

# **Fits and Misfits: Rethinking Disability, Debility, and the World with Merleau-Ponty**

**46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Merleau-Ponty Circle**

In-Person and Virtual (Hybrid)

November 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
Georgetown University, Washington, DC, USA

Much of Merleau-Ponty's thought centers around the idea that we find ourselves not separate from the world, nor even "in" it, but fully intertwined with it—caught up in a web of relations and forces that shape experience through and through. Certain relations and forces shape us in ways that are definitive for our sense of "fitting" or "misfitting," a framework I invoke from Rosemarie Garland-Thomson's seminal article, "Misfits: A Feminist Materialist Disability Concept" (Hypatia, 2011). Fits and misfits, in Garland-Thomson's sense, are everywhere, once you know how to look for them: spatial, placial, architectural, equipmental, technological, economic, social, cultural, the cosmos, and so on.

Scholars across disability studies have found Merleau-Ponty's oeuvre to be a source of inspiration—as well as critique—for thinking about disability in terms of fits and misfits as well as in conversation with other disability frameworks. We invite scholars from a diverse range of disciplines to explore the relationship between Merleau-Ponty's thought and issues relating to disability (broadly construed), debility (to invoke Jasbir Puar's work in *Right to Maim*), and the world. We welcome scholars of critical disability studies (understanding that term to pick out a very large interdisciplinary field spanning the humanities and social sciences), philosophy of disability, feminist phenomenology, Indigenous philosophy, de-/post-colonial theory, critical philosophy of race, as well as researchers in neuroscience, cultural and literary studies, and French and Francophone studies, among other fields and disciplines, to submit papers on this theme.

The conference is directed by Joel Michael Reynolds. Plenary and keynote addresses will be announced shortly. Submissions of no more than 3,500 words should be prepared for anonymous review and sent to Joel Michael Reynolds (joel.reynolds@georgetown.edu) with the subject heading "IMPC Submission" by July 1st, 2022. The annual conference features the M. C. Dillon prize and lecture for the best graduate student paper submission. To be considered for the M.C. Dillon prize, please indicate so on the cover letter of your submission.

To host the conference at a physical location, a certain percentage of talks will need to be presented in person (barring another public health or other such shut down). Please clearly indicate on the cover letter of your submission whether upon acceptance, you would attend the conference in person or virtually. If you plan to attend virtually because doing so physically presents insurmountable accessibility issues (of whatever sort, including economic ones), you are welcome (but not required) to include that information. You are also welcome to include there any anticipated accessibility needs, which will greatly assist in planning.