Patrick McKelvey on Honest Work Done By Honest Dogs

Hopkins Press Podcast Transcript
Season 4 Episode 6
17 Sept 2025

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You are listening to the Hopkins Press Podcast. My name is Rahne Alexander and I'm the senior publicist for the journals division of Hopkins Press.

On today's episode, we're talking with Patrick McKelvey about his new article for *Theatre Journal* about the early 20th century publicity campaign that popularized the Seeing Eye Dog. Patrick McKelvey is an associate professor of theater at Notre Dame and his research focuses on the theatrical cultural and social history of disability in the 20th Century United States. His first book, *Disability Works: Performance After Rehabilitation*, published by NYU Press, examines the relationship between US disability policy and the disability, arts, and cultural movement between 1960 and 1990. He's also currently a National Humanities Center fellow as well as a book review editor for *American Quarterly*, which is another of the journals that Hopkins Press publishes.

Patrick McKelvey's *Theatre Journal* article, "Honest Work Done by Honest Dogs: Canine Unemployment, Interspecies Rehabilitation, and Disability Performance" will be available to read for free at Project MUSE for a few weeks after this podcast is released. Check the show notes for links. I learned a lot from this discussion. Please enjoy our conversation with Patrick McKelvey about honest work done by honest dogs.

Well, Patrick, thank you for joining me today on the Hopkins Press Podcast. Would you mind introducing yourself to the listeners?

Patrick McKelvey
Of course. Thank you so much for having me. My name is Patrick McKelvey. I am an associate professor in the Department of Film, Television, and Theater at the University of Notre Dame. And I am very happy to be here.

Rahne Alexander
Happy to have you here. And you've got this amazing new article in Theater Journal that looks at the early campaign to establish the Seeing Eye Dog in the culture, effectively as a way to help blind people be quote unquote "productive." And this is a such a fascinating historical account. I've learned so much. Can you trace how you came to write this piece?

Patrick McKelvey
Absolutely. Thank you so much. Happy to do so. I will note this is one of my longer answers, but I hope it might be worth the journey. So I wrote this article as someone who is a scholar of the social and cultural and theatrical history of disability in the 20th Century United States. And previously I have written extensively about the history of performance and rehabilitation.

My first book which came out with NYU Press last year is called *Disability Works: Performance After Rehabilitation.* And that book is looking at the kind of theatrical history of a disability policy paradigm called vocational rehabilitation which was like the centerpiece of disability employment policy in the mid to late 20th Century United States. And in that book, I am really tracing how the success of vocational rehabilitation, which is all about cultivating disabled people as economically independent, productive citizens, was contingent upon this like massive state investment in rehabilitation, theater, and performance, including things like funding the National Theater of the Deaf in 1967, and the ways in which these rehabilitation performance initiatives were both supporting this state investment in productive citizenship for disabled people but also went on to become the kind of infrastructural foundation for disability arts and culture later in the 20th Century.

So I say this to in part to set up the fact that in some ways this article that is looking at rehabilitation performance in an earlier period might seem like a kind of direct extension of that work in my first book in disability works. And to some extent it is but the kind of route I took from the book to the article is much less linear than that would seem to suggest. And that is while researching my first book, I was reading a lot about this really fabulous and interesting and complicated lesbian actress and producer from the early 20th century named Katharine Cornell. And while the following thing I'm about to say was not remotely pertinent to anything I was thinking about, it was everywhere in everything I was reading about Cornell. Cornell was very famous in general, but also in particular for appearing as Elizabeth Barrett in this romantic biodrama about the Victorian poet Elizabeth Barrett called *The Barretts of Wimpole Street,* in which there were allegedly constant audience controversies about a dog sleeping on stage. Elizabeth Barrett famously had a dog named Flush who was played by a cocker spaniel, also named Flush, in this production throughout the course of the 1930s. And allegedly, constantly audiences were in uproar that this dog was sleeping on stage and were alleging that the only way that this dog could be sleeping on stage was that he had been drugged and were constantly reporting the production to various humane societies, etc.

Now, there's a lot going on here, of course, but one of the things that was going on was a kind of inability to understand that a dog sleeping on stage, the canine actor sleeping on stage could be working, right? Could be working as that that sleeping on stage, laying down on stage could be the work of the canine actor in this moment. And while it's a completely different context, as I was thinking about this, there seemed to be an interesting kind of kinship between audience's inability to understand the labor of the canine actor in that moment and all of the weird ways and interruptive ways and sometimes violent ways that non-disabled people interact with service animals in our present. Right? The constant ways in which non-disabled people are always constantly trying to pet or dote on service dogs while they're working. And one of the ways that this comes up most constantly is a kind of inability for people to perceive or to understand that a service dog is working even when it's just lying at the feet of its companion on the subway in a restaurant etc. And so these are completely different contexts. There's a lot of work to do in to sort of understand these as parallel phenomenon. But thinking about that close or approximate parallel made me think I needed to understand how it was that people would have come to understand the labor of service animals in general and the labor

of service animals seeming to lie down on the job in this early to mid 20th Century context.

And so that led me into reading this sort of voluminous sort of publicly available archive of non-fiction literature about The Seeing Eye, which was the first organization to sort of systematically introduce guide dogs into the United States. And I started there because of the ways in which both sort of historically in our in our kind of popular imagination the guide dog for the blind is like the prototypical service dog. And so that was a bit of a narrative journey to sort of get there. But I was basically trying to write an entirely different article about cocker spaniels on Broadway in the 1930s. I just introduced all these kinds of interesting sort of like historical and political and theoretical questions that I needed to answer in order to write a footnote and it led me to write an article in a different period with a different uh set of evidence.

Rahne Alexander
This is great. I love these curiosity routes that we get to the research that we get to do. One of the things I learned from this article, and I don't think it had ever occurred to me to think of a dog as unemployed, and I love the quote, which becomes the title of your article, “Honest Work Done by Honest Dogs.” Does this seem to suggest there are dishonest dogs doing dishonest work?

Patrick McKelvey
Absolutely. So obviously I was also consistently amused during the process of doing the research for this article in terms of the very sort of serious and earnest ways that people were sometimes talking about canine unemployment, and thinking about unemployed dogs as a problem. And so I would say in terms of the sort of suggestion that the presence of the honest dog doing honest labor suggests its foil of the dishonest dog doing dishonest labor. I think absolutely!

And so I'll just sort of say how that how that comes to pass. And that is that the phrase honest work being done by honest dogs comes from Dorothy Harrison Eustis, who was an American philanthropist living in Switzerland at the time who had her own German shepherd kennel and eventually becomes interested in guide dogs. And she offers that phrase honest work done by honest dogs when she's observing dogs and their trainers at a guide dog school in Potsdam, Germany. Now, she does not go she does not have a theory of the “honest dog.” She does not elaborate this anymore, but there's a kind of consistency I see between that framing of the honest dog with honest labor and the kind of broader ideological project that she's invested in. And so here I would say the thing to note is that originally Eustis is not really particularly interested in guide dogs at all. She is a German shepherd fancier and enthusiast. She has her own German shepherds and she, like many people in the early 20th century, across a range of dog breeds with but particularly intense ways for some German shepherd enthusiasts are really concerned with the changes to the breed that have been occurring through the codification of dog breeds and the rise of dog shows in the late 19th century, where ostensibly the kind of physical morphology of the German shepherd is now arbitrary and it's for kind of purely aesthetic purposes and there's not an understanding of a direct relationship between form and function, right? That the German Shepherd's body is no longer the body of a dog designed to

shepherd or do other forms of work, but to live up to kind of arbitrary standards created by kennel clubs and breed organizations and these kinds of things.

And so Eustace and other folks of her ilk who are sort of invested in like redeeming the German shepherd from denigrated morphology that they have sort of supposedly been cast in through purebred breeding culture etc are really invested in a kind of perfect lamination between form and function. Right? The shoulder must be this way in order to have this effect. The back must be this long in order to have this particular effect. We want the dog to be sensitive in this way, but not sensitive in this way in order to be able to do such and such and such and such and such and such. And so I see that desired or imagined perfect lamination of form and function as the kind of honesty that she is invested in as like, the dog who looks like he's supposed to look in order to do the work that he's supposed to do. And this is to distinguish the German shepherd from dogs for whom there is like no relationship or an arbitrary relationship between form and function. And these are dogs who are nonworkers or who to the extent that they are workers are performance workers.

In the case of dog shows which in the late 19th century get institutionalized through their association with things like the circus like sideshows, etc. And so we think about like the longer history of performance labor being a kind of labor that people are very anxious about that. Many people are very anxious about uh in terms of it being a degraded or illegitimate or duplicitous form of labor or that it can only be or that it's a kind of labor that seems not to be labor at all. I see that framing of the honest dog doing honest labor in the context of the guide dog and other forms of work that German shepherds sort of take on in the early 20th century as an effort to sort of distinguish it from that feminized degraded labor of the show dog and of the house pet um as it sort of gets codified in the same period.

Rahne Alexander
Well, we haven't even gotten into the origins of The Seeing Eye Dog yet, which until now I had never realized was actually a brand name, and it's not even a hundred years old as a concept. I think as you said earlier, it's become kind of an iconic emblem in our understanding of what it is to be a guide dog. And you're looking at all this through the lens of performance studies. And of course, we're going to let the readers take their time with this history. But can you give a nutshell version of how The Seeing Eye capitalized on performance, public spectacle, if you will, to make guide dogs legible and acceptable to the larger public?

Patrick McKelvey
Sure. Absolutely! So, I would say at the time that the folks who founded The Seeing Eye were introducing guide dogs to the US in the late 1920s, early 1930s, they were confronted with two real challenges. The first challenge might appear more straightforward, right? And that is the challenge of like how do you train how do you train dogs to do this kind of work? How do you train a dog to stop at curbs, circumvent potholes, avoid other forms of danger? How do you train a dog to be infinitely obedient except for when it's not safe to be obedient and they need to not listen to their masters who may not be aware of traffic going certain directions and it might be best to disobey their human companion at certain points of time. How do you train and educate blind rehabilitants to have utmost faith and confidence in their dogs and to walk in the most normatively ideal ways that they'll be able to keep pace

with the dog in order sort of successfully sense shifts in the dog's pace and movement in order to be safe in order to sort of enjoy the sort of freedom of movement and freedom freedom of mobility that guide dogs were to promise.

The second challenge is where sort of performance enters the picture and that is that there was a representational challenge that accompanied the introduction of guide dogs. And so I would sort of note that while you know the sort of systematic training of guide dogs for the blind happens in the sort of immediately sort of post World War I moment, there is a much longer history of informal guide work performed by dogs for the blind and even more so of visual aesthetic and pictorial representations of dogs performing informal guide work for the blind. But largely prior to the mid-20th century when these systematic efforts take off, the sort of prevailing perception not only sort of in the kind of popular imagination but among blind leadership in particular is that for blind people to be associated and attached to and affiliated with canine companions was a sign of dependence was a sign of their failed autonomy — unlike what happens through The Seeing Eye which is a kind of transformation of the blind into productive citizens via their interdependence on these animals. And so one of the problems or challenges that The Seeing Eye is facing is not just creating the conditions in which dogs can do this work in which dogs and humans in collaboration can do this work, but how do we make it sort of transparent to the public that this is work, that it's legible as work, that this is respectable. And that these kinds of forms of companionship and kinship and partnering in public are supporting independence rather than dependence. And they essentially turn to performance to answer this question.

And really like performance is actually like a part of the contract basically for even allowing The Seeing Eye to exist. When Owen Morris Frank, who I'll discuss in a moment, was trying to convince Dorothy Harrison Eustis to bankroll The Seeing Eye, she was basically like “Do some spectacles in the United States and see if people buy into it, and if they do, then I can put some money behind this, but I'm not putting money behind it until I do.” And so the kind of first performance that really launched what becomes The Seeing Eye — and this is in in 1928, several months before the organization is formally founded — is that Morris Frank, who is a 20-year-old insurance salesman who hails from Nashville, Tennessee, arrives in New York City with Buddy, who is a young German shepherd who he's just been partnered with via Eustis. They're not coming from Nashville, they are actually coming from Vevey, Switzerland, where Eustis has her kennel and has as a kind of one-off partnered Frank with Buddy and sort of sent them to the United States to go on a kind of public relations tour. And so they get off the ocean liner and create this performance event that is simultaneously like hyper-spectacular and completely mundane at the same time. and that is just that they walk about like the busiest, most highly trafficked parts of New York. They spend time in in the Times Square Theater District. The thing that gets the most attention and where they're followed by lots of journalists and photographers is walking along West Street, which many people at the time, as is reported in all the writing about The Seeing Eye, was called Death Street just because of how dangerous it was, in terms of how highly trafficked it was, the lack of availability of stoplights and things like this. And in addition to getting the kind of attraction from ordinary onlookers just going about their lives in Manhattan, they were followed by journalists. They were followed by photographers. And this kind of debut performance was really mediated to the public. And as the kind of

story goes from Frank and from other various writings about this initial performance is that it's kind of like an overnight sensation that like radically changes things right away to the extent that for example they say that a leader for a blind organization who had previously been very opposed to the use of guide dogs because they were evidence of dependency. Like as soon as he catches wind of Frank's performance with Buddy in Manhattan is like get me a guide dog *immediately*.

Now, of course, it doesn't actually change that quickly, but what that performance did do, even if it didn't immediately transform the entire popular imagination around guide dog, what it did do was convince the people who will become the leadership of The Seeing Eye both of the validity of founding this organization and the importance of performance to support that organization. And so thereafter, just for years and years and years, Frank, in collaboration with Buddy, embarks on a series of lecture demonstrations and a range of kind of sites where they perform for a range of different audiences. They do this in fraternal organizations. They do it at elite boarding schools. They do it in the homes of wealthy potential benefactors. And this work is both to sort of demonstrate the legitimacy of guide dog use and its respectability, and the way in which it is enabling productivity rather than enabling dependency.

It's also successful for fundraising. It was a way to demonstrate the success and get money in their coffers. The entire sort of financial history of the organization would be radically different if not for the success of these performances. But then lastly, they weren't only performing for a kind of imagined general public who needed to be convinced of the success of these performances. They were also really performing for the social and economic elite, who had the resources and power to do things like allow guide dogs on transit in restaurants and other kinds of public accommodations. And so in a kind of moment where things are not focused in a kind of rights-based framework, performance becomes the kind of method by which the people and dogs who eventually become the founders of The Seeing Eye assert the legitimacy of the kind of public presence of canine guides and their human companions.

Rahne Alexander
Well, it's so fascinating how much of this story is rooted not just in capitalist productivity, but also in gendered norms and in genetics, eugenics, breeding. You write that the Seeing Eye was really casting not just for the appropriate dogs for the spectacle, but also the recipients of those canine services and affectations.
Can you talk a little bit about how that took shape?

Patrick McKelvey
Yeah, absolutely! And so, this is just a kind of question of casting is really central for them. Again, because what they're concerned with is not just creating rehabilitants and dogs who can do the work but rehabilitants and dogs who can appear to do the work and that's where these sort of questions of casting become really central. I'll talk briefly about casting dogs before moving to humans just because it's actually the kind of interface and interrelationship between those casting practices where everything is super weird and interesting.

So just as a baseline, I don't know if I've said this as forthrightly so far, but for the first several decades, The Seeing Eye exclusively used German shepherds, and they

did exclusively use female German shepherds. And this was part of a kind of broader gender division of labor that happens with putting German shepherds back to work in this period where sort of at about the same time that there's efforts in the Europe and US to cultivate guide dogs. There's also like the rapid influx of German shepherds into military work and police work and also to film work where canine actors like Rin Tin Tin are performing representations of the military work and police work that other German shepherds are performing offscreen and it's thoroughly, thoroughly gendered. It's all the male German shepherds are doing the military and police work and the reserving exclusively female German shepherds for the guide work and I'll say a little bit more about how that plays out and why that is or with what effects that is. but doing so requires I think jumping to the humans a bit.

And so in terms of casting humans, one thing that might be helpful to note is that in the kind of history of disability rights later in the 20th century, there's a frequent critique of what activists would call “creaming,” as in cream of the crop, which was a kind of indictment of the way in which rehabilitation organizations would distribute resources to those who faced the fewest barriers to being mainstreamed into or entered into that sort of economic and cultural and mainstream of the nation. And this absolutely sort of plays out in terms of who dogs are assigned to. It's not exclusively, but it is hyper hyper hyper overwhelmingly men to whom canine guides are assigned in the United States in these first few decades. They are always men who presumably want to return to work, right? And it's an idea of “return to work,” an assumption that they were once workers and that blindness has robbed them of the ability to work and the dog will restore them to that productivity. There's only one reference in all the reading I've done in these first few decades of them even considering assigning a guide dog to a black blind rehabilitant. And there are of course like lots of other questions.

There's a lot of investment in delineating access to dogs based upon questions of age largely with age as being a proxy for understandings of like ability and strength like at what age will one be strong enough, in order to keep pace with the dog, to handle the harness in particular kinds of ways, all these kinds of things. And kind of across the board, they do end up prioritizing providing access to the guide dogs to the people who are most proximal to normativity other than the fact of their blindness. And obviously gender plays out here, race plays out here, ability plays out here, age plays out here, but gender is one of the more interesting things to think about here, I think in part because of the gendering of the human rehabilitant relative to the gendering of the dog that happens here and that is just to sort of note that something that comes up in the non-fiction literature about The Seeing Eye a lot is that blind men who were not working or no longer working often depended upon their wives to function as human guides for them even as their wives were also entering into the waged workforce in order to work because their husbands could not. And so the project of The Seeing Eye is not just to restore and return blind men to work, but to restore the family to gender normativity. Right? Of creating the conditions of not only can the blind husband now go back to work because he has a dog accompanying him, but also now the wife who no longer has to work as a human guide for her husband can return to unwaged life in the home. And so one of the things that that sort of plays out is trying to like maintain this kind of transferring the heterosexual unit of the human guide of the wife, working with the husband to the heterosexual unit of the female, German shepherd guiding the husband.

Neil Pemberton who's an animal historian, who's written great work about the training practices in particular for The Seeing Eye talks a lot about the kind of imagining of the blind male rehabilitant and the female guide as a kind of model heterosexual unit. And you see this sort of play out mostly in in the ways in which they sort of talk about the kind of effective labor that the dogs perform for them beyond guiding like lots of discussions of like holding and being held of enjoying companion and silence with one another in the space of the home. And so throughout all of this, the sort of casting processes that are involved in determining who will be the sort of ideal shepherd for this and who will be the ideal relevant for this, there's lots of things going on as I mentioned before in terms of race, gender, sexuality, age, ability. But there is really a kind of prizing of heterosexual intimacy that is only unusual for the fact that it's cross species. Yeah, there's a lot more to say about all the sort of interesting and surprising and fascinating things that sort of play out in terms of gender and racial and ability normativity throughout all of this reading.

Rahne Alexander
Well, I'm no stranger to the process of unlearning. And so, you close on a note which is ringing quite familiar to me, a call to unlearn a century of assumptions built on the foundation of this initial campaign. You say, "If one of the most liberatory forms of support that service dogs might provide is inner species friendship as a way of life, then achieving justice for disabled people and their service animals might require unlearning these century old rehabilitation repertoires. A collective crip revision of the educated disobedience Buddy brought to Broadway in 1928." Do you have any recommendations for where to begin with this kind of unlearning project after of course reading your article?

Patrick McKelvey
[Laughter] Of course. Of course. So I think I'm a bit more skilled at the prompt than the instruction to sort of actualize these possibilities. But it is a really important question and I think I guess to start what I would say is that you know earlier I narrated intellectually like how I came to this article but the article is also really grounded in political commitments I've had for a long time which could just concern like perpetual seething rage at the kind of anxiety surrounding alleged service animal fraudulence in the United States. Right? I mean, you can't, not a day goes by where one is not kind of overwhelmed by media replicas or social media discussions and anxiety about supposedly illegitimate use of service animals. And what we do know, like even if we concede that service animal fraudulence occurs, which is not something I'm actually willing to concede *ever*. But even if we were to concede that such fraudulence occurs, we know that it's not nearly remotely empirically as much of a problem as the ways in which disabled people and their companion animals are barred from participation in public life. And so I think part of this work is really just about not making people anxious or about sort of stemming the tide of anxiety around allegedly fraudulent use of service animals.

And so one thing to sort of think about here is, that I talk about in the article, right, that the introduction of guide dogs to the United States was the kind of first widespread codified introduction of a service animal into the US. But it's certainly not the first time that dogs or other animals have been understood to perform services,

including things like sort of therapeutic services. Like Katherine Grier, who's a pet historian, writes about this like from the mid-19th century onward.

There's lots of investments in understanding pets as providing the service of companionship to lonely adults like among other kinds of things. And I think we need to sort of perceive the broad range of services that dogs and other animals can provide as legitimate need. And so part of this really has to do with like resisting the sort of efforts to like certify and legislate and codify exactly what constitutes a service animal. And so like one of the ways that this plays out in the Americans with Disabilities Act and in other places is trying to maintain a strict distinction between dogs doing or — I mean, I say "dogs" because they're the prototypical service animal but maintaining a strict division between animals engaging in natural behavior and animal animals engaging in trained behavior, the kind of idea according to these efforts to sort of legislate what constitutes a service animal. Right? Is that a service animal? Is it only a service animal if it's doing a service that it's been trained to do. And the question I would have, and I mean I not it's not that I would have, it's a question I do have, [laughter] is about whether or not it's important that a dog be trained or that an animal be trained to do a service or that the animal achieve the effect of providing service irrespective of whether they're sort of trained to or not.

And this is a point that feminist disability theorist Margaret Price makes. Does it matter that a dog is trained to alleviate panic attacks if being accompanied by the dog alleviates panic attacks? I think it's much more important to be focusing on the effect of the presence of the animal than whether or not particular kinds of training is involved. And so I think part of the issue here is that animals provide, whether they're framed as service animals or not, but animals provide any number of life-saving and life-enabling functions, sometimes through their mere presence, sometimes through behavior that is improvisatory, sometimes through behavior that might be conventionalized but not trained. And we need to, I think, create conditions in which it's possible to value all of that as being service. And so I think this really sort of boils down to either we need to sort of expand what counts as work in terms of service animals with work being that trained behavior. Or when you sort of give up on work as being the conditions in which something is legible or noted or framed as service.

Rahne Alexander
Unpack those assumptions! Well, I understand that this article is part of a larger project for you. Can you talk a little bit more about what that project entails?

Patrick McKelvey
Yeah, absolutely! So, I'm currently writing something else. So, this is more in the next decade to come, but I'm thinking about it as part of a project called *Companionable: A Queer and Canine History of Collective Care* that is essentially trying to think through like this kind of queer history of the service animal that plays out in the Katherine Cornell context in the kind of discussion I had about the article I was trying to write before I got sidetracked with writing this one. There's just a lot of fascinating case studies that can be sort of brought in here. Uh including I'm really interested in an organization called PAWS — Pets Are Wonderful Support — which was essentially a dog walking organization for people with AIDS that was founded in 1987 in the Bay Area and then sort of eventually operated in a number of different urban sites

throughout the United States.

I'm interested in both the kind of disability services that animals provide and also the way in which care for animals becomes a part of a kind of broader project of disability politics and disability justice. What's been interesting is that the thinking I've done towards this honest work article is certainly part of that project. But the the bit that will circulate from here is actually the kind of the unwritten, kind of B-side of this, which is to a profound extent the article that I wrote was really concerned with sort of theorizing and historicizing the normative project. The heart of this enterprise. But there's all these other ways in which that project sort of like fails again and again and again. And so one of the ways that this appears in readings I've done against The Seeing Eye is about the kind of problems that arose through that model heterosexual unit of the male rehabilitant and the female guide. And that there were lots of documentation of domestic strife that emerged when a new kind of relationship entered the home. Wives being upset that their husbands wanted their guide dog to sleep in bed with them. And so there are all these kinds of interesting queer failures of the project to sort of uphold its normative ideals. And so I think just across the course of the 20th century, whether it be the introduction of guide dogs to the United States, whether it be sort of interspecies care and the AIDS epidemic later in the 20th Century, point to I think a really interesting and complicated and necessary story to tell about the sort of specifically queer ways in which service animals have entered into supported and enabled disabled life in the 20th and 21st century.

Rahne Alexander
I can't wait to read that! That's the next decade. What else are you working on uh in the near term?

Patrick McKelvey
I'm currently writing a book that engages some related methodological questions from my first book. And so something that's been really important to me as a disability historian and a performance historian is not to be thinking only about performance events, but to be thinking about questions of infrastructure and institutions, to be writing about the kinds of funding bodies and social policies that cultivate disabled performance and enable disabled performance. And so the project I'm writing now is doing some of that work in a different kind of historical context than my first book. And is offering the book is called I guess I that would be a useful anchor. It's called *Supporting Actors: Disability Infrastructure Performance* and this book is an effort to tell the history of social service initiatives for disabled theater workers over the course of the 20th century with particular attention to housing and efforts to create retirement housing for aged and disabled actors early in the 20th century through a number of different efforts across the 20th century, culminating in the creation of supportive housing for theater workers with HIV/AIDS in the 90s and 2000s. And so I'm really interested in sort of thinking through how paying attention to questions of housing and social services can broaden our sense of how and where disability appears and to what ends in US theater and performance history.

Rahne Alexander
Cool. Yeah, I'll be very excited to read that as well.

Patrick McKelvey
Yeah. Thank you.

Rahne Alexander
Yeah. Well, thank you for your time today, Patrick. It was beautiful to spend some time with you and talk with you. We're going to make your article free for everybody to read and we'll direct everybody to the rest of your work as well.

Patrick McKelvey
Wonderful! Thank you so much.

Rahne Alexander
Yeah, well have a great afternoon.

We hope you've enjoyed this conversation and if so, please tell a friend. Be sure to read Patrick McKelvey's's article in Theatre Journal at Project MUSE. Like and subscribe on your favorite platform and we hope that you'll join us next time for a fascinating conversation on the Hopkins Press Podcast.