

De-colonizing Disability Theory I – Crippling Development
September 19-21, 2013
Prague

Robert McRuer

Crip Displacements: Disability, Dispossession, and the *Museo de los Desplazados*

Theorists of neoliberalism, from David Harvey to Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou, have placed *dispossession* at the center of their analyses of the workings of contemporary global capitalism. Disability, however, has not figured centrally into these analyses. Even as Kevin Floyd gives David Wojnarowicz (a frequently-homeless artist and writer who died from complications due to HIV/AIDS in 1992) pride-of-place in his theorization of “the violence of neoliberalism” in *The Reification of Desire: Toward a Queer Marxism*, disability is displaced from consideration—displaced, arguably, by queerness, as Floyd provides a textured argument about the ways in which queerness both fuels and impedes neoliberalism. “Crip Displacements” examines Livia Radwanska’s photos of the redevelopment of a Mexico City neighborhood (and the displacement of poor people living in the neighborhood) in order to attend to the ways in which disability might productively haunt theories of neoliberal dispossession. Radwanska’s photos are part of the global “*Museo de los Desplazados* [Museum of the Displaced]” project. With installations in Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and elsewhere, the *Museo de los Desplazados* comes as the conclusion to a project workshop titled “*Gentrificación no es un nombre de señora*”, in which the role of culture in the process of gentrification is analyzed. At first glance, Radwanska’s photos would seem to have nothing to do with disability or crip culture. I argue, however, that disability can be located in these haunting images; indeed, given how ownership, accumulation, and possession materialize in and through compulsory able-bodiedness, the displaced and dispossessed cannot exist without disability. Critiques of dispossession, then, must attend to crip displacements, in all senses of that phrase.