

**DISABLED PEOPLE, SECURITY  
SYSTEMS AND THE STRUGGLE TO  
RECLAIM THE ENABLING IN  
‘ENABLING TECHNOLOGIES’**

*SECURITY, ETHICS, AND JUSTICE: TOWARDS A MORE  
INCLUSIVE SECURITY DESIGN CONFERENCE  
JUNE 21-23, 2012, TÜBINGEN*



**Alan  
Roulstone**

# AIMS AND CONTEXT

- To reflect on the intersection of disability, difference and technological developments
- To explore whether it is surveillance and/or broader social processes that lead to disabling technologies
- Industrialisation and massification may be as important as surveillance per se
- To look at how security technology can better accommodate differences

# TECHNOLOGY & SECURITY-WHO IS DRIVING THE AGENDA?



# TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE AND THE SUBVERSION OF SPACE

- The dramatic shifts from industrial to post industrial lives and the diffusion of ICTs in more areas of our lives is accompanied by the subversion of predominant views of time and space

(Giddens 1998).

# STONIER-NEURAL EMANCIPATION

- **Stonier (1983)....the technology of the factory age extended the musculature, new microchip technologies however extends neurological capacity**

# THE ASSISTIVE TURN

- Assistive technologies allow a plurality of communication, information and task completion through voice activated, speech output, icon-based software alongside technical improvements in mobility, dexterity and spatial technologies (Weinberg, 1990)

# THE WAR OF DESIRE AND TECHNOLOGY AT THE CLOSE OF THE MECHANICAL AGE

- New technologies allow the...  
negotiating of realities and the  
conjunction of social spaces and  
activities bound together by webs  
of physical and ideological force.  
(Stone, 1995)

# TECHNOLOGY & GLOBALISATION

- Indeed the increasingly globalised and disciplined nature of contemporary society, coupled with the rapid pace of technological change could lead to further social exclusion for disabled people

(Goggin and Newell, 2003 paraphrased)



# DISABLING TO ENABLING TECHNOLOGIES?

- The advent of new technologies is helping to highlight and overcome diverse barriers. However, negative attitudes, disabling structures and technical problems continue to limit the extent of the redefinition of environments.

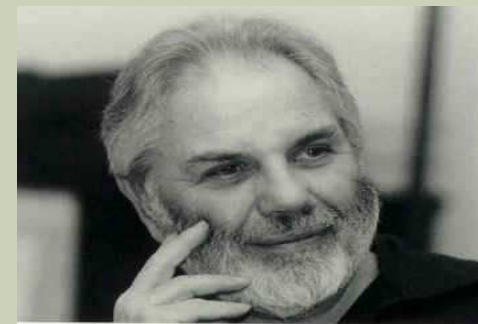
(Roulstone, 1998)

# TECHNOLOGY OF CONSPICUITY

- “I don’t want to be particularly conspicuous on account of my particular way of dealing with my disability or because of my disability for that matter. I really want to be known as yes, a person that has a disability but has a lot of attributes too. So I’d like to be known in context rather than just one part of me being known. Often the visible technology that I use attracts attention to that”. (Cited in Lupton and Seymour, 2000)

# IRVING ZOLA: DOING TOO MUCH TOO TECHNICALLY

- Technology can also do too much for those of us with disabilities. The machines technology creates may achieve such completeness that they rob us of our integrity by making us feel useless (Zola, 1982)



Irving Kenneth Zola  
1935-1994

# INDUSTRIAL ARCHETYPES

- **The object of industry is to make such machines of men as cannot err....**

**Josiah Wedgewood, 1769**

## ARCHETYPES#2

- The new manufacturing enterprise required a man of Napoleon nerve and ambition, to subdue the refractory tempers of work-people accustomed to irregular paroxysms of diligence, and to urge on his multifarious and intricate constructions in the face of prejudice, passion, and envy

Andrew Ure, 1853

# ARCHETYPES #3 SCHMIDT & STAKHANOV



## MARCUSE (1964)

- Indeed, what could be more rational than the suppression of individuality in the mechanization of socially necessary but painful performances; the concentration of individual enterprises in more effective, more productive corporations. That this technological order also involves a political and intellectual coordination may be a regrettable and yet promising development.

# STANDARDISED & DIS-ABLED SELFHOOD

- Only in the last 40 years have disabled people been seen in principle to fit with aspects of mainstream lives across a range of policy issues-education, employment, housing, diverse sexualities and wider civic contributions. (Roulstone and Prideaux, 2012)



# STANDARDISED LIVES



# NON STANDARD SELVES



# LEGISLATION

- Anti-discrimination legislation in the form of the US ADA 1990 and UK DDA 1995 (now Equality Act 2010) address disabling environments, with accessibility issues being addressed in the US by the 1996 telecommunications Act, 1973 US Rehabilitation Act (S508) etc (Lawson & Gooding, 2005; Lawson, 2008).
- Articles 2 & 3 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008) afford rights to reasonable accommodation and universal design and article 20 to personal mobility (UN, 2008).

## PROGRESS?

- **The Air Carrier Access Act of 1986 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 each contributed to making people with disabilities more mobile than at any time in history. But then came the terrorist attacks of 9/11, and security measures at our nation's airports changed drastically for everybody**

(Moakley, 2005).

## NEGATED LAW IN PRACTICE?

- Most national jurisdictions see equality and rights laws over-ridden by safety and security laws (EHRC, 2010)
- The European Commission's Towards a Barrier Free Europe for People with Disabilities acknowledged that reasonable accommodations are still difficult to achieve in practice. (Brussels, 12.05.2000 COM(2000) 284 final)

# AIRPORT SECURITY (PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES) BILL

- The Bill would require the government to take measures to ensure that the dignity of stoma bag users and other disabled people is protected at airport security checkpoints throughout the United Kingdom and the European Union. Under the Bill, it would be the duty of the government to ensure that those airport security staff who are responsible for body searches were trained in preserving the dignity of stoma bag users and those with other disabilities. (HoC, February, 2012)

# USA TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION TSA GUIDANCE

- When a passenger with a disability or medical condition calls TSA Cares, a representative will provide assistance, either with information about screening that is relevant to the passenger's specific disability or medical condition, or the passenger may be referred to disability experts at TSA.
- Travelers with Disabilities and Medical Conditions, TSA,  
<http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/disabilityandmedicalneeds/index.shtm>

# LIMITS TO ENABLING TECHNOLOGY

- User involvement in the design and review of assistive technologies remain very limited
- Technologies are largely ameliorative rather than liberatory for disabled people
- Attitudes continue to undervalue or devalue disabled people in the 21st Century

(Roulstone, 2004)



# TECHNOLOGY AS PART OF A BROADER LIFETIME ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS



# CONTACT

[alan.roulstone@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:alan.roulstone@northumbria.ac.uk)