Philosophy Department Colloquium Presents

Katharina Heyer
Associate Professor & Graduate Chair of Political Science

Friday – April 15, 2016 at 2:30PM
Sakamaki Hall C-308

WRONGFUL BIRTH, GENETIC GATEKEEPING, AND REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE: THE DISABLED BODY ON TRIAL

This presentation traces the reappearance of the disabled body in public deliberations over reproductive and genetic politics that use disability to frame arguments about which bodies are worthy of protection, how and why we limit reproductive choices, and how families may seek financial support for the raising of their children with disabilities. The disabled body features prominently in these debates, used by both proponents and opponents of abortion rights, prenatal testing, and wrongful birth claims.

I will argue that the re-emergence of the disabled body contributes to a re-medicalization of public conceptions of disability that stands in direct contrast to the types of rights-claiming and antidiscrimination campaigns waged by the contemporary disability rights movement. At the same time, it offers new opportunities for a disability politics that affirms reproductive autonomy while simultaneously challenging public perceptions of disability and refocusing debates to larger questions of health care and social justice.

Katharina Heyer is an Associate Professor and the Graduate Chair of the Political Science Department at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa.

Katharina Heyer is Associate Professor of Political Science and Law & Politics. Her research and teaching focus on the sociolegal inquiry into rights, social movements, and comparative law. Born and raised in the American sector of what was then called West Berlin, as well as spending years living in Japan, she developed a lifelong interest in the American influence on German and Japanese postwar politics, welfare states, and legal reforms. Trained as a comparative political scientist she finds her intellectual home in the law and society movement and in disability studies.

Everyone is welcome to attend.
For disability access information, please call 956-8649.