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Colonising Disability

Colonising Disability explores the construction and treatment of disability across Britain and its empire from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Drawing on a wide range of sources, Esme Cleall explores how disability increasingly became associated with 'difference' and argues that it did so through intersecting with other categories of otherness such as race. Philanthropic, legal, literary, religious, medical, educational, eugenistic and parliamentary texts are examined to unpick representations of disability that, over time, became pervasive with significant ramifications for disabled people. Cleall also uses multiple examples to show how disabled people navigated a wide range of experiences from 'freak shows' in Britain, to missions in India, to immigration systems in Australia, including exploring how they mobilised to resist discrimination and constitute their own identities. By assessing the intersection between disability and race, Dr Cleall opens up questions about 'normalcy' and the making of the imperial self.

Esme Cleall is a senior lecturer at the University of Sheffield. She is the author of *Missionary Discourses of Difference: Negotiating Otherness in the British Empire, c. 1840–1900* (2012).

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Impairment and Otherness Across Britain and Its Empire, c. 1800–1914

Esme Cleall
University of Sheffield

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To Mum and Dad, for all their love

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