, 1963). The seminars deal with an extensive range of topics; of interest to us here is exegesis on the body.

It is no secret that Heidegger had a distaste for the reception of his work in France, in particular by the existential phenomenologists (Askay, 1999, 29). The Zollikon seminars are, in part, a response to Sartre's criticism that there were no more than 'six lines on the body' in the entirety of *Being and Time* (Aho, 2005, 10). Frederick Svenaeus suggests that Heidegger's focus on the body likely was inspired by his reading of Merleau-Ponty; though Heidegger does not cite him once (Svenaeus, 2000, 135-6). However, despite the potential animosity between Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, there are some marked similarities between their somatic conceptions—in addition to some significant differences.

Recalling the concept of *Dasein* introduced in *Being and Time*, Heidegger proposes that bodily being can be described as 'bodying-forth' into the phenomenal world; in this sense similar to Merleau-Ponty (Aho, 2005, 12). Primarily, both employ the *Leib/Körper* distinction common to embodied sociology.

One could understand the living body as a corporeal thing. I am seated here at the table, and fill this space as enclosed by my epidermis. But then we are not speaking about my being-here, but only about the presence of the corporeal thing in this place. Perhaps one comes closer to the phenomenon of the body by distinguishing between the different limits of a corporeal thing [*Körper*] and those of the body [*Leib*]. [...] The *bodying forth* [*Leiben*] of the body is determined by the way of my being. The bodying forth of the body, therefore, is a way of Da-sein's being. (Heidegger, 2001, 85-6)

Here we can see the similarities between the two authors: Merleau-Ponty's body as the basic unit of situated sensation and Heidegger's notion of 'bodying-forth' each see the

phenomenal body as in-the-world, and both see the body as a lived-entity to be distinct from the corporeal thing, enveloped by the epidermis.

Leaving the discussion here might suggest that the two authors' arguments are fully commensurable. This is not the case. Recalling Heidegger's notion of 'revealing', as discussed in "The Question Concerning Technology", will help to isolate the peculiarities of the two positions. For Merleau-Ponty, using the methods of Gestalt psychology (but extending his conclusions beyond those of that school) the body is said to be the primary lens through which the world is encountered; the *Leib* is ontologically primary to unconcealment—*aletheia*—as it is the body that breathes life into the world "as the heart is in the organism." (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 115) Here, Merleau-Ponty is decidedly opposed to the *scientific* presumptions of the inter-war psychological *milieu* because of the failure to acknowledge the fundamental truth of bodily-being-in-the-world. Here an important difference arises between the two authors.

Though Heidegger has been criticized for his presentation of both psychology and psychiatric practice within the *Seminars* (see Meynen and Verburgt, 2009; Guignon, 1993), I believe that his position is less critical of the natural-scientific examination of the body as a corporeal thing than Merleau-Ponty's. Recall above when discussing the essence of technology, I suggested that *in some cases* revealing—as a process of truth production—is rival to other forms. The example of the Rhine was given. However, when it comes to the body, particular processes are revealed differently when an alternative method of interrogation is employed. Heidegger provides the example of sadness. He suggests that the lived experience of sadness is one which resists quantification:

you can never actually measure tears. If you try and measure them, you measure a fluid and its drops at most, but not tears, tears can only be seen

directly. Are they something somatic, or psychical? They are neither the one nor the other. [...] One can also say “he is ‘a bit sad,’” but that does not mean a small quantity of sadness. The “a bit” refers to a quality of mood. This very depth, is in no means measurable. (Heidegger, 2001, 81-2)

While the lived experience of sadness, or other-sadness, is one which is 'ascientific'—in that the methods of natural science cannot truly capture its essence—it is certainly not 'anti-scientific'. That is to say, if one were looking to describe sadness from both the phenomenological and naturalistic perspectives, both sets of information are important to mental health. How can one put primacy on the question “*how deep is your depression?*” as compared to “*what is the duration of your depressive episodes?*” They are two equally important questions, with unique measurements. As Heidegger indicates,

All measuring is not necessarily quantitative. When I take notice of something, then I myself have “measured up to” [*anmessen*] what a thing is. This measuring-up [*Sich-anmessen*] to what is, is the fundamental structure of human comportment to things. (Heidegger, 2001, 102)

From the above, we can see that Heidegger is a realist; he simultaneously can accept the 'truth-making' statements of natural science, while maintaining his anti-Platonism (for a comprehensive discussion, see Dostal, 1985). In this way, things—as states of affairs—can exist simultaneously as adjacent truths, as *aletheia*, while remaining *scientifically* incommensurable. Such a position is of clear utility to the academic study of disability, allowing relatively peaceful cohabitation of natural and social-scientific approaches.

There is a second important difference between Merleau-Ponty's conception of the body and Heidegger's. While the world to Merleau-Ponty's perceptive body is something constantly present before unfolding phenomena, Heidegger's 'bodying-forth' is much more nuanced and fluid. That is, while the lived body for Merleau-Ponty is the *sine qua non* of worldly existence, for Heidegger, the body appears and disappears at different

moments in lived experience. His notion of 'breakdown' is a testament to this: in *Dasein* we are in a flow of everydayness, of routine, where we are not consciously aware of the operation of our bodies (Aho and Aho, 2008, 106). However, in moments of interruption, such as the loss of motor function, actions which were once 'effortless' become 'effortful', even unattainable; bodily *function* becomes unconcealed during *dysfunction* (Toombs, 1995, 15). This is an important element to consider when it comes to naturalistic views of the body, which see breakdown in terms of mechanistic malfunction. When speaking of a disability with non-static symptomatology, this concept is invaluable. Here, the epistemological element of Heidegger's thought becomes more than simply a way of allowing phenomenological and naturalistic explanations of the body to be equally 'truthful', his work allows a window into a hermeneutics of disabled existence.

Above we find two fundamental challenges to the adoption of phenomenological views currently found in disability studies present in Heidegger. First, due to the emancipatory demands of the project, there is an untenable equation of disability *as lived experience* and disability as a *category in identity politics*, which takes place in Hughes' work (see, for instance, his clumsy use of de Beauvoir in Hughes, 2007, 4-5). However, from Heidegger, with the understanding that disability can be revealed differently at multiple sites of investigation, we can employ a phenomenological approach equally favourable to naturalistic and hermeneutic investigation. We do not need to transcend the nature/social dichotomy, because the two, as objects of measurement are not directly opposed.

Secondly, and I believe most importantly, Heidegger forces reconsideration of the "existence before essence!" trope, which is equated with the 'social construction' of

disability argument, first found in Oliver. By bringing existence to the everyday experience of breakdown and Being, Heidegger provides the tools to examine the lived experience of disability, without abstracting that experience to the point where all disabilities are 'socially constructed' in an equal and identical manner. This is a crucial blow to the emancipatory project, which, for all intents and purposes, sees 'the social construction of disability' as something unifying, arbitrary and pathological—rather than as the fundamental site of *transformation*, if the lives of those with disabilities are to be improved.

I believe that the above arguments will produce too main objections. The first deals with the life of Martin Heidegger. Though one of the greatest minds of the twentieth century, Heidegger surely ranks among one of its most deplorable inhabitants. However, despite his affronts, Heidegger invigorated the phenomenological tradition, and inspired some of the most prominent authors routinely employed in the sociology of disability: Foucault, Merleau-Ponty, Bourdieu, to cite examples. To deny his influence in this tradition would simply be ignorant. Disability Studies prides itself on the close link between its activists and academics; Heidegger's career should serve as a warning to the glorification of that link. Further, even if Heidegger's troubled politics *did* seep into his philosophy—do we, as critical thinkers, not have the power to divide immoral from moral philosophy? If being critical means treating all arguments with intense scrutiny and unflinching rigour, then perhaps we should read all texts as if they were written by Nazis.

Secondly, the above reading of Heidegger's view on technology is admittedly roseate. Indeed, this distaste for industrialization was perhaps one of the main motivators

for his politics. I will admit that my reading is decidedly technology-friendly. Though perhaps unpopular with Heidegger, this sentiment is shared by another theorist he influenced—Bruno Latour—to whom we will turn next.

4: Bruno Latour and a Re-Tarded Disability Studies

As Martin Heidegger is to Luddite, Bruno Latour is to technophile. Whereas Heidegger's cantankerous approach to technology culminates in a furious dismissal of the modern world, Latour's sociology wholly embraces it, at the same time questioning the basic premises of the sociological project. Rather than present a complete overview of Latour's work, here I will focus on two aspects: first, his reevaluation of the technology-society relationship; secondly, his discussions of so-called 'critical-sociology'—which I see as a direct challenge to the Social Model's emancipatory imperative. Again, we will see the oppression-centered outlook of the social model is a bulwark to recent advances in social theory. My first task, however, shall be to provide a basic overview of Latour's project, which will set the stage for further investigation below.

Let's get our hands dirty. Rather than abstract a skeletal approximation of Bruno Latour's entire career, I will (briefly) return to a familiar subject: the body. We will find the outline we are looking for in “How to Talk About the Body? The Normative Dimension of Science Studies” (2004) where Latour provides a rather 'olfactocentric' investigation, focusing on professional 'Noses': those who are trained in the taxonomy of perfumes. Latour warns against falling prey to what Whitehead called the 'bifurcation of nature': the division between an objective natural world, and a second-tier world of language and description (Latour, 2004b, 208). That is, rather than suppose there exists a subjective nose and an outside world of objective smells, Latour argues that we in part mediate and inform an external world through technical intervention. Through the use of 'odour kits'—samples of perfumes arranged in particular order to refine senses—humans enframe (to invoke a Heideggerian term) scents in particular ways. Rather than

possessing a static entity of constant sensation, here the Nose 'noses-forth' into a newly odoriferous world. Where non-Noses would objectively discern no distinction among the provided scents (they are similarly enframed), the Nose engages them as differentiable objects. In this example, 'technology' applies in three senses: first as *techne*, belonging to a thing coming into itself; second as a noun, with the odour kit being a physical mediator between body and external world; third as in 'technology of the self', or the reflexive modification of the self in relation to particular truths (as discussed in Chapter 2).

It is through such processes that humans, alongside their non-human collaborators, contribute to the 'assembly' of bodies. Instead of seeing the body in fixed-essential terms, for Latour it exists as a 'being-there', understood in terms of the processes through which technologies (in the triumvirate sense suggested above) intersect as a state of somatic affairs.

The body is thus not a provisional residence of something superior—an immortal soul, the universal or thought—but what leaves a dynamic trajectory by which we learn to register and become sensitive to what the world is made of. Such is the great virtue of this definition: there is no sense defining the body directly, but only in rendering the body sensitive to what these other elements are. By focusing on the body, one is immediately—or rather, mediately—directed to what the body has become aware of. (Latour, 2004b, 205-6)

A Latourian investigation of bodies, then, does not treat the human body as a beginning, but rather as the cessation of those processes which establish its final coherence. These processes can occur at multiple levels of abstraction, from multiple epistemological bases, and from a diverse set of controversies. In short, the body exists as a network interception. It is not from agreement or commensurability that bodies gain their coherence, or 'reality', but rather from a heterogeneous 'perspectivism' (to use a

Nietzschean turn of phrase). All this is to say: *for Latour, the body is a conclusion, rather than an origin.*

Just as bodies are 'constituted' through myriad intersections, so too is 'the social'. Indeed, Latour makes great effort to distinguish his particular sociological approach from the traditional 'sociology of the social'. In contrast, Latour defines his project as the 'sociology of associations', originating in the work of Gabriel Tarde, and finding its antithesis in Émile Durkheim. I will simplify the distinction as follows: whereas traditional Durkheimian sociology seeks to discover objective 'social facts' which restrict human behaviour (and thus exist a priori to individual human activity), Tarde sought to expand the term 'social' to all manners of 'societies': from electrons to European delinquents (Latour, 2004a, 14-6). Tarde felt as though Durkheim's project sought to explain micro-level facts by appealing to those of a greater level of abstraction, rather than discussing the (more important) process through which collectives become amalgamated (Tarde in Latour, 2004a, 15). Just as Marx sought to invert Hegel's philosophy, Latour seeks not how 'the social' assembles things, but rather how things come to assemble 'the social'.

It has become clear over the years that the existence of society is part of the problem and not of the solution. 'Society' has to be composed, made up, constructed, established, maintained and assembled. It is no longer to be taken as the hidden source of causality which could be mobilized so as to account for the existence and stability of some other action or behaviour[; ...] society explains nothing but has to be explained[.] If it is to be accounted for, it will be, by definition, through the presence of many other little things that are not social by nature, but only social in the sense that they are *associated* with one another. (Latour, 2000, 113; italics in original)

While previously, terms like 'communication', 'power' and 'the social' were said to maintain formative capacity *vis-à-vis* human activity, for Latour these terms are merely

shorthand for more complex processes of association. While replacement for the sake of convenience is fine *in some cases*, when social scientists take these abstractions to inform, rather than represent, human activity, they have committed a grave error.

Let's return to the subject of Chapter 2 for an example. Ian Hacking's criticism of contemporary readings of Foucault represents a position similar to Latour's. Hacking discussed how some of Foucault's 'less gifted followers' took some of the notions which he crafted (discourse, in particular) and took them to be the *sine qua non* of Foucault's philosophy (Hacking, 1998, 85). Terms like 'discursive formation' came into vogue, suggesting that discourse, as a thing, can be taken as the originator of some human actions. Uses of 'power' fit this mould as well. Of course, Foucault was not interested in a 'general theory' of power, but rather in particular asymmetries which contribute to scientific praxis. 'Power' can be used as shorthand to *describe* these asymmetries, but the two are *not* synonymous, and 'power' cannot be said to *replace* or *cause* the singular events discussed in each of Foucault's histories. Latour shares Hacking's sentiments.

No one was more precise in his analytical decomposition of the tiny ingredients through which power is made and no one was more critical of social explanations. And yet, as soon as Foucault was translated, he was immediately turned into the one who had 'revealed' power relations *behind* every innocuous activity: madness, natural history, sex, administration, etc. This proves again with what energy the notion of social explanation should be fought: even the genius of Foucault could not prevent such a total inversion. (Latour, 2004a, 86n)

While it is perfectly reasonable to suggest that all occurrences involve 'power' (as an abstraction of diverse relational asymmetries), it is not helpful to suggest that power *qua* power has any role in the event. *Power is a label, not an agent, and we must not mistake analytic convenience for intellectual rigour.*

Latour also demands a reconsideration of the notion of an 'agent'. As seen above, Latour is interested in the minute processes through which the social is constituted via the assemblage of numerous pre-social entities. Such was the case when various practices and technologies came together to assemble the body as 'a thing to become affected'. In the body example, Latour wants us to extend agency to *each* of the things and processes—in short, *technologies*—which contribute to the body's final coherence. That is, the odour kit is as much an agent as the olfactory system which it in part conditions. These technological associations are crucial to Latour's sociology. Such is the argument in "Mixing Humans and Nonhumans Together: The Sociology of a Door Closer" (1988). Intent on establishing a new vocabulary for the study of non-humans, Latour picks apart 'door-closing technology', a practical example of the way in which technologies and their physical products—as society's *lieutenants*—require prior knowledge and roles on the part of those who employ them. (Latour labels this 'prescription'; see Johnson, 1988, 308). If we are searching for a science of associative action, we are only telling half the story if we singly focus on *human* agency, and not the associated technologies (in the extended, threefold sense used above) which both channel and direct that activity.

I suggest that Latour's project presents a fundamental challenge to Disability Studies. First, I will discuss the technological void present in the sociology of disability, and then turn to his discussion of 'critical sociology,' relating both to the emancipatory imperative inherent to the Social Model.

For the most part, the only non-human agents seriously engaged by the social model are those barriers which create disability. As suggested in Chapter 2, this is understandable considering the intention of the UPIAS was to alter the causality through

which disability was perpetuated—shifting from 'individual medical tragedy' to 'disablement via arbitrary social barriers'. This can be seen in Oliver quite clearly.

What is at stake here is the issue of causation, and whereas previous definitions were ultimately reducible to the individual and attributable to biological pathology, the [UPIAS] definition locates the causes of disability squarely within society and social organization. (See Chapter 1 for the UPIAS definition. Oliver, 1990, 11)

Thus, while quite important to the study of *impairment*, technologies—in the restricted car, computer, wheelchair sense—were of little concern to those interested in a political economy of disability. Indeed, even technology in the wider sense could be seen as a part and parcel of the 'ideology of individualism' produced by capitalism. Here, however, I suggest that this a priori elimination of technology from discussions of disability—resulting from the impairment/disability dichotomy—is untenable. I will turn to two powerful critiques below.

Michael Schillmeier's "Dis/abling Practices: Rethinking Disability" (2007) presents a categorical denial of the social model's causality, while at the same time expanding the scope of the political economy of disability to include previously unimportant non-human mediators. Focusing on physical currency as a mediator through which visual impairments are revealed, Schillmeier suggests that blindness is not an affliction that exists singly in nature or society.

Rather, (visual) disability refers to complex sets of heterogeneous practices that (re-)associate bodies, material objects, and technologies with sensory and other practices. These practices bring to the fore how ordinary acts (re-)assemble social orderings by linking the material configurations of human (culture) and non-human (nature) relations. [...] Such a reading not only rethinks the culture/nature divide of disability. It also questions the standard definition of money since Adam Smith as the neutral medium of exchange. (Schillmeier, 2007, 197)

Though revealed as an 'octonormative' (my term) mediator for those with visual impairment, currency falls into further 'good' or 'bad' money categories. 'Good' blind money resides in coin-holders, is folded in a particular way or is sorted by a trusted accomplice; 'bad' blind money is a set of unknown coins, an unfolded bill, or is provided in a "take what I owe" fashion to a vendor.

Rather than attempt to appeal to greater forces—in this case 'capitalist social organization'—as the source of disability, Schillmeier successfully aligns the local, sensory practices of monetary exchange with the greater global political economy. This alignment, however, varies in intensity depending on the actants present during particular moments of exchange.

Money practices in buses differ from those in shopping centres, for example: they change depending on the context and the products bought. Money-for-ticket practices exemplify rather routine practices of exchange, practices that enable movement from place to place with public transport in order to buy things or meet friends, for instance. (Schillmeier, 2007, 202)

While still critical of the process of capital accumulation, Schillmeier presents a much more compelling political economy of disability than Oliver, with a causality more encompassing of the actual experience of those with visual impairments. In contrast, the social modelists require an appeal to 'ideology' to maintain causal coherence—yet another cohort of those who Pierre Bourdieu labelled 'materialists without materials' (Bourdieu in Garrett, 2007, 363).

A further case for the rejection of the Social Model's a-technological disability formulation can be found in Simmons' et al. "Post-modern Synergistic Knowledge Creation: Extending the Boundaries of Disability Studies" (2008). Though employing a Deleuzo-Guattarian theoretical framework, their example of a young child diagnosed

with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) presents a compelling case for a reconsideration of technological actancy in the sociology of disability. The child, Sam, is observed as 'pre-volitional', 'pre-intersubjective', 'pre-communicative', pre-contingency-aware, and 'at high risk of a world of confusion'; in short suffering from '*pre-x symptomology*' (Simmons, Blackmore and Bayliss, 2008, 734). Throughout the duration of the study, Sam is sent to a special school for four days of the week, and to a mainstream school for the remaining one. During engagement at the special school, multiple mediators engage the student, both in technical and human forms. Preferring the engagement with the non-human mediators—in this case a massager operated by a member of the staff—Sam displays all the symptoms of PMLD provided above, and does not engage with his special school peers.

As the study continues, and as Sam gains more exposure to mainstream school peers, the observers begin to see changes in Sam's behaviour, where the substantive criteria for the PMLD label begin to dissipate.

Sam's [mainstream school] peers had no understanding of 'PMLD' or 'pre-x symptomology'—in Sam they saw a classroom friend and interacted with him as such. Sam responded with enthusiasm. [... The] relationship was mutually reciprocal—both Sam and his peers enjoyed themselves. In contrast, his special school presented as offering the least potentiality. Sam as being PMLD was subjected to the care, specialist teaching and therapeutic interventions which were deemed appropriate for children with PMLD where such children are conceptualized as embodying the pre-x symptomology. Here Sam became a passive recipient. Sam became PMLD. (Simmons et al., 2008, 739)

Above we see not only the important role which a technical mediator played in the (re)production of PMLD, but also a case for the utility 'bodying-forth' as discussed in Chapter 3. Both technology in the restricted and extended senses come into play regarding Sam's case, and the revealing (*das Ge-stell*) of PMLD is seen to be contingent

upon the presence of particular actants within therapeutic intervention. Both senses of technology resist being assigned solely to the region of 'impairment' or 'disability'—such classification would surely downplay the role which technologies play in this instance of learning dis/ability (to borrow Schillmeier's punctuation). To prevent the label of 'social construction' being applied to either of these instances, I next turn to Latour's views on so-called 'critical sociology.'

Latour's positions on critical sociology depart from his rejection of the 'sociology of the social', the project which takes 'social' entities to be pre-existing, unnatural objects which initiate causal relations among 'social' agents. Crucial to this rejection, as illustrated above in the olfactory example, is Latour's rejection of the 'bifurcation of nature'. Though some explanation was provided above, I will elaborate further. Found best in his *We Have Never Been Modern* (1993), Latour's argument can be summarized as follows: the contemporary social sciences have established a 'constitution of modernity', one which demands that all objects of investigation be delegated to either the 'nature' or 'society' categories (Latour, 1993, 7). Indeed, for anthropology since Lévi-Strauss, the litmus test dividing modern and barbarous societies has been the ability to distinguish between natural and social entities. Some objects—rocks, plants, cholera—gain their coherence through their natural existence, while other entities—idols, gender, commodities—gain their forms through socially imbued fetishism, reified through external attribution. Thankfully, through the modern constitution and the rational sciences, we are able to overcome this savagery and get on with our modern lives. Or so it seems.

Perhaps modernity stands strong when it faces minor constitutional challenges. A firm example would be instructive. Nobody will object to the suggestion that rocks are a natural entity. There have always been—and there always will be—rocks. Rocks are timeless, natural, objective and boring. But what about dolomite? Surely some intervention brought this sexier, more scientific rock to us (for a more comprehensive discussion, see “Rocks” in Hacking, 1999). Is it appropriate to say that rocks are 'socially constructed' in their more precise, more 'scientific' form? What does this say about geology? The modern constitution demands that rocks either be natural or social in essence, yet here we have an entity here that is somehow located between the two camps—a 'quasi-object', as Latour calls it (Latour, 1993, 51). Quasi-objects (or quasi-subjects) exist somewhere between the poles of nature and society, and gain some meaning through their 'ecological niche'. Does this mean we must return to barbarism? No. For Latour, true to his Heideggerian heritage, things need not be of a single substance; we have forgotten about *being* (Latour, 1993, 65). Simply, we have always been amodern. Things are different for the social model, to which we now turn our attention.

Latour sees the true barbarism in the application of the modern constitution within the critical social sciences. There, the social researcher has gained the ability to attribute particular human actions either to 'objective' scientific causality (as in the case of 'social facts'), while at other times, the ability to declare observed human actions as the product of fetishized beliefs (Latour, 2004c, 238). Take masculinity as an example. It is perfectly acceptable for a critical researcher looking at gender identity to suggest that masculinity is a product of social hierarchy. Actions taken by those so subjected are

considered to be influenced by such a social construction. Yet, as soon as a subject declares “It is a man's job to...” the critical researcher quickly interrupts: “You are attributing your actions to a powerless idol! Do you not see you are simply projecting your will in this process?” With the ability to pick and chose whether agency (via fetishism) or structure (via social facts) is primary, the modern critic is invincible: they can never be wrong (Latour, 1993, 39). Or rather, *they can never be wrong so long as the world is filled only with abstract, 'social' stuff.*

Through processes of purification—the delegation of objects to either the nature or society camp—the social model is able to maintain its coherence. Assuming such purity, we can supposedly bracket biomedical impairment from our inquiry of disability (though the model sees impairment as a necessary condition for disablement). For the society pole: either the disabled are able to recognize their arbitrary exclusion from market society (marking the first step towards their emancipation) or they succumb to the ideological forces of capitalism and fail to recognize the source of their disablement. For the social model, oppression is produced both *by* and *for* capitalist social organization.

Problems arise, however, when we look at the *dramatis personae* included in the disabled camp. For the social model, the causality is simple. The impaired are disabled. The disabled are oppressed. Thus, the impaired are oppressed. In practice, however, this is not the case. Should we (re)substitute some of the cases discovered above, this simplistic causality becomes questionable. Take the example of visual impairments discussed above. While market exchange enframes the revealing of disability, it is only within particular sensory environments *within* market exchange in which such visual impairments represent disability. For the visually impaired, 'bad money networks' reveal

visual impairment, not capitalism as a whole. If we recall the notion of the body as an entity to be affected, as a being-there, it is *better* capitalism, rather than *less* capitalism, that will emancipate visually disabled subjects—contrary to the social model's critical causality.

There is a further, epistemological dimension to the social model's 'critical' presumptions. As discussed in Chapter 1, the social model sees itself as 'incommensurable' with the 'medical model' of disability (Oliver, 1983, 23). What this means in practical terms is a focus on the experience of disability *only* in terms of social barriers. The suggestion of incommensurability—a *de facto* form of purification—implies by definition that those experiences of disability which employ non-social mediators need not be considered during academic inquiry. They belong either to impairment or ideology. Experiences produced *vis-à-vis* non-social, non-barrier mediators are either translated as those of impairment, or of ideologically warped consciousness. One must object to this on two grounds. First, regarding the material and social, Latour rightly trivializes such a division.

To distinguish a priori 'material' and 'social' ties before linking them together again makes about as much sense as to account for the dynamic of a battle by imagining a group of soldiers and officers stark naked with huge heaps of paraphernalia—tanks, rifles, paperwork, uniforms—and then claim 'of course there exist some (dialectical) relation between the two'. (Latour, 2004a, 75)

If we see disability—and every other thing—as an entity which is revealed differently based on the particular questioning which is posed to it, as Heidegger would have it, then we see 'incommensurability' as simply a convenient boogeyman; it simply exists to scare investigation away from serious engagement with biomedicine. Here nature and society are not conceptual tools which allow us to stake out where sociology and biomedicine

should begin the division of labour. “Nature and society are part of the problem, not part of the solution.” (Latour, 1993, 95)

The second objection relates to the 'critical' project itself. The *a priori* division of the questions “how does being disabled feel?” from “what is the nature of disability?” is a telling example of dangerous critical abstraction. Seeing disablement as an 'objective social fact' provides the illusion of science (nor is it true to the legacy of Durkheim). As Latour warns, this peculiar notion of objectivity *is not* the same sort of objectivity which is practised within the natural sciences—nor should it be the model for the social sciences.

Objectivity does not refer to a special quality of the mind, an inner state of justice and fairness, but to the presence of objects which have been rendered 'able' (the word is etymologically so powerful) to object to what is told about them. (Latour, 2000, 115)

If we divide what disability *is* from what disability *means to the disabled* we are substituting a convenient social causality for the experiences of the subjects themselves. Rather than see disability as an 'objective' entity, here the social modelists are squelching the very voices they wish to represent. Emancipation surely cannot proceed from conceptual tyranny.

Where the social modelists' project offers several conceptual dead-ends, Bruno Latour's project offers several new (and much-needed) avenues of discourse. To simply pigeonhole his offerings to the study of disability to the areas of 'the sociology of biomedicine' or to 'social epistemology' would be a mistake. Rather, his critique is designed to strengthen the basis of the sociological project, and warns of the dangers of the application of rampant criticism. He is, however, not unfriendly to criticism, and his arguments do not lead to nihilism. One would be wise to recall the maxim of Nietzsche's

general. For, as Heidegger states, “A science’s level of development is determined by the extent to which it is *capable* of a crisis in its basic concepts.” (Heidegger, 1996, 51; emphasis in original) If a ‘crisis in the basic concepts’ of Disability Studies entails a rejection of the term ‘socially constructed’ (if that term is taken to mean all things social come to produce oppressive disablement) a dismissal of a barrier-centered view of technology and a reevaluation of the ‘critical project’, then development is welcome. The costs of the status quo are too high.

Emanciperoration

Allow me to be Nietzschean and declare “*you are as you forget!*” The argument can thus be restated: to strengthen its academic rigour, Disability Studies must forget the demands of the social model. “What then of oppression?” the reader may ask. Further: “have the disabled not been through enough, before criticizing their cries for help?” These questions cannot be ignored.

Heidegger declared that the essence of truth is freedom. With the social model, one attempts to encapsulate the entire experience of disability as bondage in the chains of oppression. But what have we lost in this declaration? Freedom. In an ironic reversal, the social model’s remedy—emancipatory research—is more poison than panacea. Apart from clever slogans or humanistic diatribes, the basis of the disability rights movement is the belief that there is nothing that essentially differentiates the disabled from the non-disabled other than medical conditions. In the case of physical disability, our unlikely hero is right on the money: “There is no such thing as a cripple, if the mind is right.” (Dowling, 1918, 50) Unfortunately, this simplicity escapes the critical disability student. In searching for hidden causality and bamboozled ideologues, the emancipatory researcher denies one final truth—one final freedom—maintained by the impaired: the freedom to be oppressed. That is, to translate the cacophonous voices of those being liberated into one single cry of “help!” the researcher locks those being studied into a cycle of victimhood.

Here we can dispense with terminology like ‘emancipatory imperative’, ‘oppression a priori’ or ‘ideology of individualism’. If the second wave of disability studies is truly going to begin, it will do so through the understanding that solidarity

comes at a price. Currently, strategic essentialism translates into clumsy social theory. The disability rights movement and the discipline of Disability Studies do not need to travel the same path. We political economists understand the importance of the division of labour. Armchair revolutionaries need not install automatic doors, and activist organizers need not waste time discussing that infrastructure's revolutionary impact on social theory. While this divorce may seem painful at first, it will let the sociology of disability reconnect with adjacent fields, through the theoretical inlets I have discussed here. Simply put: it is time to forget the social model.

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