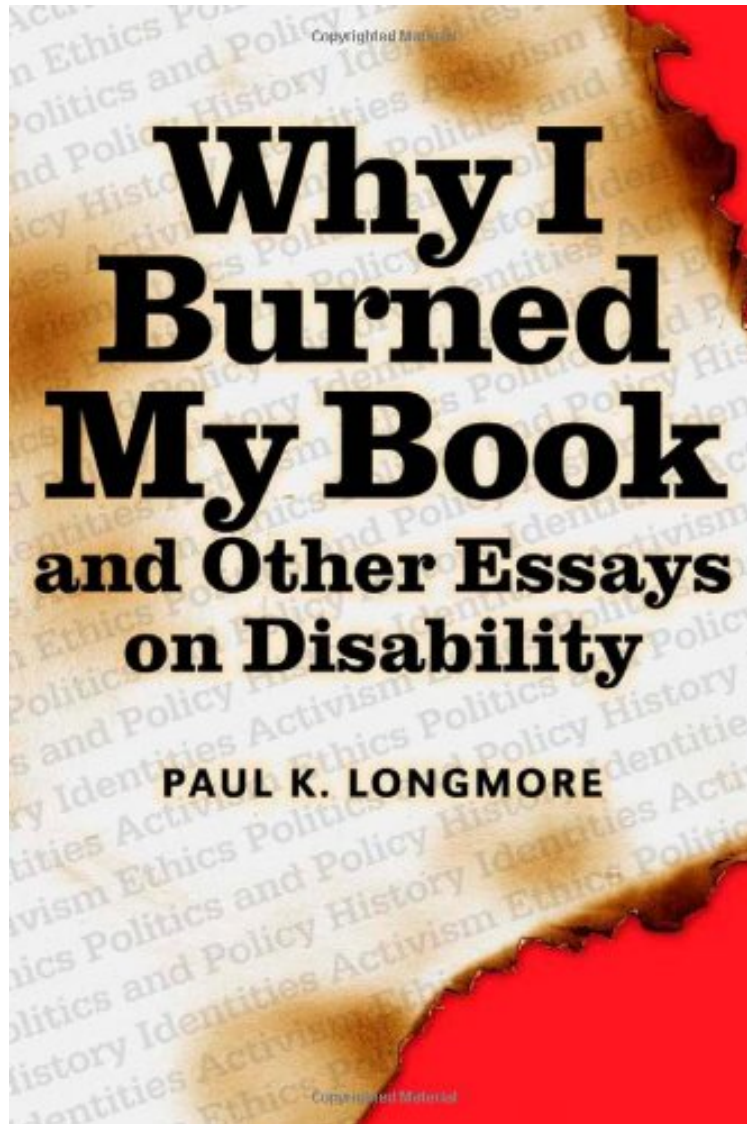


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Why I Burned My Book and Other Essays on Disability (American Subjects)

Paul K. Longmore

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This wide-ranging book shows why Paul Longmore is one of the most respected figures in disability studies today. Understanding disability as a major variety of human experience, he urges us to establish it as a category of social, political, and historical analysis in much the same way that race, gender, and class already have been. The essays here search for the often hidden pattern of systemic prejudice and probe into the institutionalized discrimination that affects the one in five Americans with disabilities. Whether writing about the social critic Randolph Bourne, contemporary political activists, or media representations of people with disabilities, Longmore demonstrates that the search for heroes is a key part of the continuing struggle of disabled people to gain a voice and to shape their destinies. His essays on bioethics and public policy examine the conflict of agendas between disability rights activists and non-disabled policy makers, healthcare professionals, euthanasia advocates, and corporate medical bureaucracies. The title essay, which concludes the book, demonstrates the necessity of activism for any disabled person who wants access to the American dream.

"The strength of Longmore's work [is] in remembering the ongoing marginalization of millions[.] Longmore challenges and disrupts dominant ideologies of 'normality' and disability. Furthermore, he offers an alternative in writing the study of disability as social history.... Longmore's text is a worthy read for its intellectual sensibility."-Metapsychology Online "Why I Burned My Book and Other Essays on Disability is a collection of some of his best writing on both history and policy. The combination of scholarship and activism displayed in this book is exciting."-H-Net "Why I Burned My Book is a must-read for anyone seeking to understand the history and the current issues of disability."-The Progressive "Longmore's newest work provides an engaging discussion of some of the major issues and concerns within the disability community as well as a scholarly review of the major events in disability history.... The book provides an in-depth accounting of disability rights history, scholarship, activism, and advocacy. It is lively and very accessible and is an important contribution to the files of disability studies, as well as broadening and deepening our national understanding of the complexity of our history, one the author's stated goals."-The Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare "[A] fine introduction to the contemporary study of disability."- s in American History "Longmore offers poignant observations about images of disability in American culture....A major strength of Longmore's essays is calling our attention to historical antecedents, so that current disability issues can be put in the context of developments in society and technology."-New Political Science "Paul Longmore is simply the best historian now writing about disabilities. This volume collects a series of major essays that have shaped the academic and public discourse about disabilities inside of and beyond the university. From the unwritten history of disabled people to questions of assisted suicide, and the public face of disability culture, Longmore writes intelligently, compassionately, and readably. Read these essays and learn!"-Sander L. Gilman, Distinguished Professor of the Liberal Arts and Sciences and of Medicine, The University of Illinois-Chicago "Paul Longmore's sharp and cogent criticism has always sought and found the soul of the disability rights movement. But these essays go far beyond activism and constitute a cultural document for a people adrift. Longmore's refreshing views represent an intellectual Ellis Island for people with disabilities, hampered by bureaucracy, myth and sentiment, trying to find a place in America. His stories are as important to this nation's sense of self as the Mayflower's landing at Plymouth Rock."-John Hockenberry, author of A River Out Of Eden and Moving Violations
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"Personal inclination made me a historian. Personal encounter with public policy made me an activist."About the Author
Paul K. Longmore is Professor of History at San Francisco State University. He is the author of The Invention of George Washington and the co-editor (with Lauri Umansky) of The New Disability History: American Perspectives.