



RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES – 2014/2015  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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Katherine Runswick-Cole is Senior Research Fellow in Disability Studies & Psychology in the Research Institute for Health and Social Change at Manchester Metropolitan University. Katherine studied Modern History and Philosophy at The University of St Andrews (1985-89) and completed a degree in Psychology at the Open University (1999-2003). Katherine gained her PhD in the Department of Education at the University of Sheffield in 2007, where she was supervised by Professor Dan Goodley, exploring parents'/carers' experiences of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. Katherine locates her work in a critical disability studies perspective and has published extensively in the field. Recent publications include: *Disabled Children's Childhood Studies: critical approaches in a global context* (ed. with Curran, 2013, Palgrave MacMillan) and *Approaching Disability: critical issues and perspectives* (with Mallett, 2014, Routledge).

**Title: Disabled Children's Childhood Studies: informing research and practice?**

***Abstract***

This paper explores the emergence of disabled children's childhood studies as a different approach to inquiry. Disabled children's childhood studies present a paradigm shift away from the long-standing deficit discourses of disabled childhoods that have dominated Western culture and its reaches. Contemporary childhood studies have frequently contested normative, Eurocentric mantras that construct the 'standard child' and disability studies have challenged the medical discourses of childhood and the scope of its authority. However, while drawing on these two approaches, the aim, here, is to demonstrate that disabled children's childhood studies offers more than a combined critique. Crucially, in disabled children's childhood studies, disabled children are not viewed as necessarily *having problems* or *being problems* but as *having childhoods*. The paper concludes by asking how the principles of disabled children's childhood studies might be reflected in contemporary contexts for research and practice with children, particularly in the light of the changes for children in England following the Children & Families Bill (2014).