

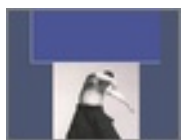
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Unimaginable Bodies: Intellectual Disability, Performance and Becomings

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Hickey Moody, Anna. 2009. *Unimaginable Bodies: Intellectual Disability, Performance and Becomings*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers. ISBN 978-90-8790-854-6 [Book]



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Abstract or Description

To move beyond the theory and practice divide, to leave the mind-body distinction behind us, to affirm rather than negate them, are among the most wise principles of our age. They are lessons learned from Deleuze and Guattari: we still do not know what bodies can do, because we still think of bodies and minds in restrictive and hierarchical ways. Yet few, very few works push through to the other side or even show us what it might look like, instead of merely preparing a cerebral path, and in so doing falling back into older modes of thinking and outdated cultural models. The great achievement of Anna Hickey-Moody's book on intellectual disabilities, dance and philosophy is then to have shown us a way to truly think of disability as ability, created within multiple cultures and in changing environments. In offering a thoughtful, sensitive and genuinely immersive immersion in the work of the Restless dance ensemble, she puts Deleuze and Guattari's concepts to work: we may not only understand them, but also discover a world where they find a setting suited to a novel critique on multiple differences resistant to simple ordering and judgement. This allows for a powerful critique of discourses in their reliance on terminologies based around impairment and lack. Hickey-Moody demonstrates the cost of defining levels of ability against norms and around the concept of wholeness. More importantly, thanks to her work on dance she shifts the academic, political and ethical frame for living in a world of differences away from classification and coping, and towards forms of affirmation sensitive to the power to transform limits embodied by senses, affects and ideas. This book will change disciplines, not only because it makes things possible in new ways, but because it releases minds and bodies too long devalued in bygone ones.

Professor James Williams, the University of Dundee

Unimaginable Bodies draws on the thought of Spinoza, and Deleuze and Guattari, in novel ways in order to confront medical and sociological categories of intellectual disability. When this philosophical approach is coupled with Hickey-Moody's fascinating reflections on her work with Restless Dance Company, the ethically vital and empowering book promises to transform mundane sense(s) of ability and disability.

Professor Moira Gatens, University of Sydney

'Unimaginable Bodies is an indispensable study that deepens our understanding of disability and corpor offers us a luminous reframing of long-standing questions about bodies, ethics, senses, movement, and Gerard Goggin , University of New South Wales, Australia

Author biography:

Dr. Anna Hickey-Moody is a lecturer in the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies at the University Sydney. She is interested in how we can re-frame questions of social justice, and as such, her research in across cultural studies of youth, disability and gender. Drawing on philosophy and the arts, Anna is inter how bodies marked as somehow being 'disadvantaged' might be thought in new ways. She is co-author Masculinity beyond the Metropolis (Palgrave) and co-editor of Deleuzian Encounters (Palgrave).

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