

AABANY 2025 Fall Conference

Disability Rights and Asian American Identity

New York Law School

Saturday, September 27th, 2025

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Speakers

Prianka Nair, Co-Director of the Bet Tzedek Civil Litigation Clinic, Cardozo Law School

Eman Rimawi-Doster, Senior Organizer, Disability Justice

Moderator

Amanda Chan, Associate Attorney, Outten & Golden

AABANY 2025 Fall Conference CLE

Disability Rights and Asian American Identity

Saturday, September 27th, 2025, 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Speakers: Prianka Nair and Eman Rimawi-Doster

Moderator: Amanda Chan

Agenda

- 09:00 - 09:05 AM: Introductions
- 09:05 - 09:15 AM: Historical events of Asian American Identity
- Chinese-American Exclusion Act and how Asian exclusion shows up
 - Grounded in racism and ableism
 - Policies that have formulated the Asian American Identity as an anti-war, anti-imperialist political identity
 - Racism in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic
 - Defining ableism, what constitutes disability and what doesn't throughout history
- 09:15 - 09:30 AM: Intersectionality of Asian American identity and disability
- Explaining Disability Justice
 - Important role of Reparations – Community-based, community-derived solutions, not necessarily reflected in the case law
 - Discussion of PTSD and C-PTSD in the immigrant community
- 09:30- 09:40 AM: Insight into Asian Americans or the general population approach disability rights
- Awareness
 - Stigma
- 09:40 - 09:55 AM: Exploring existing barriers and case studies on “equity” for disabled Asian Americans under current policy, and
- Lyft Class Action – ADA class action about WAV vehicles, still no pathway to get inclusive transport for disabled populations,
 - Inaccessible subway stations – even successful lawsuits don't result in results

- Systemic Reasons as to why this is happening to marginalized groups,
 - The role of white supremacy in policy making
 - Access-a-ride: on-demand pilot program, the MTA trying to skirt around the law, Paratransit, subway accessibility portion
- 09:55 - 10:10 AM: Strategies disabled Asian Americans can use to amplify their voices and effect systemic change
 - John Berge Police Torture Case
 - People with disability were neglected during Pandemic Reparations
- 10:10 - 10:20 AM: Any new status given President Trump's anti-DEI initiatives
 - Federal government's involvement in city and state laws
- 10:20 - 10:30 AM: Questions and Answers

NYCLE Credit

1.5 Diversity and Elimination of Bias
(Non-transitional ONLY)

Faculty Biography

Amanda Chan

Associate Attorney, Outten & Golden

Amanda Chan is an associate at Outten & Golden LLP, and a member of the firm's Individual Practice Group, representing employees in discrimination and retaliation matters. Prior to joining the firm in 2022, Amanda represented consumers, workers, and nursing home residents in individual and class action litigation at Finkelstein, Blankinship, Frei-Pearson & Garber LLP. Amanda earned her B.Phil. from the University of Pittsburgh in 2016 and her JD from Harvard Law School in 2020. During law school, Amanda was a summer associate at Winston & Strawn, served as a student attorney at the Wilmerhale Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School, and interned at the Death Penalty Project in London, UK.

Prianka Nair

Co-Director of the Bet Tzedek Civil Litigation Clinic, Cardozo Law School

Professor **Prianka Nair** joined Cardozo in 2025 as Co-Director of the Bet Tzedek Civil Litigation Clinic after serving as Assistant Professor of Clinical Law and the Faculty Director of the Disability and Civil Rights Clinic at Brooklyn Law School. Prior to joining the faculty at Brooklyn Law, Professor Nair worked as a public interest attorney at Disability Rights New York, where she conducted abuse and neglect investigations, focusing on access to services in correctional facilities across New York State. She has also litigated cases and led policy initiatives to achieve equal rights for persons with disabilities. Her litigation included cases involving violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Fourteenth Amendment. She has also represented clients in all aspects of guardianship and related proceedings in state and federal court. Professor Nair earned her law degree in Australia and served as a Solicitor for the Australian federal government before completing her LL.M. at Columbia Law School, where she was a James Kent Scholar.

Eman Rimawi-Doster

Senior Organizer, Disability Justice

Eman Rimawi-Doster is a Black, Native American and Palestinian woman who lives in NYC. She began writing poetry and prose early in life. Her natural creativity steered her towards becoming a spoken-word artist, educator, and youth organizer for dozens of non-profit organizations in New York City including The Audre Lorde Project, FUREE, Casa Atabex Ache, The Jed Foundation. She went on to teach creative writing, community organizing, history, and political science workshops to youth in New York. She's been focused on organizing around disability rights and staying true to her passion for community connectedness and proven strength. She started Amped Up, an organization that helps disabled people to be creative and live lives they love, through fashion, creativity and social gatherings. She is also putting out

graphic novels and children's books where disabled people are the main characters, as well as facilitating workshops to support businesses who employ disabled people to better support and interact with their staff. Eman joined NYLPI as Senior Organizer of the Disability Justice program. She will be organizing around making Access A Ride better for their customers.

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EXPLORING THE INTERSECTION OF DISABILITY RIGHTS AND ASIAN AMERICAN IDENTITY

SEPTEMBER 27, 2025, 9AM
AABANY FALL CONFERENCE



Prianka Nair

Associate Clinical Professor of Law
Co-Director Bet Tzedek Civil Litigation Clinic



EMAN RIMAWI-DOSTER

SENIOR ORGANIZER, DISABILITY JUSTICE

erimawi@nylpi.org

Eman Rimawi-Doster is a Black, Native American and Palestinian woman who lives in NYC. She began writing poetry and prose early in life. Her natural creativity steered her towards becoming a spoken-word artist, educator, and youth organizer for dozens of non-profit organizations in New York City including The Audre Lorde Project, FUREE, Casa Atabex Ache, The Jed Foundation. She went on to teach creative writing, community organizing, history, and political science workshops to youth in New York. She's been focused on organizing around disability rights and staying true to her passion for community connectedness and proven strength. She started Amped Up, an organization that helps disabled people to be creative and live lives they love, through fashion, creativity and social gatherings. She is also putting out graphic novels and children's books where disabled people are the main characters, as well as facilitating workshops to support businesses who employ disabled people to better support and interact with their staff. Eman joined NYLPI as Senior Organizer of the Disability Justice program. She will be organizing around making Access A Ride better for their customers.



Advocates for Workplace Fairness



Amanda T. Chan

Associate

📍 New York

✉ achan@outtengolden.com

📞 (516) 788-7159



Defining Ableism

"A system that places value on people's bodies and minds based on socially constructed ideas of normality, intelligence, excellence, desirability and productivity. These constructed ideas are deeply rooted in anti-Blackness, eugenics, misogyny, colonialism, imperialism and capitalism.

This form of systemic oppression leads to people and society determining who is valuable and worthy based in a person's language, appearance, religion and/or their ability to satisfactorily [re] produce, excel and "behave."

You do not have to be disabled to experience ableism."

- working definition by @TalilaLewis, updated January 2022, developed in community with disabled Black/negatively racialized folk, especially @NotThreeFifths.

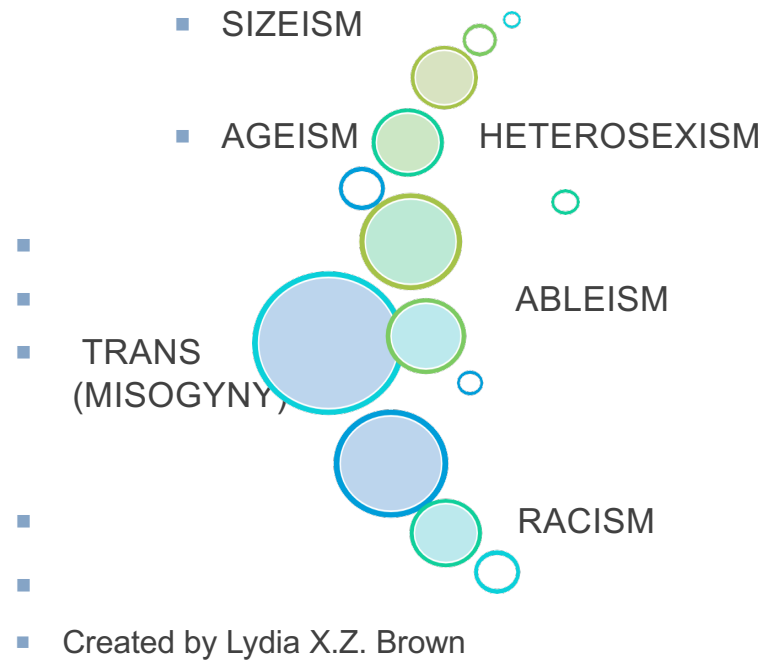


ABLEISM AND OTHER FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

- “Ableism is connected to all our struggles because it undergirds notions of whose bodies are considered valuable, desirable and disposable.”

- Mia Mingus

ABLEISM WORKS ACROSS SYSTEMS



THE ABCS OF ABLEISM



Affective emotions or attitudinal
reactions



Behavioral actions and practices;



Cognitive beliefs and stereotypes
that go beyond general negativity

HOW DOES ABLEISM MANIFEST?

Interpersonal

1. Overt aggression
2. Overly protective behaviors
3. Envy
4. Disgust reactions/ Disease avoidance ideas
5. Inspiration Porn
6. Belief that life is not worth living with a disability

Institutional

1. Broad policies that disproportionately impact people with disabilities
2. Epistemic Injustice
3. Pathology Logic
4. Carceral logic underpinning law and policy

OVERT AGGRESSION

“

**WE HAVE OUR OLD, WE HAVE
OUR WEAK AND WE HAVE OUR
DRAINS ON OUR RESOURCES.
THIS VIRUS IS TARGETING THOSE
SECTORS OF OUR POPULATION.**

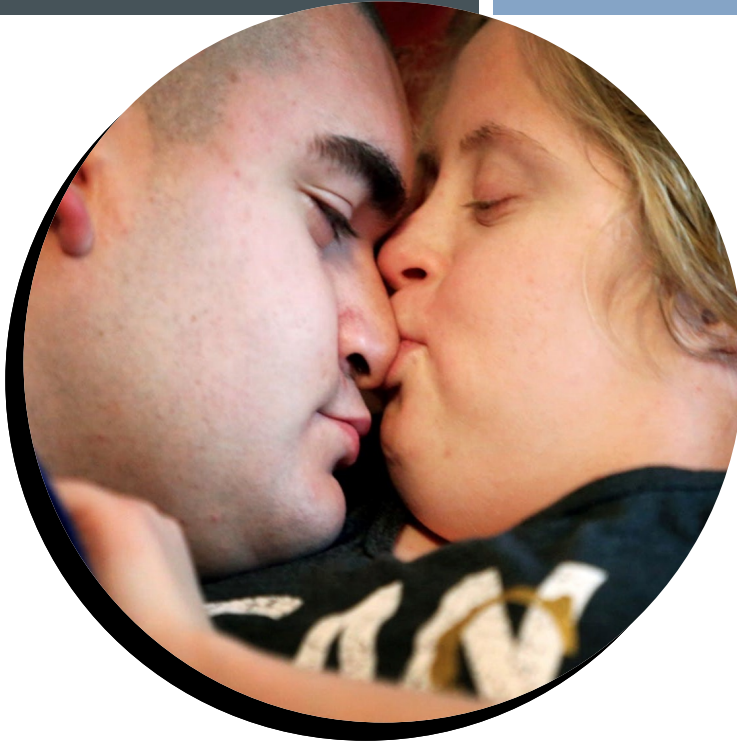
KEN TURNAGE
CHAIR OF THE ANTIOCH PLANNING COMMISSION
POSTS ON FACEBOOK - APRIL 23, 2020



“

**BUT AS SPECIES, FOR OUR
NATION AND AS A PLANET WE
WOULD STRENGTHEN WHEN
THIS IS ALL SETTLED.**

KEN TURNAGE
CHAIR OF THE ANTIOCH PLANNING COMMISSION
POSTS ON FACEBOOK - APRIL 23, 2020



Rachel Larson, 21, and Nicholas Hamilton, 24, who have developmental disabilities, have been dating about a year.

OVERLY PROTECTIVE BEHAVIORS

- Preventing people with disabilities from engaging in sexual relationships – obstacles include arbitrary curfews, approval from family members or guardians and undergoing a sexual capacity assessment.
- Guardianship statutes that impose a guardianship just because the individual has a diagnosis with a disability
- Putting cameras in group homes to prevent abuse and neglect

CARCERAL ABLEISM

“Carceral ableism or sanism is the practice and belief that disabled/mad people need special protections in ways that often increase their proximity to carcerality and vulnerability to premature death.”

- Liat Ben-Moshe



ENVY/ ANXIETY ABOUT THE DISABILITY FRAUD



George Takel

Liked · August 2

She was filled with the holy...spirits

Like · Comment · Share

👍 81,078 people like this.

Top Comments ·

🗨️ 52,087 shares



Dena Gassner Not funny, George Takel. Disappointed in you.

Like · Reply · 🗨️ 11 · August 2 at 11:21am



Stacy Anderson *aisle

Like · Reply · 🗨️ 2,061 · August 2 at 11:15am

💬 73 Replies



Wynn Anne Sibbald Not fair: she may have MS or some other disorder that prohibits her from walking or standing for lengths of time. Doesn't mean she isn't allowed to drink or use a wheelchair. And, yes, *aisle

Like · Reply · 🗨️ 3,327 · August 2 at 11:17am

💬 168 Replies

HISTORY

- Page Act of 1875 – against involuntary immigration from “China, Japan, or any Oriental country”
- 1882 Act to Execute Certain Treaty Stipulations Relating to Chinese (“Chinese Exclusion Act”) – to restrict the immigration of Chinese
- “Asian American” as anti-war and anti-imperialist





Student activism at SF State escalated dramatically with the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) strike, in which a multiracial coalition shut down the campus in order to demand that students be granted “self-determination” over their educations and that the college be more accessible and relevant to communities of color. The strike lasted for nearly five months, from November 1968

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to March 1969, making it longest student strike in U.S. history. Hundreds of students were arrested and thousands more refrained from attending classes. For months, national attention focused on the events at State, with newspaper stories and television broadcasts reporting on demonstrations, clashes with police, and the antics of the conservative Japanese American interim president, S. I. Hayakawa, who joyously repressed the student uprising. The strike was significant for five reasons. First, it united Asian American, Black, Latino, and Native American students in a multiracial Third World coalition. Second, working-class, non-white students assumed primary leadership, while sympathetic white students played supporting roles. Third, it demonstrated a new vision that knowledge and education should serve as tools of liberation for Third World people. Fourth, the strike succeeded in establishing the first School of Ethnic Studies in the nation. Fifth, it sparked a wave of student activism that spread far and wide, as students around the U.S. demanded that their colleges and universities, and even high schools, provide a more relevant education.

COVID-19



By —
Terry Tang,
Associated
Press

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5 years after pandemic surge, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders still targets of hatred

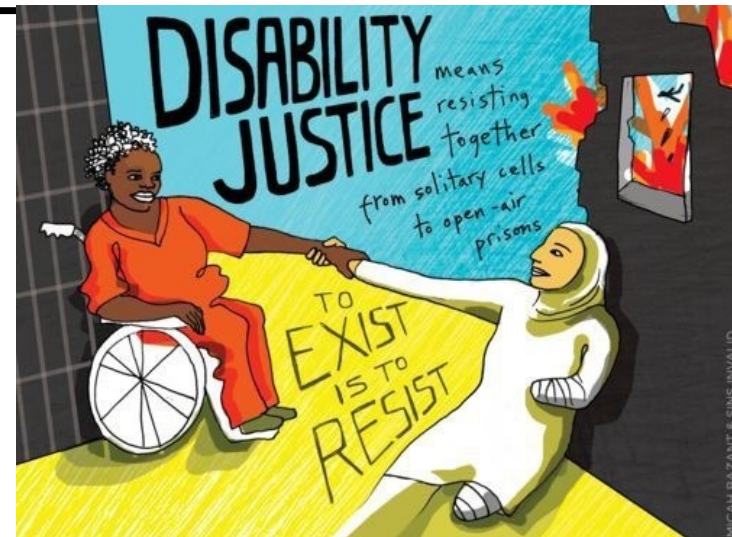
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"ASIAN-AMERICAN" AS IDENTITY

10 PRINCIPLES OF DISABILITY JUSTICE

- 1 **INTERSECTIONALITY** *"We do not live single issue lives" --Audre Lorde*
Ableism, coupled with white supremacy, supported by capitalism, underscored by heteropatriarchy, has rendered the vast majority of the world "invalid."
- 2 **LEADERSHIP OF THOSE MOST IMPACTED**
"We are led by those who most know these systems." --Aurora Levins Morales
- 3 **ANTI-CAPITALIST POLITIC**
In an economy that sees land and humans as components of profit, we are anti-capitalist by the nature of having non-conforming body/minds.
- 4 **COMMITMENT TO CROSS-MOVEMENT ORGANIZING**
Shifting how social justice movements understand disability and contextualize ableism, disability justice lends itself to politics of alliance.
- 5 **RECOGNIZING WHOLENESS**
People have inherent worth outside of commodity relations and capitalist notions of productivity. Each person is full of history and life experience.
- 6 **SUSTAINABILITY**
We pace ourselves, individually and collectively, to be sustained long term. Our embodied experiences guide us toward ongoing justice and liberation.
- 7 **COMMITMENT TO CROSS-DISABILITY SOLIDARITY**
We honor the insights and participation of all of our community members, knowing that isolation undermines collective liberation.
- 8 **INTERDEPENDENCE** We meet each others' needs as we build toward liberation, knowing that state solutions inevitably extend into further control over our lives.
- 9 **COLLECTIVE ACCESS** As brown, black and queer-bodied disabled people we bring flexibility and creative nuance that go beyond able-bodied/minded normativity, to be in community with each other.
- 10 **COLLECTIVE LIBERATION** No body or mind can be left behind
-- only moving together can we accomplish the revolution we require.

www.sinsinvalid.org
SINS INVALID 2015






"ASIAN-AMERICAN" AS IDENTITY

- Invisible illnesses (PTSD, ADHD, Autism, Lupus, Crohn's Disease)
- 47% of migrants have PTSD







CPTSD (Complex PTSD)

Complex PTSD includes the core symptoms of PTSD including:

- 
Hyper-aware of any danger.
- 
Avoiding trauma triggers.
- 
Flashbacks.

In addition to the following symptoms:

- 
Difficulty regulating emotions.
- 
Feelings of shame or guilt.
- 
Trouble staying in relationships.

 Cleveland Clinic

“ASIAN-AMERICAN” AS IDENTITY

- Gentrification is a disability justice issue for Asian-Americans



Nearly Half Of Employees Fear Requesting Disability Accommodations, Data Shows

By [Gus Alexiou](#), Contributor. ⓘ Gus Alexiou is a London-based reporter cove... ▾

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Published Oct 30, 2024, 07:00am EDT

Almost half (43%) of employees don't feel safe about asking their employer about important disability accommodations that can help them thrive in the workplace according to new data released by inclusive hiring and retainment platform Inclusively.

WHAT IS “EQUITY”?

- Thinking beyond the confines of what gig capitalism is presenting to us

Disability rights groups battle Lyft for wheelchair accessible vehicles – again

Lyft officials said the company is exempt from the Americans with Disabilities Act and doesn't have to cater to people with nonfolding wheelchairs.



— Ansel Lurio, a participant in the pending class-action lawsuit against LYFT, alleges that the company needs to comply with ADA standards regarding accessible vehicles. Ansel is photographed in front of his van in the parking garage of his home in Yonkers, NY on August, 18, 2022.

Laurel Gollio For NBC News

JOHN BURGE – TORTURE ALLEGATIONS



**In Chicago, reparations
aren't just an idea. They're
the law**

For decades, a gang of Chicago police tortured and forced confessions from people in custody. Now, in a historic move, the city is teaching this shameful history in schools - but not everyone thinks it should. By Peter C Baker

By [Peter C Baker](#)



PANDEMIC REPARATIONS

Triage protocols and nursing home deaths

PRESIDENT TRUMP – WHAT’S COMING?

Trump Administration Poised to Cut SSI Benefits for Nearly 400,000 Low-Income Disabled and Older People

AUGUST 7, 2025 | BY [KATHLEEN ROMIG](#) AND [DEVIN O’CONNOR](#)

SHARE



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The Trump Administration is preparing to propose a rule to cut Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits and strip eligibility for hundreds of thousands of low-income older people and severely disabled adults and children.^[1]

ANY QUESTIONS?
