CURRENTS//CRIP TIME & CLIMATE CRISIS
The words in bold appear in a glossary at the end of this transcript.

CC:
The first time I encountered the term "**crip** time" was from Carrie Sandahl, who's a disabled scholar and author. And one of the ways that she talked about it was the idea that crip time begins at conception.

And that human beings have put these standardised markers in place that say, "By this point the fetus should have developed in this way, or should do this, or have that."

And so already, within weeks or months, if you're not conforming—
You're in crip time.

JWB:
Disability experience thrusts me out of the normative expectation, about time.
About how time is *supposed* to run, how bodies are *supposed* to work.

This is how we see that certain people become marked as those who "fail to develop" properly.

In the micro *and* in the macro, for an individual life and also for the broader life of a community, the imposition of different expectations about how development has to happen to be good and right and profitable and efficient—

All of these things are linked to climate crisis.

CC:
The choice to mark time in the way that human beings have, with clocks, with hours, with minutes, have really come from capitalism. You know, from trade and industry. From needing to define what time the factories open. And that then leads to deciding how much someone should accomplish in a day.

Disability has existed for *all* time, across *all* species.
But as soon as we standardised human beings, and time—
then disabled people were really pushed to the edges of society.

JWB
So I think we're perennially misjudging the time scale.

And because we mess up our thinking about time, that ends up constraining our choices.

We do the same thing when it comes to climate. We think we have more time than we do, and it means we have fewer good options to mitigate harm.

CC:
One of the ways I first understood crip time in my own life was through a notion of distance. It really was related to the act of walking for me.

Like, when I would ask people how far it was to somewhere. And they would say, "Oh it's just a five-minute walk" or "a ten-minute walk."

And I began to understand that their ten-minute walk
was not the same as my ten-minute walk.

JWB:
These are also really concrete ways that we see certain people's modes of being in the world [get] stigmatised.

This is how you don't measure up—particularly in the western, globalised North. There's a certain model of what an "accomplished" civilisation should be.

And these benchmarks for "appropriate development" are often intertwined with extraordinary violence and **extraction**.

CC:
My closest friends have now worked out that they need to explain distance to me in terms of what I can see. Because if I can *see* it, I can understand how it feels in my body. And how it feels today, actually. Because what might have taken me ten minutes yesterday might take me longer today.

Those who know me know to say things like, "It's from here to that lamppost over there, times five." It's often in lampposts. Lampposts are one of my main units of distance!

But if I was to set off with someone else's suggestion of what they think is a ten-minute walk, then it's possible I won't get there.

Or I *might* get there—but I won't be able to come back.

JWB:
A lot of people think about disability as something that only happens at the end of life, as a consequence of aging.

This assumption is a kind of denial. It's a way of saying "we don't have to think about that now. That's something to think about later." And, of course, I want to connect that to the way in which elders and people who are aged are often also really marginalised and pushed out of consciousness and away from dominant culture's attention. It's this pushing away.

I think disabled folks know something about what it feels like, what it *means,* to be on the other end of people's denial—people not wanting to look at us or think about us or account for our presence. Recognise us.

And it's quite similar to what we do with climate change.

Glossary:

currents: the flow of a river

crip: a reclaimed term used by some disabled people to express a political disability identity

extraction: the removal of something (such as food, coal, oil, gas, or minerals), especially when the process takes effort or requires force.

A 2018 UN Environment study found that extraction industries account for 50% of the world's carbon emissions—and more than 80% of biodiversity loss. https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/mar/12/resource-extraction-carbon-emissions-biodiversity-loss

To Learn More about Crip Time:

Karin Ljuslinder, Katie Ellis, and Lotta Vikström. "Cripping Time: Understanding the Life Course through the Lens of Ableism." (2020) *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* 22:1. http://doi.org/10.16993/sjdr.710

Ellen Samuels, "Six Ways of Looking at Crip Time." (2017) https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/5824/4684

Sav Schlauderaff, "When Crip Time is Chronic." (2019) *The Queer Futures Collective.* https://www.queerfutures.com/sundaysentiments/2019/12/29/when-crip-time-is-chronic

About Carrie Sandahl:
https://ahs.uic.edu/disability-human-development/directory/sandahl-carrie/