



PAUL K. LONGMORE

Institute on Disability

Our Mission:

Part think-tank, part cultural center, the Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability introduces new ideas about disability and disabled people. It expands its founder's concept of social justice by hosting unlikely conversations that transform thinking about the human condition, past and present.

2013 annual report

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A MESSAGE *from our* DIRECTOR:

THE PAUL K. LONGMORE INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY offers a prime example of new life growing from a loss that our community continues to feel deeply. This past year proved challenging as I grappled with missing a dear friend and mentor while honoring his memory and being true to the Institute on Disability's social justice mission that Paul Longmore launched at San Francisco State back in 1996. But I had two more goals for my first year as director: 1) to establish a strong physical and virtual foundation, and 2) to begin reaching out to the campus and broader world on several issues of major importance to the disability community. We found enormous good-will at every turn from people who knew and loved Paul, and who still wanted to honor him in some way. This kind support represents a fundamental part of who we are and how we got to where we are. It's those countless ways everyone seems to say: "Paul would be so proud!" Given all that we have accomplished after just a single academic year, I must humbly agree.

We faced two important challenges that we fully embraced as part of our mission and have already started to address. First, society still tenaciously holds onto older, negative stereotypes about disabled people as passive victims isolated from mainstream ideas and concerns, as individuals who need help rather than those who can actually offer it; stigma, prejudice, and unquestioned preconceptions cause some discomfort with our message, which in turn means that we must devote real effort not simply to get the word out, but also to ensure that we strike the right chord. While the rewards are immense, such outreach involves many one-on-one conversations that require careful listening, sensitive questioning, and gentle persuasion. Our task is made considerably easier by the fact that disability is everywhere once you know to look for it – it's mostly a matter of finding that unique way of connecting to each person or group.

Second, being ambitious, and times being what they are, we must raise considerable funds to ensure the Longmore Institute's success and long-term survival. The hours spent attending workshops, becoming web-detectives, meeting with administrators and program officers, writing up grants, and meeting with people who want to learn more about what we're doing have been an amazing learning curve for me as an academic who tended exclusively to my teaching and my research.

As critical as it is, fundraising was only one of the areas we focused on this year. Since my arrival in August 2012, we have set up our lovely two-room office on the ground floor of the Humanities Building; organized and catalogued one of the best disability studies libraries in the world; hired a terrific two-person staff and a team of dedicated interns; welcomed scores of visitors from on campus and from around the world; and hosted a number of events, all of which we have captured on our fast-expanding website – another accomplishment in itself. We also launched a series of projects, including the major initiatives described in more detail in this report. Each one furthers our mission of showing disability to be a generative, creative force with benefits for everyone. They blend scholarship, teaching, and community outreach through partnerships we have established among campus departments and community groups.

Above all, we've fostered countless improbable conversations among people – our students, our colleagues, and our friends, from accidental tourists to fellow travelers – about sometimes difficult, always timely topics with far-reaching implications for everyone: what does it mean to offer universal access? How do you change thinking by and about people whose place in the world seems so static and taken for granted? What happens when you consider disability as central to all conversations, not as a marginal condition always in need of fixing, but rather as something to offer fresh perspectives?

I invite you to explore our exciting work and to join us in bringing about the pivotal transformations that historian, activist, and teacher Paul K. Longmore inspired in so many of us.



In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Catherine Kudlick".

Catherine Kudlick
Director, Paul K. Longmore Institute
kudlick@sfsu.edu



HONORING PAUL K. LONGMORE



WHEN HE PASSED AWAY UNEXPECTEDLY IN August 2010, Paul K. Longmore left a legacy that the Institute seeks to honor and expand. Under the leadership of Professor Catherine Kudlick, the newly incarnated Institute on Disability has had a productive first year, filled with new partnerships, successful events, and impressive progress toward our major goals. In line with our mission and San Francisco State's dedication to social justice, our projects and events sought to challenge prevailing notions that disability can only be a hopeless tragedy by showcasing disabled people's strength, ingenuity, and originality. Drawing upon the vibrant Bay Area disability community, we have been promoting new forms of teaching, scholarship, artistic creation, strategizing, and free-wielding conversation for disabled and nondisabled people alike.

We aim to honor Paul Longmore's legacy by being the leading source of information and inspiration for fresh thinking about disability and disabled people on campus, in the San Francisco Bay Area, nationally, and internationally. By blending academic rigor, careful analysis, open conversation, creativity, and a healthy dose of our founder's irreverence and humor, we want to engage every kind of person to imagine human potential in new ways.

This year, we held two major events in honor of Paul Longmore and we began the important project of making his extensive collection of papers broadly available to community members and scholars around the world.

10-11-12: THE LAUNCH OF THE LONGMORE INSTITUTE

Our official kick-off took place on October 11, 2012 when nearly a hundred people, including members of the campus and Bay Area disability communities, came to honor our friend and colleague with the launch of the institute. SF State President Wong's wife Phyllis welcomed the group and participated in the "unribboning" of the quilt made from Paul Longmore's famous disability-themed T-shirt collection. The event showcased three student panelists who exemplify the diversity, ingenuity and generative potential of disability. We've posted captioned videos of the event online.

MISCHIEVIOUS ENTANGLEMENTS: THE EMBODIED HISTORIES OF PAUL K. LONGMORE — SCHOLAR, TEACHER, ACTIVIST

Scholars, former students, activists, and community members came together on April 12, 2013 to share stories and to learn about the work of this noted historian, advocate, and friend, as part of the Organization of American Historians' annual conference. Director Catherine Kudlick was organizer and chair of this panel, which also included: Mary Lou Breslin, Victoria Lewis, Laura Garrett, Mary Felstiner, Kim E. Nielsen, Susan Schweik, and Eva Sheppard Wolf. Following the panel, we co-hosted a reception with the department of History, providing additional time for laughter and tears as we shared memories of Longmore and his impact.

HONORING PAUL LONGMORE'S PAPER LEGACY

In Spring 2013, the Longmore Institute hired a professionally-trained archivist to preserve and catalogue the more than forty boxes of Paul Longmore's papers. They contain his notes on teaching and research, as well as university business. And Paul was an avid correspondent online and off, having strong opinions about numerous disability policies and issues during the late 20th and early 21st centuries. We have appreciated the help of SFSU librarians, who guided us through this process, and are pleased that his papers will soon be included among the University Library's Special Collections for consultation by researchers. Longer-term plans include digitizing them in an electronically accessible format so that anyone, including those with print-reading disabilities, can have access. Meanwhile, this year Director Kudlick oversaw the completion of Longmore's long-awaited Telethon book, which is now under review at an academic press.

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

WHILE OUR PRIMARY EFFORTS THIS YEAR FOCUSED on laying the groundwork for the major projects we outline in this report, we also took important strides to develop the Longmore Institute in tangible and intangible ways, starting with a concise mission statement, clear goals, a distinguished advisory board, and a comprehensive communication strategy.



OUR GOALS

This first year (2012-2013) we sought to establish the Institute's physical and virtual presence as well as to begin reaching out to people on and off campus to spread our unique message. For 2013-2014, we have three goals to build on these efforts: 1) strengthen our community partnerships, 2) make concrete connections with SF State faculty, and 3) redouble our fundraising efforts. Our long-term plans for the Institute require growth. We seek to have funds to support faculty and graduate students to promote critical disability studies, offer physical and virtual resources for researchers and teachers nationally and internationally, and be a leading place for innovating thought and conversation.

OUTREACH TO SFSU

One of our major goals and accomplishments for our first year was to reach beyond the College of Liberal & Creative Arts to other units and departments at SF State. To this end, we sought out administrators, faculty colleagues, and key staff people to tell them about the Institute, introduce them to critical disability studies, and find common ground that might serve as the basis of future intellectual and cultural collaborations. Many of the projects and events in this report are the direct result of conversations and collaborative partnerships with SFSU faculty, service providers, and students.

ADVISORY BOARD

We established our initial advisory board, a distinguished and diverse group made up of dedicated university administrators, faculty, and respected community members. We convened quarterly meetings during which the board reviewed plans, assisted with establishing priorities, advised on development strategies, and generally provided guidance on the Institute's activities. We look forward to having the benefit of the continued input and perspective next year.



INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

In the fall, we launched the Longmore Institute Internship Program, and by the spring, we had three interns and a volunteer. Our interns tackled a variety of projects, from helping with accessible event planning to conducting basic research. In exchange, we provided them with an introduction to disability studies during weekly meetings with the aim of fostering skills that they will put to good use when they enter their careers. (Read our interns' end-of-year reflections in Appendix A).

OUR SPACE

Since we moved into our new home in Humanities 135/136, we've worked to make it welcoming to colleagues, students, and members of the community from near and far. We estimate that we have had as many as two hundred visitors this year, including international guests from Brazil, Norway, Australia, and France. The space has been used by SFSU groups, including the Autism Spectrum Group, the Rehabilitation Counseling Association, and the Disabled Programs and Resources Center. From professors interested in learning more about disability studies to students writing papers and seeking guidance, these conversations have energized us and convinced us that the Longmore Institute has valuable contributions to offer.

OUR DISABILITY STUDIES LIBRARY

Thanks to Paul Longmore's extensive book collection, contributions from the estate of avid bibliophile Steve Dias, and gifts from others, along with ongoing acquisitions, we have the basis of a first-rate disability studies library with over 850 books. In the spring, we cataloged the collection online. With support from friends of the Institute, we hope to create digital copies for people with print-reading disabilities. For now, growing numbers of undergraduate and graduate students have come to consult, converse, and get ideas for research projects.

COMMUNICATION AND ONLINE PRESENCE

In September 2012, we launched the Longmore Institute website. We have also initiated efforts to build a social media presence through Facebook, Twitter, and our blog, "Disability Remix." Topics have included an 86 year-old losing his sight who learns from his legally-blind daughter to use an iPad, a thank-you letter to the Americans with Disabilities Act from an able-bodied mother, and ruminations on media portrayals of this law. We also circulated newsletters to our growing mailing list of more than 750 people. We look forward to expanding our growing online presence in the coming year to bring additional attention to the Longmore Institute and our events.

OUR PROJECTS

THANKS TO OUR STRONG PHYSICAL, VIRTUAL, AND COMMUNAL connections, we have a number of projects that are already well under way. Though there are many overlaps and cross-pollination, they fall into two areas, "Disability, Community, and Culture" that brings San Francisco State into the broader community, and a second, "Teaching, Learning, and Disability" that brings the ideas of disability studies to San Francisco State.



I. DISABILITY, COMMUNITY, AND CULTURE

To promote the invaluable contributions of disabled activists, artists, athletes, and many others, we have a series of projects that explore the places people with disabilities have occupied, past and present. They help fulfill our goal of bringing attention to the Institute both inside and outside of San Francisco State. Whether one-time events such as film screenings and book readings or the longer term projects described below, they draw upon the unique talents of our partners. They are our gift to the community, a tangible representation of our mission.

Patient, No More!

This hands-on educational project teaches about the disability rights movement through a commemorative exhibit to mark the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 2015. Through this ambitious undertaking that brings together scholars, students, and community members, we seek to tell the unheard stories of a movement with strong local roots and broad national significance.

The exhibit will be based at the new Ed Roberts Campus in Berkeley, the symbolic and accessible center of the Bay Area disability community. The Institute's student assistant and interns have begun working with archivists at UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library, one of the leading repositories of information related to the disability rights movement, to locate material for the exhibit. In Spring 2013, we held conversations with faculty from SF State's departments of Design and Industry as well as Fine Arts, and will be pursuing conversations with others to mount the main exhibit and a component designed to travel to different parts of the Bay Area. Advised by prestigious historians, curators and archivists, the exhibit will garner much public attention and will generate invaluable resources for K-12 teachers and students in response to California's FAIR Education Act of 2011, which mandates the teaching of disability history.

Giving Back to SFSU:

- Through the project, San Francisco State University students will have a unique opportunity to participate in capturing history, rather than just being the passive recipients of a history education.
- The exhibit will include a traveling portion that will first be displayed at the Cesar Chavez Student Center Art Gallery, making the project outcomes accessible to the SFSU community.
- The larger exhibit at the Ed Roberts Campus will prominently display the many ways that SFSU made this exhibit possible, and because the exhibit will launch with the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a media-worthy event, we believe it will capture a good deal of attention.
- This project will celebrate the rich, local history of a significant but often neglected social movement, helping change attendees' perceptions of disability. These efforts fall closely in line with SFSU's mission to support social justice, and will thus present the University as a leader regionally and nationally.

Partners:

Much of our work this year has involved forming and nurturing partnerships with many diverse players throughout the US and especially those in the Bay Area that are central to this multifaceted project.

- The Ed Roberts Campus will host the exhibit, starting July 2015.
- We are collaborating with two archivists at the UC Berkeley Bancroft library, to incorporate their disability rights movement collection items into the exhibit.
- We have established partnerships with experienced museum curators, librarians, disability community members, community activists, and disability studies faculty.

Fundraising:

We are working particularly hard to secure funding for this critical undertaking for the Institute. It will be a key piece in our fundraising campaign in 2013-2014; the more we can raise, the more professional the exhibit quality and the more we can build-in innovative technologies to enhance accessibility for all visitors.



SUPERFEST: THE INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY FILM FESTIVAL

Superfest, an annual film festival held in the San Francisco Bay Area, is the longest running festival in the world to showcase cutting-edge films that portray disability culture in all its diverse, complex, and empowering facets. Bringing together filmmakers with disabilities, SFSU faculty and students, and consumer/advocacy organization San Francisco Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Superfest will not only offer new and complex representations of people with disabilities, but with the artistic integration of audio descriptions for blind and visually impaired audiences, Superfest will reimagine the very way audiences everywhere access film. The festival perfectly transmits and models the Longmore Institute's mission of challenging prevailing stereotypes while promoting examples of disability being a generative, creative force.

In 2012, leadership was transferred to Longmore Institute director Catherine Kudlick and Bryan Bashin, CEO of the San Francisco Lighthouse, to build upon the festival's previous foundations. In October 2013, we will host a scaled-back version of Superfest in the form of the "Dissies," an award ceremony focused on the "worsts" in disability and film. We will then aim to expand programming in 2014.

Giving Back to SFSU:

- Being on the ground floor of an innovative, growing film festival with local roots will provide hands-on employment and internship opportunities for students in Cinema Studies and BECA.
- The excitement and energy associated with a film festival on campus will generate interest academically, leading to companion courses on "Disability and Film."
- The festival will make San Francisco State a visible player in the Bay Area's vibrant film-festival scene, resulting in positive publicity in the community and San Francisco Bay Area arts scene generally.
- Opportunities for fundraising by providing pre-ceremony events for donors.

Fundraising:

Working closely with development at the San Francisco Lighthouse, we are seeking additional support through grants, and we are soliciting sponsors and individual donations.

II. TEACHING, LEARNING AND DISABILITY

Being part of San Francisco State means actively engaging in teaching and learning as well as contributing to the life of the mind. Whether nurturing first-rate scholarship, developing curriculum, or participating in academic conversations, the Longmore Institute has been energetically bringing the study of disability to initiatives and venues at the secondary and postsecondary levels. By looking critically at preconceived ideas about disability, such study will help sow the seeds for new thinking about disabled people.



FAIR EDUCATION ACT SUMMITS

As part of its dedication to disability history, the Longmore Institute began to help with curriculum development in response to California's FAIR Education Act (SB 48), which calls specifically for introducing disability history content and awareness to teaching K-12. On December 15, 2012, we co-hosted a one-day symposium that brought 35 stakeholders to SF State, along with the Bill's sponsors, State Assemblyman Tom Amiano and State Senator Mark Leno, to discuss future steps for generating curriculum content and effective ways of integrating it into existing lessons in American history at the high school level. The following April, Director Catherine Kudlick was invited as a featured speaker to present these ideas at "Beyond Diversity: What is a FAIR Education?", a one-day workshop for administrators and a select group of high school teachers hosted by Black Studies at UC Santa Barbara and the Santa Barbara Unified School District. In 2013-2014, we will be supporting FAIR education by looking for useful ways of incorporating disability history into teaching at the primary and secondary levels.

DISABILITY STUDIES AND THE SFSU CURRICULUM

To pave the way for introducing more disability content into courses in a wide variety of colleges, schools, and departments at SF State, the Institute began an ambitious program of outreach. Our student interns culled the most recent catalog for courses that explicitly deal with disability or that might be likely candidates for including it. Their work led to valuable pedagogic conversations to parse out what factors needed to be in place, but also yielded a long list of potential future collaborators. Beginning with the most obvious in fields such as Special Education, Health Education, and Rehabilitation Counseling, the Institute's director and assistant director began contacting individual faculty members and deans to explore possible areas of common interest.

Partly because of these efforts and also because of the Institute's increasing visibility on campus, Director Catherine Kudlick has been invited to present for several departments/classes. We have already found an unusually rich and diverse set of faculty who are eager to expand their research and/or teaching with the fresh analytic tools and insights of disability studies.

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC OUTREACH

Other disability studies events to which the Longmore Institute lent its support this year included:

- Talking Biopolitics: A Webinar with Assistant Director Emily Beitiks
- International Colloquium: History of Blindness, History of the Blind
- Greater Bay Area Disability Studies Consortium, co-organized by the Longmore Institute
- Access to Design Professions Symposium, where the Longmore Institute participated in planning meetings and Director Kudlick presided over a session.

III. IN THE WORKS

FUTURE PAST: DISABILITY, EUGENICS, AND BRAVE NEW WORLDS

In November 2013, the Longmore Institute on Disability will host a one-day public symposium on California's eugenic legacy. Building upon earlier conversations, a diverse network of historians, bioethicists, cultural studies scholars, and reproductive justice activists will come together to discuss how California - the U.S. state with the highest number of eugenic sterilizations to date - might atone for this past while promoting conversations about science and society today.

LONGMORE FELLOWS PROGRAM

For 2013-2014, we are planning for our first cohort of Longmore Fellows, three faculty whose current or future research and teaching would greatly benefit from incorporating the perspective of disability studies. The group will meet in a weekly seminar lead by Catherine Kudlick and Emily Beitiks to introduce key works in the field and to share research and teaching innovations based on what they are learning. In return, each Longmore Fellow will provide unique contributions to Longmore Institute major projects.

RETHINKING THE AGING PROCESS

We have had our first conversations to lay the groundwork for what will be an important future initiative: Disability and Gerontology.

ACCESSIBLE SPORTS

In the spirit of bringing unlikely groups together in support of disability as part of SF State's social justice mission applied to scholarship, teaching, and campus life, the Institute convened a series of constructive conversations about developing accessible, alternative sports for SFSU. More than almost any other aspect of university life, sports challenge prevailing views of disabled people as helpless and passive, while also providing opportunities for disabled and nondisabled students to work together. Alt-sports offer an exciting new approach for all athletes through challenging team sports such as Goal Ball (blind soccer), wheelchair basketball and rugby, beep baseball, power soccer, tandem bicycle racing, as well as recreational activities that build cooperation between disabled and nondisabled participants. Our meetings in 2012-2013 included representatives from academic departments, the President's office, the Disability Programs and Resources Center, and Campus Recreation. Three off-campus organizations joined us to offer guidance: the World Institute on Disability, which recently secured major funding from the Department of Education for a study of disability and fitness; the Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP); and UC Berkeley's Cal Star program for athletes with disabilities. In 2013-2014 we will assess where synergy among campus departments and programs and student interest is strongest, and identify events to showcase accessible sports.



SUPPORT THE LONGMORE INSTITUTE

If you or your organization is interested in donating to or collaborating with the Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability, please contact us:

***Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Ave.
Humanities Building 135/136
San Francisco, CA 94132
415-405-3528
pklinst@sfsu.edu***

***Catherine Kudlick, PhD, Director: kudlick@sfsu.edu
Emily Beitiks, PhD, Assistant Director: beitiks@sfsu.edu***



Appendix A: Internship Reflections

I. Kayla Tolentino

I am humbly grateful to have been a part of the Paul Longmore Institute on Disability as a student, an intern, and an ally for the past two semesters at San Francisco State University. I boast to people with pride of the small yet significant steps we have taken as a team. I feel as though all the time I have invested in here has taught me so much about social justice and equality and has expanded my vision for an inclusive world.... I recognize that I still have much to learn, but PKL has given me so much in terms of education and knowledge that I have and will continue to spread through my daily interactions with others.

In retrospect, I had come into institute with little awareness and recognition of the disability community. My privilege as an able-body and lack of exposure allowed me to remain oblivious of the marginalization and oppression people with disabilities face historically and contemporarily. At times, I initially felt uncomfortable (which is not necessarily a bad thing, as it pushes for an opportunity of growth) and intimidated because I am an outsider with little experience and awareness of disability issues.... The thing that enabled me to continue learning was the support I found at PKL and my willingness to learn from its discomfort. I never felt blamed for my previous assumptions that had limited my thinking.

Particularly, I enjoyed our Tuesday communal meetings during the second semester. Through the readings and our conversations, I feel better equipped with challenging the dominant ideology that has constructed disability in various contexts. In fact, in just a semester's work, I have seen such dramatic changes in my knowledge to the disability community....

My work with the institute is far from over. I want to still be a part of whatever I can be because my work there restores what potential I see in myself in being part of the world's steps into social equality and justice. I believe in our work and even as I continue to learn, I feel as though I can contribute. I wish I could articulate my ideas a little better and thus, I know I can work on my presentation skills but I am fortunate to have a space that allows for my voice to be heard. I am glad to be part of this movement and to be a part of this community. I look forward to all of the work we have ahead of us!

II. Mahalia Le Clerc

Interning at the Longmore Institute on Disability this semester played a key role in my own personal and intellectual growth.... After a Professor referred me to the Institute, I wandered into Cathy's office and found myself discussing disability with her for over an hour! Everything she told me about disability made sense and seemed to be things I had always felt at my core were true but had not yet been able to articulate to myself. It goes without saying; there were many "Aha!" moments. I quickly realized I wanted to be part of this organization and learn more about the way they viewed disability. I asked Cathy right on the spot if I could intern with the Longmore Institute, though it had not been my intention to do so when I first walked through her door.... Overall, my internship at the Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability has led to my own personal growth through the greater understanding of my own disability in the context of society and to my intellectual growth by challenging me to question my own assumptions around disability and think outside the box. I now see disability places I never noticed it before. In movies that in the past I would not have even noticed disability in, I now find it glaringly obvious and cannot help analyzing how disability is portrayed and how this portrayal supports or challenges societies understandings of disability.

III. Jordan Piorek

My internship at the Paul K. Longmore Institute on Disability has been an absolutely incredible experience. The directors of the program did an excellent job of showing the culture of the disability community and the prejudices facing the disability community. Not only did we discuss these social stereotypes, but we dissected them in every way we could, asking why they are there in the first place, what exactly it is doing for an individual with a disability and what can be done to change this outlook. There were weekly readings on different topics and I always found them to be very interesting, educational, and extremely entertaining. We took a beautiful field trip to the UC Berkeley campus to see the endless amount of material the school has about the history of disability.... We also had an awesome event honoring Paul K. Longmore and this particular event was important for me because it gave me hands-on experience with promoting disability events. My fellow interns also inspired me with their stories and insight and their consistent enthusiasm to be at the institute. This experience was the best part of my semester and not once did I feel unexcited to work at the institute. I am super excited for all the future projects at the institute and I plan on interning until I graduate!