Article

Pandemic Lived Experience, Crip Utopias, and Dismodernist Revolutions: For a More-Than-Social Model of Disability

Arianna Introna

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Open University, UK; arianna.introna@open.ac.uk

Abstract

At its height, the Covid-19 pandemic dispersed across society a perception of bodyminded contingency that ushered in modes of "building community" that were unimaginable in pre-pandemic times, alongside an intensification of health and social inequalities. From the start, disabled people intervened on social media to stress the considerable extent to which the pre-pandemic knowledge derived from their lived experience, disability theory, and disability rights' organising could contribute both to the critique of how in pandemic times people were *made* differentially disposable and to the creation of new relationalities, mostly online, around the principle of accessibility. This article explores how a critical perspective rooted in the lived experience of disability builds on these interventions to excavate the role played by the lived experience of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability during the pandemic in generating a radical transformation of modes of living (together). First, it will suggest that this radical transformation powerfully resonated with the politics of accessibility associated with disability politics. It will do so by delineating the critical significance of commentary produced during the pandemic by disability theorists and activists, as well as the relationship between the perception of widespread bodyminded contingency and vulnerability and the development of "crip utopias of accessibility" and "dismodernist revolutions" during the pandemic. It will then locate this experiential spread of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability at the core of pandemic infrastructural sensibilities. I will conclude by reflecting on its relevance for the development of a "more-than-social" model of disability which attends to the crip world-making power of disability as fundamentally entangling the social and the biological.

Issue

This article is part of the issue "Disability and Social Inclusion: Lessons From the Pandemic" edited by Owen Barden (Liverpool Hope University), Laura Waite (Liverpool Hope University), Erin Pritchard (Liverpool Hope University), and Ana Bê (Liverpool Hope University).

1. Introduction

At its height, the Covid-19 pandemic dispersed across society a perception of bodyminded contingency that ushered in modes of "building community" that were unimaginable in pre-pandemic times, alongside an intensification of health and social inequalities. From the start, disabled people intervened on social media to stress the considerable extent to which the pre-pandemic knowledge derived from their lived experience, disability theory, and disability rights' organising, could contribute both to the critique of how in pandemic times people were *made* differentially disposable and to the creation of new relationalities, mostly online, around the principle of accessibility. On the one hand, these interventions spotlighted the relevance of the lived experience of disability for understanding people's experiences of the pandemic. On the other, the pandemic conjuncture was defined by the de-linking of the reorganizing of collective life in a more accessible manner from the disability histories and theories through which a politics of accessibility has been developed. For years, in drawing upon my

crip lived experience and knowledge to help make the spaces I inhabited more accessible, I had performed a similar de-linking by disconnecting my actions from any overt connection to crip politics. To explore possibilities for undoing this de-liking in 2019 I applied to participate in the Lived Experience Leadership pilot scheme offered by the disabled people organisation Inclusion Scotland. The aim of the programme was to help participants explore what being disabled and a leader could mean in their individual life journeys, and how as disabled leaders they could make a positive change in the world.

I had applied to join the Lived Experience Leadership programme before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic when face-to-face teaching in academia, besides activism, provided the horizon of my thinking around the ways in which I could use my experience of disability to crip the world I was part of for the better. When the Lived Experience Leadership programme started, however, the pandemic was in full swing, as was lockdown; I had lost my job and the world I wanted to crip for the better was constituted by the online spaces of autonomous learning that had become my learning communities. These spaces were more accessible to me than any other space I had encountered in my life (apart from the spaces of the activist groups I am involved with). Their accessibility seemed to me to simultaneously materialise a crip utopia and index a relationship between disability politics and the pandemic reorganizing of social relations online. By the end of my Lived Experience Leadership journey, I was keen to explore how the lived experience of disability could link to pandemic lived experience by contributing a critique rooted in its own politics and history, and by encouraging the pursuit of accessibility as a crip world-making endeavour.

This article will unfurl this spirit by exploring how lived experience of disability and lived experience of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability during the pandemic are connected. Its focus will be on how a critical perspective rooted in the lived experience of disability afforded a position from which to critique the institutional abandonment of unwanted populations during the pandemic, but also to illuminate the materialization of crip ways of reorganizing society during lockdown. The first section of this article will therefore discuss the significance of the lived experience of disability in understanding the pandemic lived experience of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability, as well as emancipatory possibility. The lived experience of disability is defined by a double encounter with oppressive social structures and with alternative ways of being (together). This afforded a critical lens during the pandemic for illuminating the differential vulnerability and disposability the governmental management of the pandemic was creating, as well as the potential for alternative ways of organizing relations in an emancipatory direction to develop.

Drawing on commentary provided by disability theorists and activists, the second and third sections of this article will instead explore how the disruption of normalcy that the pandemic involved might allow us to contemplate disability as "both a signifier of inequity and the promise of something new and affirmative" (Goodley et al., 2019, p. 972). They will discuss how the reorganization of relations in the context of social distancing and lockdown materialised what I will call "crip utopias" and "dismodernist revolutions." Both are crip visions of a different world that originated out of the grassroots responses that people made to the universality of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability. The second section will address "crip utopias" of accessibility as already existing forms of life that fit the description of "concrete utopia" proposed by Ernst Bloch to distinguish a world-changing anticipation of the future in the present from the discredited abstract utopias which merely operate as wishful thinking. The third section will argue that the crip utopias of pandemic times can be read as "dismodernist revolutions" that emerged out of the spreading out across society of lived experience of bodyminded vulnerability and contingency. Lennard Davis' concept of dismodernism is particularly apt to capture the pervasiveness of this experiential spread.

However, the lived experience of disability is fundamental not only for critique but also for remaking the world in an emancipatory direction. As Sandhu (2017) suggests, lived experience can provide an ideal position from which to make a positive change in the world. The fourth and fifth sections of this article will delineate how the radical transformation of understandings and practices generated from the widespread lived experience of bodyminded vulnerability and contingency during the pandemic connects to a revised social model of disability. Section 4 will locate this experiential spread of bodyminded vulnerability and contingency as the biological core which animates the sensibilities of care and vulnerability that became thinkable during the pandemic, which I will call infrastructural to express their rootedness in the material conditions of collective life. Section 5 will connect the infrastructural (post-)pandemic understanding of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability that these sensibilities express to critical disability studies models of disability which locate bodyminded phenomena of non-normativity within a world in which the human and the non-human, as much as the social and the biological, are entangled. Underpinning this section is an argument for the usefulness of embracing a "more-than-social model of disability" to theorise the possibilities afforded by the lived experience and materiality of disability to make worlds and remake the world. To delineate what this model might look like I will draw on Dimitris Papadopoulos' exploration of the experiential practice and reconfiguration of the material conditions of existence that underpins the transformation of political and social movements into "more-than-social'' movements.

Mine will be an attempt to capture the glimmers of the crip world (re-)making power that appeared in pandemic times. It will be driven by the intent to take a stand

against the unfurling post-pandemic consensus that we are back to the pre-pandemic normal, and that there is nothing we can do to stop the retreat away from the crip utopias of accessibility and dismodernist revolutions that pandemic times witnessed. My reflections on what happened during the pandemic, thus, ultimately re-affirms a belief in the power of crip lived experience to expand outwards and meet others to contribute to the continued undermining of normalcy in post-pandemic times.

2. Sick and Crip Lived Experience in Pandemic Times

Discussing pandemic contingency and vulnerability as "bodyminded" identifies "the imbrication (not just the combination) of the entities usually called 'body' and 'mind'" (Price, 2015, p. 270) as grounding experiences of oppression as well as resistance, while disentangling their lived experience from association with a specific set of impairments, medical conditions or identification. Efforts to delineate what or who lived experience of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability during the pandemic included, thus, marks out an experiential field inhabited by individuals and groups holding a variety of disability identifications, if any. It offers the possibility to link the expertise derived from pre-pandemic lived experience of disability into an expansive pool of lived experience of body-minded contingency and vulnerability. It also contributes to explaining why the commentary issued from a perspective of the lived experience of disability during the pandemic was in tune with the widespread lived experience of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability that defined pandemic times. It did so, I would argue, precisely because it recognised as familiar both the unequal distribution of healthcare inequalities and socioeconomic hardship that characterised the pandemic conjuncture and the attempts to sustain and build community in conditions where "normal" face-to-face interaction was precluded.

The critical edge possessed by commentary on the pandemic produced by disability theorists and activists derived from the connection between theory and lived experience of disability in ways that lend support to Lois McNay's recent engagement with the nexus between theory and lived experience. McNay traces out the possibilities for critique of oppression this encounter opens up, and the intersectional, situated, and anti-essentialist framework within which this critique unfolds: For McNay (2022, p. 7), "theorizing from experience" is an approach that "affirms the pivotal importance of the lived reality of those directly affected to an unmasking critique oppression." This unmasking starts from within heterogenous life-worlds to produce a "wider, multivalent or intersectional account of power"; its aim is not to posit an "original truth of oppression, but to render critique alive to latent, unrecognized, or emergent dynamics of power that often fall below the threshold of public visibility" (McNay, 2022, p. 9). The visibilisation of "emergent dynamics of power that often fall below the thresh-

old of public visibility," and of emergent understandings and practices that undo these dynamics, is precisely what was performed during the pandemic by perspectives rooted in the lived experience of disability.

Significantly, however, this lived experience shaded into the proliferation of life-worlds of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability generated by the pandemic. A continuum could be imagined between those of us who experienced bodyminded contingency and vulnerability for the first time and those of us who had already been inhabiting ill or crip bodyminds. Speaking from the perspective of the former, medical humanities theorist Felicity Callard reflected upon the epistemic disruption and expansion allowed by the lived experience of thinking from a sickbed in pandemic times—an epistemic experience and reality that she describes as separate from those pertaining to the sphere of health. She said: "What we perceive, and how we think, depends on where we are and how our body is positioned. In thinking about epidemic time, I want to think from a body that is positioned on a sickbed" (Callard, 2020, p. 728). The ways in which Callard's positionality was critical as much as it was embodied exhibited the features proper to a phenomenology of impairment that, according to Jonathan Sterne, furnishes a "critique of naturalization" from a perspective defined by "contingency and situatedness" (Sterne, 2021, p. 11).

When the insights generated by crip lived experiences of the pandemic are concerned, manifold directions of inquiry emerged to tease out the relevance of disability politics to the injustices and potential for emancipatory change that marked pandemic times. The epistemic possibilities afforded by crip lived experience allowed an appreciation of how the pandemic offers a privileged lens through which to denounce the differential disposability of life. Starting from the fact of high death rates of disabled people and seniors, disability theorists denounced how Covid-related deaths were the result of populations having been made vulnerable by socio-economic relations and structures. Within an anti-essentialist and intersectional framework, Tremain (2020) expanded the parameters of critique to contend that "vulnerability isn't a characteristic that certain individuals possess or embody. Like disability, vulnerability is a naturalized apparatus of power that differentially produces subjects, materially, socially, politically, and relationally"; within this framework, "it is by and through the contingent apparatus of vulnerability and other apparatuses that certain members of the population are vulnerableized" (Tremain, 2020). In a similar spirit, contributors to the I Human blog denounced how "who lives and who dies then during this pandemic is not just a matter of biology, but a fundamentally (bio)political matter" (Ktenidis, 2020) and how the societal devaluation of certain categories within the population provided the basis for their "vulnerableization" (Tsakiri & Mavrou, 2020). Ignagni et al. (2020) captured through the hashtag #ICUEugenics dynamics whereby "disabled

and chronically ill people are being viewed as vulnerable, potentially expendable, and a lower priority, when access to life-saving healthcare and medical equipment are limited," and situated their analysis within a wider intersectional framework attuned to "the amplification of this frame of disposability along interlocking markers of marginalization." Importantly for the discussion of this article, Rice et al. (2022) contrasted the violence of medical triage protocols in Canada with the possibility of lively worldmaking carried by digital story-making.

Indeed, oppositional critique contributed by disability theorists and activists was fundamental for unpacking the ways in which proliferating lived experience of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability had made more readable, within the wider society, what had been hitherto occluded disability perspectives. First, the contestation of processes of devaluation was put forward as simultaneously speaking to wider dynamics and situated within the confines of disability politics and history. As Wong (2020) put it:

> In this critical time, when scarcity is a reality, you see the hierarchy. Certain groups are valued over others. This is the world that so many disabled and chronically ill people already live in. Our lives are still seen as expendable. Now the magnitude is much greater.

Secondly, the fact that the pandemic upended the illusory power of ableism was theorised as significant for society at large, not just for disabled people. As Altermark (2020) argued, also on the I Human blog, "our societies are confronted with the fact that bodies are fragile and open to injury. As a result, ableist ideals of self-sufficiency and self-mastery suddenly appear as illusory." Third, a critique of the individualistic framing characteristic of the discourse of pandemic governance was performed as an entry point into the delineation of forms of crip world-making grounded in opposite logics and relationalities. As Schippers (2020) noted, "the current public health measures are rooted in a merely individualistic approach, as reflected by its main feature 'social distancing'" and developing a "counterstory of solidarity" is what "will keep the (disability) community alive in this time of crisis." Fourth, the call for accessible structures to be embedded within all forms of practice was voiced as key for identifying the bases of alternative forms of social organization. Commenting on how the pandemic had witnessed the development of a degree of commitment to accessibility that disabled people had been advocating for already, and the risk for this commitment to lapse as soon as a post-pandemic moment would be entered, Wong (2020) reflected:

> My hope for coming out of this pandemic is that we don't return to the status quo. Many don't realize that "normal" was actually not great for a lot of people. Just because all of the nondisabled people go back to work—or to Burning Man, or to Coachella—that doesn't mean we should stop thinking about accessibility.

If, as Goodley et al. (2021, p. 33) suggest, "living through a geopolitical moment where many people are dealing with matters of life and death inevitably raises existential questions"—and they go on to question "what is it that we want...how might disability disrupt normative desires? How might we desire disability?"—then Wong's and Schippers' reflections indicate the extent to which the alternative order of accessibility and solidarity that perspectives rooted in crip lived experience called for during the pandemic is what may make crip worlds desired in post-pandemic times.

3. Crip Utopias in Pandemic Times

At the start of the pandemic Ignagni et al. (2020) speculated that "Covid time might allow a particular kind of crip world making that engages crip practices that may have seemed impossible five weeks ago." This becoming possible of the seemingly impossible indeed panned out as online spaces structured around multiple access needs flourished in ways that materialised the Blochian conception of "concrete utopias," or "collective movements" towards the materialization of emancipatory futures "in the here and now" (Dinerstein, 2017), as this section will explore. Titchkosky (2011, p. 4) argues that "access not only needs to be sought out and fought for, legally secured, physically measured, and politically protected, it also needs to be understood—as a complex form of perception that organizes socio-political relations between people in social space." Since online meetings became the main form of participation and community building during lockdown, access was the main form of perception underpinning their design and operation, thus turning them into a microcosm for the alternative order of accessibility and solidarity that underpinned community building during the pandemic.

In particular, the organisation of these meetings to meet the participants' diverse and changing needs since the first lockdown entrenched access as a form of perception that operated as a fundamental lens through which to "see" each other's needs and dignity. In so doing, it conjured the "access intimacy" that Mia Mingus talks about; namely, the feeling that one's access needs and those of others are not only understood but welcomed as belonging within a given space. Access intimacy was what, during the pandemic, brought people close as the tool that most effectively "builds and deepens connection" (Mingus, 2011). Turning the perspective of a crip lived experience on the development of access intimacy in online meetings during the pandemic would read it as constituting a form of crip politics aimed at remaking the world in more inclusive directions. It would also value the role of lived experience of bodyminded vulnerability and contingency during the pandemic as having possessed "intrinsic as well as instrumental value" in

bringing to the table a specific form of experience around which to "rebuild our systems and structures" (Sandhu, 2017, p. 123).

Indeed, the materialisation of emancipatory futures through the reorganization of collective spaces around multiple access was inseparable from the dispersal of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability across society during the pandemic. The alternative realities, rhythms, perceptions and life-worlds that our crip life-worlds have always been entangled with had finally found resonance with collective realities that could include but were not confined to the space of a disability identification. The merit of lived experience of pandemic bodyminded contingency and vulnerability in making these alternative realities come true was captured by medical humanities scholar Monica Greco. Greco (2020) maintained that seizing the crisis that the pandemic constituted originated from an oppositional and embodied assertion of the epistemic validity of the knowledge produced by lived experiences of illness. She reflected:

> So here we find ourselves, at ground zero, observing the experience of illness and the pandemic as if our lives depended on it. The "lay perspective" and stories of sickness acquire new meaning, new status, a new kind of relevance….The crisis must be seized, and not wasted.

Greco's anticipation of radical change as brought on by the owning of and acting upon our lived experience of illness, and as something that already exists, evokes utopian thinking of the Blochian kind, where "utopian" indicates not something abstract but something emerging from "the contents of…most immediate nearness" that "still ferment entirely in the darkness of the lived moment" (Bloch, 1986, p. 12).

In seeking to rehabilitate utopia from wishful thinking into the ground for a world-changing practice operating in the present, Bloch maintains that:

> We need the most powerful telescope, that of polished utopian consciousness, in order to penetrate precisely the nearest nearness. Namely, the most immediate immediacy, in which the core of self-location and being-here still lies, in which at the same time the whole knot of the world-secret is to be found. (Bloch, 1986, p. 13)

The perspective of crip lived experience can function as a telescope through which to grasp the organisation of online spaces around multiple access needs as a form of crip politics that belongs within the order crip utopias. Crip utopias—from Mingus' (2015, p. 118) imagination of the "Unperfects" building, a city in which it was possible to live "with pride and ease," to Piepzna-Samarasinha's (2019) celebration of a disability justice community that has long "dreamed new ways of creating and accepting care as a pleasure, not a chore"—are always set against

a world where "disability is unwelcome, its presence in utopia" is an unsettling reality (Smith, 2021). It is in this way that thinking towards the future through the lens of crip lived experience becomes a conduit to seeing how survival, both individual and collective, "is hopefully what's next" (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2020). If for Bloch (1986, p. 8) utopian thinking is "directed towards changing the world and informing the desire to change it," crip utopian thinking possesses a collective orientation that makes visible the collective realities that emerged out of widespread bodyminded contingency and vulnerability during the pandemic.

4. Dismodernist Revolutions for (Post-)Pandemic Times

The crip utopias of accessibility that I had encountered in online meetings and learning groups during the pandemic materialised responsiveness to my access needs that I had never encountered in life as a crip person, researcher, or teacher (only as an activist). Most importantly, it was not only the exigencies of my crip bodymind that were being accommodated. Access intimacy was fed by the simultaneous welcoming of myriad other access needs within the design and management of online spaces. In pandemic times, the principles of universal design that I had sought to apply in my teaching practice were being employed as matter-of-fact technologies for building community. Whether we identified as ill or healthy disabled or unhealthy disabled, during the pandemic collectivized life-worlds of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability were what provided a starting point for remaking society in its entirety. If "any crisis asks questions of common sense…[it] exposes the problems with existing arrangements, provokes responses that were previously unthinkable and collectively reminds us that all that appears to be solid can very easily melt into air" (Parker, 2020, p. 8). The pandemic was a crisis that still offers potential for the remaking of our worlds precisely on the basis of the crip utopias it witnessed. The fact of the pervasiveness of bodyminded vulnerability and contingency within pandemic society is captured by Davis' famous description of the world we inhabit as one in which "we are all nonstandard, and it is under that standard that we should be able to find the dismodernist ethic" (Davis, 2002, p. 32). Davis' work is crucial for building expansive conceptions of disability, attuned to the access intimacy that during the pandemic operated as the ground for crip utopias of accessibility to develop in online spaces. For this reason, I suggest, the world-changing power that pandemic crip utopias and lived experience possessed is usefully envisaged as having been rooted in their operation as "dismodernist revolutions"; namely, as a re-organisation of everyday practice and relations that transforms a society by undoing the boundaries that separate the sick and the crip from the healthy and the abled.

Lived experience of widespread bodyminded contingency and vulnerability during the pandemic unsettled

these boundaries by naturalizing understandings opposite to those that define "ontologically violent messages" (Liddiard, 2020) such as the notion of "risk group" that reassured "'normal' people that someone else will die" and that individualized risk to protect the "ableist fantasy of independency and full functioning" (Altermark, 2020). This points to the need for an emancipatory perspective rooted in crip lived experience to start with, but reach beyond, lived experience of illness and disability to challenge power and imagine different worlds. To grasp its operation what is required is what Goodley et al. (2021, p. 35) call a "bifurcated analysis" that acknowledges the "possibilities offered by disability to reshape and re-fashion the human (crip ambitions) while at the same time asserting disabled people's place within common humanity (normative desires)." This perspective significantly predicates a form of critique that, by drawing on interdisciplinary and intersectional orientation, starts but does not end with disability.

This perspective resonates with Ignagni et al.'s (2020) reflection that, on the one hand, it is easy to think that, during a pandemic, "we are all a little bit crip, [that it] is [easy] to assert that we are all living in crip time now, as we zoom into meetings, work from home, and prioritize comfort over maintaining an ableist level of professionalism"; on the other hand, "Covid time is not the same as crip time. Covid time is emergency time that must be endured rather than settled into" (Ignagni et al., 2020), as it is defined by unequal vulnerableization. Covid time was crip time because it was "polyrhythmic" (Kafer, 2021, p. 15) and thus incompatible with clock time and the temporalities of normalcy; it was also crip time because it provided the basis for imagining the future as crip in the expansive dismodernist sense by overturning imaginaries in which "the very absence of disability signals a better future" (Kafer, 2013, p. 2). Davis' concept of dismodernism grasps both the vulnerableization to which people are differentially exposed and the possibility for re-making the world along lines of support and solidarity by starting from an understanding of the world as a space in which "impairment is the rule, and normalcy is the fantasy. Dependence is the reality, and independence grandiose thinking" (Davis, 2002, p. 31). While differential vulnerableization defines both pandemic and non-pandemic times, crip utopias during the pandemic proliferated "prototypes" of experience that "disassemble the regnant fantasies of wholeness and completion" (Davis, 2013, p. 16) and, in this way, materialized a dismodernist re-organisation of society.

This dismodernist re-organisation of society created an ideal scenario in which to put to work the power for critique as well as coalition building that crip identification affords. As Kafer (2021, p. 15) notes, crip operates as "as a word, an orientation, an affiliation, a feeling" that has dragged many of us into a community we did not know existed, were not sure we wanted to join, "but needed, desperately." It also continually forces reflection on which bodyminds we include in our crip politics and

see as belonging within its imagined futures. This, in turn, prompts the question: "How do my failures to imagine others as crip restrict the coalitions to come?" (Kafer, 2021, p. 416). Deploying the insights derived from the lived experience of disability to examine pandemic lived experience of bodyminded vulnerability, contingency, and the societal change these demanded, it becomes possible to approach pandemic lived experience as having sparked possibilities for crip world-making practices that spilt over the abled/disabled and healthy/ill divide by superseding its very ontological underpinnings and by delineating a dismodernist field of relationalities.

The crip utopias of accessibility that developed during the pandemic indexed the unfolding of dismodernist revolutions in Eva von Redecker's sense of the term. Von Redecker (2022, p. 1) understands "revolution" as disentangled "from the inevitable associations with the storming of the Bastille" and as associated with "a form of radical change that is initiated in the interstitial spaces of a social order and that leads, through lengthy processes of transfer, to a new constellation." This sense of revolution captures how crip utopias and the lived experience that defined pandemic times operated by "rehearsing the future and repurposing the present" to generate new constellations in which "the unthinkable comes to be taken for granted" (von Redecker, 2022, p. 1). This dismodernist form of interstitial change is defined by a "path-breaking persistence" that holds hope for persistence in (post-)pandemic time but only on the condition of creating the infrastructure necessary to sustain crip utopias beyond the delimitation of "pandemic times" defined by governance (von Redecker, 2022, p. 20).

5. Crip Lived Experience and (Post-)Pandemic Infrastructural Sensibilities

A crip lived experience perspective yearns for and contributes to bringing about access intimacy through a politics of access that builds community as a form of collective survival (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018). This is what constituted the sensibilities that underpinned and were nourished by the unfurling of crip utopias and dismodernist revolutions during the pandemic. As this section will explore, they can be defined as infrastructural because they tied collective survival into the creation of infrastructures that would support it, while taking responsibility for this creation. Pandemic infrastructural sensibilities of this order resonate with a conception of natural disasters as preventable "by reducing vulnerabilities" (Kelman, 2020, p. 154). From a similar perspective, Bratton argues that the pandemic has made urgent the need for a "positive biopolitics" that takes responsibility for devising the "governmentality through which an inevitably planetary society can deliberately compose itself" (Bratton, 2021, p. 12). In other words, he calls for the emphasis to be placed on how society "knows itself, models itself, and attempts to compose, organize, and care for itself through various mechanisms,

be they public, personal, private, or scientific" (Bratton, 2021, p. 2). The flourishing of self-organised initiatives to re-compose society through online gatherings that I have discussed through the lenses of crip utopias of accessibility and dismodernist revolutions is a prime example of this. The centrality of access intimacy to their constitution lends support to a theorisation of the pandemic as having made visible the entangled nature of human existence. As Martin Parker notes, "Covid-19 has also allowed us to see infrastructure more clearly….Human beings have made a world that is profoundly entangled" (Parker, 2020, p. 3). For Bratton, the biological in the infrastructural spawns a conception of entangled vulnerableization that views "society as epidemiology does, not as self-contained individuals entering into contractual relationships, but as a population of contagion nodes and vectors" (Bratton, 2021, p. 33). This in turn calls for the emphasis to be shifted "from personal experience and toward responsibilities couched in the underlying biological and chemical realities that bind us" (Bratton, 2021, p. 34). Within this framework, awareness of "our common biological circumstance" should underpin sensibilities that "override, other subjective cultural divisions and associations" (Bratton, 2021, p. 33). It was precisely the common biological circumstance of the lived experience of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability that made necessary, and possible, the development of crip utopias of accessibility and dismodernist revolutions during the pandemic.

Pandemic crip utopias of accessibility and dismodernist revolutions can in this sense be re-visioned as having been woven together by infrastructural sensibilities of solidarity and care, and as infrastructural phenomena that belong within the order of the posthuman as it has been discussed in critical disability studies as a "complex fusing of human and non-human entities that mark the 21st-century citizen" (Goodley et al., 2021, p. 30). In parallel to Bratton's view, this view of the posthuman is predicated by an ontological perspective which places a focus on how "materiality and immateriality are entangled with one another" and, as a consequence, on how "human beings (and the non-human entities which we come into contact with) are capacitated through their interconnections" (Goodley et al., 2021, p. 31). It also yields a political perspective that works towards "a convergent model of social justice" to explore "the productive alliances, sustainable assemblages and affirmative connections that exist between humans and non-humans'' (Goodley et al., 2021, p. 45). It is this political perspective that valorises the politics of access that generated crip utopias of accessibility and dismodernist revolutions during the pandemic as both infrastructural and, fundamentally, crip.

6. The Lived Experience at the Core of (Post-)Pandemic More-Than-Social Models of Disability

A crip infrastructural vision for (post-)pandemic times speaks to a further aspect of Bratton's reflections around the place of the biological within infrastructural models. To capture the ways in which the biological operates a disruption of normalized patterns of organizing life, Bratton develops the concept of "the revenge of the real." Through this concept, he wants to capture how "the most difficult lessons to be learned are those that come when reality—in the form of a virus, of our vulnerability to it, of our inadequate governing responses to it—crashes through comforting illusions and ideologies" (Bratton, 2021, p. 1). The pandemic effected "a revenge of the real" as a conjuncture which forced us to confront the "real" as a "non-negotiable reality that upends comfortable illusions, no matter how hard some may try to push back with their chosen form of magic" (Bratton, 2021, p. 3). Situating crip utopias of accessibility and dismodernist revolutions within this framework illuminates the political flourishing that the disruption of normalcy that Bratton reads as "a revenge of the real" allows.

The idea of "a revenge of the real" carried by biological intractability particularly resonates with materialist conceptions of disability that seek to rescue it as an "active, dynamic, and substantive materialization" (Mitchell et al., 2019, p. 4) by attending to the logic of trans-corporeality by which it is animated. Alaimo proposes "a trans-corporeal paradigm that interconnects disability and environment," anchored by the disability sense that "one is always immersed within that which must be reckoned with" (Alaimo, 2017, p. xv). From this perspective, for example, environmental hazards and disability appear not as "individual health problems of bodies or environments gone astray but rather [as] shared continuities of each other" (Fritsch, 2017, p. 375). Disability is entangled, on this view, in a space of trans-corporeal "interconnections between the human and the more-than-human world" (Alaimo, 2010, p. 2) that are "not merely social but material" and that crucially unfold the "landscapes of interacting biological, climatic, economic, and political forces" (Alaimo, 2010, p. 2). This perspective can be read as infrastructural as it conceives of disability as a trans-corporeal phenomenon defined by participation in the creation of "alternative biologies, alternative subjectivities and viable nonnormative modes of life (human, animal, organic, inorganic)" (Mitchell et al., 2019, p. 2). The possibility for this perspective to contribute to radical change resides in its apprehension of embodiment's "productive, proactive expressive capacities" (Mitchell et al., 2019, p. 4), as what allows us "to inhabit the world as vulnerable, constrained, yet innovative embodied beings" (Mitchell & Snyder, 2017, p. 371). Crip utopias of accessibility and dismodernist revolutions during the pandemic sedimented into an alternative organisation of social relations with multiple attempts to inhabit the world through the lived experience of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability.

It is in this way that their constitution resembles that which Papadopoulos associates with more-than-social movements. Papadopoulos (2018, p. 1) uses the

term "posthuman culture" to refer to a "decentering of the human (and the humanist subject and its politics) into its relations to other living beings and the material world." He introduces the concept of "more-than-social movements" to propose an alternative to social movements which, on his view, fail in proportion as there is not an adequate "infrastructure that could hold together and protect the communities and perpetuate and multiply the effects of their actions" (Papadopoulos, 2018, p. 2); to correct this flaw Papadopoulos develops "an ontology of community and infrastructures of communal connectivity" (Papadopoulos, 2018, p. 2) that refer to "something much greater than social relations" (Papadopoulos, 2018, p. 3). Crip utopias of accessibility and dismodernist revolutions during pandemic times were precisely rooted in infrastructures of communal connectivity that were cripped by their emergence in response to the need to build collective survival out of a shared bodyminded contingency and vulnerability. In this way, the autonomous experimenting with worlds and with "the materiality of life" (Papadopoulos, 2018, p. 3) that attended the formation of crip utopias of accessibility and dismodernist revolutions performed the hallmark function of more-than-social movements to "change the materiality of the lived spaces and the bodies, human and nonhuman, of communities" (Papadopoulos, 2018, p. 3).

It is on this basis that they call for analysis through the lenses of critical disability studies concerned to attend to the biological core that lies beneath the social model of disability. In an attempt to upgrade the traditional social model of disability there have always been proposals in disability studies to build "a conceptual model that will enable an appreciation of difference and embed the plurality of lived experiences into a frame of action" (Owens, 2015, p. 388). An early example of this was Swain and French's (2001, p. 569) "affirmation model," which addressed "the limitations of the social model through the realisation of positive identity encompassing impairment, as well as disability." Another early example was Crow's (1996) "renewed social model of disability," which aimed to encapsulate "the total experience of both disability and impairment" by bringing back impairment for analysis alongside social disablement. Common to these explorations was the intent to contest the dualism that the traditional social model of disability originally set up between biological impairment and socially-constructed disability (or disablement), and to attend to the plurality of lived and embodied experiences of illness and non-normative bodyminds in their socio-economic, cultural and political contexts through the re-insertion of "an embodied ontology" as an ideal starting point for disability studies (Shakespeare & Watson, 2001). A re-connection of the biological and the social through a "more-than-social model of disability" captures their interconnection in the formation of crip utopias and dismodernist revolutions that emerged out of the lived experience of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability in pandemic times. It also spotlights lived experience of bodyminded contingency, vulnerability and inaccessible worlds as the core from which crip modes of worldmaking can originate in post-pandemic times. Within a more-than-social model, disability is not only defined by its socioeconomic, political, and experiential constitution but it is apprehended as a phenomenon itself constitutive of both individual life-worlds and collective ones.

7. Conclusion

In retrospect, 2020 marked a pivotal threshold in the history of disability; one in which the Covid-19 pandemic dispersed bodyminded vulnerability and contingency unequally across society, opened up space for a reconfiguration of realities and understandings of health and illness, and fostered possibilities for de-centering conceptions of permanent able-bodiedness within these. At the time of revising this article, August 2022, this reconfiguration seems to be crumbling under the pressure of the lifting of all government measures that sought to contain the spread of Covid and, in so doing, defined the contemporary conjuncture as a pandemic. It also seems to be crumbling in the face of widespread enthusiasm for the return to ways of living according to the rules of normalcy that this lifting has allowed. Mingus (2022) expressed "disabled rage" at the "stunningly self absorbed levels of abled entitlement" in January 2022, and declared: "We will not trade disabled deaths for abled life. We will not allow disabled people to be disposable or the necessary collateral damage for the status quo" (Mingus, 2022). In what has been declared the post-pandemic times, the "eugenic abandonment" Mingus talked about has been normalized and cherished as part of the new normal.

Crip lived experience developed before or during the pandemic affords the tools and perspective needed to challenge the post-pandemic return to normalcy by refusing to let the re-organisation of life and relations around access needs that was mainstreamed during the pandemic recede to its pre-pandemic exclusively crip dimension. As disabled people, it is in this refusal that we can take leadership, and a more-than-social model of disability allows us to do so by rooting disability at the centre of any crip world (re-)making endeavour. A powerful example of the stance we can take is provided by Tischer's (2022) recent call for "safer eventing" to remain a priority: This is fundamental for a variety of reasons, including the need to guarantee the safety of self and attendees and because hosting in-person events conveys the "implicit message that the pandemic is over and things are back to 'normal'" It is equally important because the return to in-person modes of finding community causes many of us "grief in being sent back to the margins" where attending events "is tiring, stressful, and expensive," and fear that "the ease that was the saving grace of the last 2 years is going to inexorably dwindle away."

The power to resist this dwindling away resides, whether in pandemic or post-pandemic times, in the owning of our lived experience of disability or body-minded contingency and vulnerability as possessing a revolutionary potential for remaking the inaccessible worlds that we live in. This is because the reconfiguration of realities and understandings of disability and body-minded contingency and vulnerability occasioned by disability as much as by the pandemic cannot be decoupled from the potential to create accessible collective realities and spaces. A more-than-social model of disability provides the theoretical framework for grasping as much because it identifies the biological materiality that infuses lived experiences of illness and disability as what contains the power to disrupt social structures and received understandings. Locating crip matter at the core of (post-)pandemic more-than-social movements allows us both to centre within these a disability perspective and presence, and to contribute to debates around models of disability a position that centres the world (re-)making power of bodyminded non-normativity as well as vulnerability and contingency.

On the one hand, thus, to value how pandemic lived experience and crip utopias of accessibility unfolded as dismodernist revolutions can be a useful starting point for the development of more-than-social models of disability. On the other hand, carrying forward the legacy of these utopias and revolutions involves a refusal to let them recede as a post-pandemic pursuit of normalcy asserts itself. One of the legacies of the pandemic might be the appreciation of how staying with the uncomfortableness that crip lived experience brings is entangled with sharing it with others, with re-encountering it through other bodyminded lived experiences, and with collectivising the myriad alternative realities it originates. Sandhu (2017) argues that owning lived experience may place us in a position to change the world for the better. From this perspective, the emancipatory possibilities afforded by crip lived experience and pandemic lived experience of bodyminded contingency and vulnerability may just reside in the epistemic revolutions that they animate when we turn outward, armed with new understandings of our world (re-)making power, to create crip post-pandemic worlds, with others.

Acknowledgments

Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

References

Alaimo, S. (2010). *Bodily natures: Science, environment, and the material self*. Indiana University Press.

Alaimo, S. (2017). Foreword. In S. J. Ray & J. Sibara (Eds.), *Disability studies and the environmental humanities: Toward and eco-crip theory* (pp. ix–xvi). University of Nebraska Press.

Altermark, N. (2020). *The function of risk groups*. I Human. http://ihuman.group.shef.ac.uk/the-function-of-risk-groups

Bloch, E. (1986). *The principle of hope*. MIT Press.

Bratton, B. (2021). *The revenge of the real: Politics for a post-pandemic world*. Verso.

Callard, F. (2020). Epidemic time: Thinking from the sickbed. *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, *94*(4), 727–743. https://doi.org/10.1353/bhm.2020.0093

Crow, L. (1996). *Including all of our lives: Renewing the social model of disability*. Women's Press. http://www.roaring-girl.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Including-All-of-Our-Lives.pdf

Davis, L. J. (2002). *Bending over backwards: Disability, dismodernism & other difficult positions*. New York University Press.

Davis, L. J. (2013). *The end of normal: Identity in a biocultural era*. University of Michigan Press.

Dinerstein, A. C. (2017, December 7). Concrete utopia: (Re)producing life in, against and beyond the open veins of capital. *Public Seminar*. http://publicseminar.org/2017/12/concrete-utopia

Fritsch, K. (2017). Toxic pregnancies: Speculative futures, disabling environments, and neoliberal capital. In S. J. Ray & J. Sibara (Eds.), *Disability studies and the environmental humanities: Toward and eco-crip theory* (pp. 359–380). University of Nebraska Press.

Goodley, D., Lawthom, R., Liddiard, K., & Runswick-Cole, K. (2019). Provocations for critical disability studies. *Disability & Society*, *34*(6). https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2019.1566889

Goodley, D., Lawthom, R., Liddiard, K., & Runswick-Cole, K. (2021). Key concerns for critical disability studies. *International Journal of Disability and Social Justice*, *1*(1), 27–49.

Greco, M. (2020). *The yearning for crisis*. Diecisiete. https://diecisiete.org/expediente/the-yearning-for-crisis

Ignagni, E., Chandler, E., & Erickson, L. (2020). *Crips and Covid in Canada*. I Human. http://ihuman.group.shef.ac.uk/crips-and-covid-in-canada

Kafer, A. (2013). *Feminist, queer, crip*. Indiana University Press.

Kafer, A. (2021). After crip, crip afters. *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, *120*(2). https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-8916158

Kelman, I. (2020). *Disaster by choice: How our actions turn natural hazards into catastrophes*. Oxford University Press.

Ktenidis, A. (2020). *Covid-19 and the implications of its ontologically violent messages*. I Human. http://ihuman.group.shef.ac.uk/ontologically-violent-messages

Liddiard, K. (2020). *Surviving ableism in Covid times*.

I Human. http://ihuman.group.shef.ac.uk/surviving-ablesim-in-covid-times

McNay, L. (2022). *The gender of critical theory: On the experiential grounds of critique*. Oxford University Press.

Mingus, M. (2011, May 5). Access intimacy: The missing link. *Leaving Evidence*. https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2011/05/05/access-intimacy-the-missing-link

Mingus, M. (2015). Hollow. In A. M. Brown & W. Imarisha (Eds.), *Octavia's brood: Science fiction stories from social justice movements* (pp. 109–122). AK Press.

Mingus, M. (2022, January 16). You are not entitled to our deaths: Covid, abled supremacy & interdependence. *Leaving Evidence*. https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2022/01/16/you-are-not-entitled-to-our-deaths-covid-abled-supremacy-interdependence

Mitchell, D. T., & Snyder, L. S. (2017). Precarity and cross-species identification: Autism, the critique of normative cognition, and nonspeciesism. In S. J. Ray & J. Sibara (Eds.), *Disability studies and the environmental humanities: Toward and eco-crip theory* (pp. 553–572). University of Nebraska Press.

Mitchell, D. T., Antebi, S., & Snyder, S. L. (2019). Introduction. In S. Antebi, S. L. Snyder, & D. T. Mitchell (Eds.), *The matter of disability: Materiality, biopolitics, crip affect* (pp. 1–36). University of Michigan Press.

Owens, J. (2015). Exploring the critiques of the social model of disability: The transformative possibility of Arendt's notion of power. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, *37*(3). https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.12199

Papadopoulos, D. (2018). *Experimental practice: Techno-science, alterontologies, and more-than-social movements*. Duke University Press.

Parker, M. (2020). *Life after Covid-19: The other side of crisis*. University Press.

Piepzna-Samarasinha, L. L. (2018). *Dreaming disability justice*. Arsenal Pulp Press.

Piepzna-Samarasinha, L. L. (2019, May 29). The joyful intersections of disability justice, care, and pleasure. *Yes Magazine*. https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2019/05/29/pleasure-activism-disability-justice-care-joy

Piepzna-Samarasinha, L. L. (2020). *Questions with Jeanne Córdova*. Lamba Literary. https://lambdaliterary.org/2020/05/5-questions-leah-lakshmi-piepzna-samarasinha

Price, M. (2015). The bodymind problem and the possibilities of pain. *Hypatia*, *30*(1). https://doi.org/10.1111/hypa.12127

Rice, C. M., Jones, C. T., & Mündel, I. (2022). Slow story-making in urgent times. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, *22*(3). https://doi.org/10.1177/15327086211072230

Sandhu, B. (2017). *The value of leadership in social change: The need for leadership and organisational development in social sector*. The Lived Experience. https://thelivedexperience.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/The-Lived-Experience-Baljeet-Sandhu-VLE-summary-web-ok-2.pdf

Schippers, A. (2020). *The Netherlands: An "intelligent lockdown."* I Human. http://ihuman.group.shef.ac.uk/the-netherlands

Shakespeare, T., & Watson, N. (2001). The social model of disability: An outdated ideology? *Research in Social Science and Disability*, *2*, 9–28.

Smith, S. E. (2021, July 14). Disabling utopia to save it. *The Nation*. https://www.thenation.com/article/society/disability-utopia

Sterne, J. (2021). *Diminished faculties: A political phenomenology of impairment*. Duke University Press.

Swain, J., & French, S. (2001). Towards an affirmation model of disability. *Disability & Society*, *15*(4). https://doi.org/10.1080/09687590050058189

Tischer, I. (2022, May 24). Why I won't be organizing any in-person fundraising events for the foreseeable future. *Disability Visibility*. https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/2022/05/24/why-i-wont-be-organizing-any-in-person-fundraising-events-for-the-foreseeable-future

Titchkosky, T. (2011). *The question of access: Disability, space, meaning*. University of Toronto Press.

Tremain, S. (2020, April 1). Covid-19 and the naturalization of vulnerability. *Biopolitical Philosophy*. https://biopoliticalphilosophy.com/2020/04/01/covid-19-and-the-naturalization-of-vulnerability

Tsakiri, M., & Mavrou, K. (2020). *The rights and lives of people with disabilities in the era of Covid-19*. I Human. http://ihuman.group.shef.ac.uk/rights-and-lives-in-covid

von Redecker, E. (2022). *Praxis and revolution: A theory of social transformation*. Columbia University Press.

Wong, A. (2020, June 15). "Normal" was actually not great for a lot of people. *Esquire*. https://www.esquire.com/news-politics/a32474779/alice-wong-interview-coronavirus-covid-19-lessons

About the Author

Arianna Introna received her MLitt and PhD in Scottish Literature from the University of Stirling and is now an associate lecturer with the Open University (Scotland). Her research interests lie primarily in Scottish literature and Scottish studies, disability studies and the medical humanities, Marxist autonomist theory, critical theory, and the social history of the welfare state. Her first monograph, *Autonomist Narratives of Disability in Scottish Writing: Crip Enchantments*, was published in May 2022.