



Curative Violence

How to Inhabit the Time Machine with Disability

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Dulles Hall 168

230 Annie and John Glenn Ave



Abstract: This presentation explores “folded time” in which the present disappears through the imperative of cure in the case of Hansen’s disease care in South Korea. By folding time, cure demands temporal crossings to a past through “rehabilitation” and “recovery” and to a future without disabilities and illnesses. By thinking about the imperative of cure as a time machine that seeks to take us to the past and to the future, I explore the possibility of inhabiting in the present with disability and illness.

Cure appears as an attempt at category-crossing from otherness to normality, which reveals the multiplicity of the boundaries that divide “human” and “inhuman” as well as “life” and “nonlife.” Kim also discuss the temporal trap into which discussions of non-Western societies in Western academic contexts might fall, one that denies coevalness or universalizes disability experiences across different cultural and historical contexts. In this analysis, cure is reframed, not as unequivocally beneficial nor politically harmful, but as a set of political, moral, economic, emotional, and ambivalent negotiations. To rethink cure is to unfold the past, present, and future in order to recognize the various modes of the presence of disabilities and illnesses.

Bio: Eunjung Kim is Assistant Professor in the Department of Women’s and Gender Studies and Disability Studies Program at Syracuse University. Her research and teaching involve transnational feminist disability studies, visual cultures of vulnerability, Korean cultural history of disability, humanitarian communications, asexuality theories, and queer inhumanism.

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