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## ENG 5061A-600 Special Topics in Literature and Literary Theory

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*Eastern Illinois University*

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**English 5061: “Representations of Disability and Chronic Illness”**  
**Course Policy and Syllabus Fall 2023**  
**Online Asynchronous**

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Tacke  
Email: [etacke@eiu.edu](mailto:etacke@eiu.edu)

Office: Coleman Hall 3325  
Office Hours: Tues 11-12 and 2-3; Thurs 11-12 and 2-3

This asynchronous online course will explore both cultural and literary representations of disability and disability studies to interrogate how language and culture shape societal understandings of illness and (dis)ability. Students will explore how notions of “ability” and “disability” are deeply rooted in complex histories of oppression and how intersections of race, gender, class, and sexuality mediate and shape experiences of disability. To counter dominant narratives that often deny disabled individuals the credibility to author their own narratives, this course will also explore how authors with chronic illness or disability negotiate their experiences through life writing, and the different ways that their encounters with the medical model help them interpret, mediate, accept, and/or resist diagnosis, treatment, or definitional and cultural understandings of their disability or illness. Through discussions, readings, and collaborative projects, students will consider how we can better understand sometimes complex and contradictory understandings of (dis)ability to help adopt practices of inclusion, accessibility, and social justice. Course material will include critique of and engagement with popular media and creative nonfiction and memoirs such *The Collected Schizophrenias* by Esmé Weijun Wang and *Brilliant Imperfection* by Eli Clare.

**Required Texts:**

Antonetta, Susanne. *A Mind Apart: Travels in a Neurodiverse World*, 2005.  
Clare, Eli. *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure*, 2017.  
Firestone, Shulamith. *Airless Spaces*, 1998.  
Forney, Ellen. *Marbles: Mania, Depression, Michelangelo, and Me*, 2012.  
Galloway, Terry. *Mean, Little, Deaf Queer: A Memoir*, 2009.  
O’Rourke, Meghan. *The Invisible Kingdom: Reimagining Chronic Illness*, 2022.  
O’Toole, Corbett. *Fading Scars: My Queer Disability History*, 2015.  
Washuta, Elissa. *My Body is a Book of Rules*, 2014.  
Wang, Esmé Weijun. *The Collected Schizophrenias: Essays*, 2019.  
Wong, Alice (Ed). *Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century*, 2020.

\*Note: Additional required readings will be available as accessible PDFs.

**Materials**

Course texts, laptop for PDF readings (or printed articles), reliable Internet service, PDF, Microsoft Office software (Word, PowerPoint, etc.), electronic devices & cloud back-up space storing written work.

**Course Requirements:**

**Overall Grade Breakdown**

Your grade will be based on your work in the following categories:

**1. Major Projects: (65% of overall grade)**

- 1) **Short Analytic Paper**
- 2) **Synthesis Responses**
- 3) **Choose Your Own Adventure Final Project**

<b>Major Course Projects:</b>	
<b>Short Analytic Paper</b> You will be responsible for one analytic paper this term, drawing on one of our main course texts and supported by in-class and researched articles. (Signups will take place during our second week).	<b>POINTS</b> 100
<b>Synthesis Responses</b> Twice this term, you will be required to collaboratively write a full synthesis of all your peers' D2L posts. This synthesis should track trends and patterns across our weekly class discussion and relate these analytic trends back to engagement with weekly course readings and ongoing course discussions.	100
<b>"Choose Your Own Adventure" Final Project Options</b> Because English is a diverse and interdisciplinary field, and many of you may have different career trajectories and interests, you'll pick <i>one</i> of the following final projects. You'll need to write out a complete proposal and get approval before you begin. Note: some projects have prerequisite requirements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Traditional Seminar Paper</b> (i.e., a 15-20 page argument-based research paper)</li> <li>▪ <b>Creative Nonfiction/Essay Writing Project + Analytic Cover Letter</b> (<i>only</i> for students who've taken Creative Nonfiction Writing courses prior at the college-level or want to convince me to let them engage otherwise)</li> <li>▪ <b>Disability or Chronic Illness Podcast (MP3) + Analytic Cover Letter</b> (this course will not be introducing students to the art of podcasting, so this should be chosen by students who are already acquainted with podcasting OR are willing to try on something new and find resources for themselves)</li> <li>▪ <b>Accessibility Audit + Lesson Plans/Prompt + Analytic Cover Letter</b> (<i>only</i> for students who have taken a Methods course at the college-level and/or current teachers)</li> <li>▪ <b>Propose Your Own Project</b> (this option requires an office hours appointment and informal proposal of project to be negotiated <i>before</i> the official proposal is due; I reserve the right to deny your proposal or require alternatives/changes)</li> </ul>	100

#### **Late Submission of Major Assignments:**

Unless you notify me in advance (**note "advance" is at least 48 hours before the due date**) about extenuating circumstances that will prevent you from submitting a project on time, I'll lower your grade for the assignment by one letter for each day that it is late. For instance, if you submit a "B" project two days late, your grade will become a "D." The goal is that you can a) learn to be proactive in your communication and b) advocate for yourself as needed.

#### **2. Class Preparation and Participation (35% of overall grade)**

The success of our course depends on each of you being prepared to participate each week. You should plan on having materials read in time to post on Wednesday, which means you might need to look ahead and adjust your reading schedule to accommodate these requirements. Full engagement with your peers in our online site will be how you demonstrate that participation. You will be graded for the following:

- **Discussion Posts and Short Responses:** At *least* twice a week, you must engage with our readings and my weekly prompt in our discussion posts. Using MLA, cite all sources that you reference. ALL discussion posts require an initial post AND responses to at least 2 peers (depending on the prompt).

- **Participation and “Attendance”:** Points will be given on online participation (logging into D2L several times a week, engaging with all course docs, reading all peers’ D2L posts, etc.) and course preparation. Points will be deducted if you are not engaging online in *all* aspects of our course community.
- **Quizzes:** Potential short assessments to determine understanding of key concepts from assigned readings and class discussion.
- **Peer Review:** You will engage in a few sessions of peer review to support one or two of the major assignments.

### Notes on Effective Online Class Participation:

Effective participation entails being an engaged reader. As you’re reading materials for class, please adopt whatever strategies will enable you to stay alert and active as a reader, such as:

- underlining or flagging important passages and key phrases
- synthesizing or summarizing central arguments and supporting claims
- writing and defining key words at the top of various pages or with sticky notes
- writing notes in the margins of pages/on sticky notes or in a reading journal
- jotting down questions that you want to raise about the reading
- listing pages or specific passages that contain especially confusing or intriguing material.

**Effective participation entails being an engaged and balanced contributor.** Participation can take many forms, including:

- posing a question or responding to others’ questions
- identifying a passage or section that you find difficult to understand
- sharing an insight from a writing assignment
- making links between our discussions and events in the wider world
- engaging carefully and respectfully with other students’ contributions.

## University, Course, and Instructor Policies

### Grading Standard:

Please note that I will hold your work to high standards because I believe it is crucial that you learn to communicate your ideas clearly in writing. Developing your abilities as a writer will enable you to succeed in your remaining classes, in graduate or professional school, and in the workplace. Writing clearly and effectively is difficult, and always a work-in-progress. (Writing is never done, it’s just due!) Despite this reality, I will evaluate your written work on the basis of how well the words on the page communicate your ideas. Be prepared to challenge yourself and engage in large-scale revisions. Receiving honest feedback will enable you to improve your writing and achieve greater success in your college and post-college career. You will need to perform work that is consistently above average in order to receive a grade of “B” or “A” in your major writing assignments.

**Course Grade:** Your grade in this course will be calculated using a straight point system and standard grading scale. Your final grade will be determined by the following breakdown and grading scale:

A = 90%-100%

D = 60%-69%

B = 80%-89%

F = 0%-59%

C = 70%-79%

**Rounding Final Grades:** Because this university does not utilize a +/- system in grading, I will *only* consider rounding a letter grade up if it falls in a 1-point range, and I have seen the following from the student:

- All work has been turned in on time throughout the semester and demonstrates solid effort;
- The student has actively participated in all online sessions;
- The student has frequently attended office hours and has maintained open communication with the professor and their peers.

### **Office Hours:**

I look forward to meeting with you individually during office hours. I cannot say it enough: Office hours give you one-on-one time with me to talk about your work and ideas. I am here for you! You should plan on attending one required office hours appointment over the term. I also encourage you to come to my office hours throughout the term (whether online or in person). For online office hours: Please email me in advance to set up a zoom session during my in-person office hours. If those don't work for you, I'm more than happy to schedule something at another time! We can talk about your assignments, issues that we've been discussing in class, any difficulties that you're having, and/or your future plans. If your schedule conflicts with my weekly office hours, please let me know so that we can arrange to meet at another time.

In addition, communication via my [etacke@eiu.edu](mailto:etacke@eiu.edu) email is also welcome. However, discussion about grades and more in-depth questions about writing or content are better suited to in-person or web-based meetings. When using email, please follow professional etiquette, including:

- A subject that contains the central question/purpose of email
- An email address and signature (i.e., Dear Professor X, This is Y from [course name]...)

### **Technological Response Time and PDF:**

Although I am known to be active on email throughout each day, I have set up the following response time expectations and boundaries:

- I will respond to emails within 36 hours, not including weekends or holidays. Please follow up at that time if you haven't heard from me.
- I will be active on PDF discussion boards and our course site generally, but I will not respond to every single assignment or discussion you post.
- Grade response time varies, but you can expect major essays to be turned around in 2-3 weeks and smaller assignments to be turned around in roughly a week's time.

### **Plagiarism (including the use of AI-generated writing and research):**

Building on others' words and ideas is an essential element of effective scholarship. However, using someone else's words, ideas, or work without proper attribution is plagiarism, and such an act is considered a serious ethical violation within the university community. In accordance with English Department and University policies, "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, represented as one's original work' (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty up to and including immediate assignment of the grade of F for the assigned essay, a grade of NC for the course, and file a report with the Judicial Affairs Office." If you complete an assignment for one course and then submit that same assignment as original work for a different course, you are also committing plagiarism.

The best argument against plagiarism is that you cheat yourself out of the education you are here to obtain when you copy someone else's work. If you believe that a specific instance in your writing/design might constitute plagiarism, please consult me prior to turning in the final draft. In short, students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

With the rise of AI writing, such as ChatGPT, note that student work will always be read through the Turnitin program on D2L that now has an AI writing detection algorithm. Any student who is suspected of using AI-generated writing may face the same consequences as traditional forms of plagiarism.

### **Accommodations for Disability and Chronic Illness:**

Eastern Illinois University is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students, and I am committed to making learning as accessible as possible for all of my students. If you are a student with a documented disability or chronic condition in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). If you have accommodations through OSDS, please share this documentation with me as soon as possible, preferably within the first few weeks of class. But I also want you to know that you should feel free to come and talk about any particular needs that you have, and we can collaborate on a plan for your success. I will treat as private and confidential any information that you share.

- Office of Student Disability Services (SDS): McAfee Gym, Room 1210, 217-581-6583, <https://www.eiu.edu/disability/>

### **Technology Support:**

EIU has various support systems in place to help students with technology-based concerns. Please utilize the below resources as needed throughout the semester.

- ITS Help Desk  
Location: 1014 Student Services Building Phone: 217-581-HELP (4357)  
Email: [itshelp@eiu.edu](mailto:itshelp@eiu.edu)  
Web: <http://its.eiu.edu/userservices.php>
- Booth Library Services  
Phone: 217-581-6072  
Toll Free: 1-866-862-6684 Web: <http://www.library.eiu.edu>

### **Student Success Center & Writing Center:**

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations.

- **Student Success Center**  
Location: McAfee Gym, Room 1310  
Phone: 217-581-6696  
Web: [www.eiu.edu/~success](http://www.eiu.edu/~success)

The Writing Center is also a resource that students can utilize to improve their performance in this course. The Writing Center may be holding online/virtual writing consultations or face-to-face consultations, depending on access and availability.

- **The Writing Center**  
Location: Coleman Hall, Room 3110  
Phone: 217-581-5929  
Web: <http://castle.eiu.edu/writing>

### **Sexual Violence and Misconduct:**

Eastern Illinois University prohibits sexual misconduct, relationship violence, and stalking in any of its employment situations or educational programs and activities. As indicated here, <https://www.eiu.edu/mandatedinformation/assault.php>, Sexual assault, abuse or other sexual misconduct including domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking is prohibited and will not be tolerated. The

University continually endeavors to prevent sexual assault by providing training and educational materials to all students and employees, and by thoroughly investigating complaints of assault.

Sexual assault is a crime and complaints will receive serious and immediate action. Once a complaint is received, the first step taken by the University personnel will be to ensure that the complainant is safe and protected from harm. The University understands that a complainant may need a support person to accompany them on campus and students and employees will be provided with contact information with various on-campus and off-campus resources.

Should you need to file a complaint, you have multiple options, and I have included a few below:

- **The University Police Department (UPD)**  
Location: 7th and Grant (directly east of the University Union)  
Phone: 581-3212 (911 if an emergency)  
Hours: Department is open daily until 4:30 p.m.; officers are on duty 24 hours.
- **The Office of Civil Rights and Diversity - Title IX Coordinator**  
Location: 1011 Old Main  
Phone: 581-5020  
Hours: Office is open M-F from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and by appointment.
- **The Office of Student Standards**  
Location: University Union – Lower Level  
Phone: 581-3827  
Hours: Office is open M-F from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## Tentative Course Calendar

*Note: This calendar is subject to change. Additional readings may be included depending on student need.*

### Unit #I: Introductions to Disability Studies

DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES/TOPICS:	DUE:
Week #1: What is Disability Studies? Historical and Cultural Perspectives Part I	
<p><b>Week 1, Aug 21-25</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Course orientation and overview</li> <li>▪ Required materials + Assignment Scope</li> <li>▪ Introduction to Disability Studies</li> <li>▪ Understanding the ability and disability spectrum</li> <li>▪ Critiques of the medical model</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments Handed Out:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assignment #1: Weekly Discussion Posts</li> <li>▪ Assignment #2: Synthesis Responses (due dates vary)</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are some of the central tenets of Disability Studies, according to Davis? What are some of the major questions the field is based upon?</li> <li>2. In "Reassigning Meaning," what does Linton suggest about the role of language in our understanding of disability? What does it mean to understand disability as a piece of larger systems of oppression rather than an individual problem?</li> <li>3. Use the PDF handout (see D2L Week #1) to help you track the major differences between what Linton is naming "Disability Studies" and "Not Disability Studies." From there, make sure you can clearly define each and help use those to name her argument overall.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Syllabus</li> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Lennard Davis, "Introduction" from <i>Beginning with Disability: A Primer</i> (pp. 3-14)</li> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Linton, Simi, "Reassigning Meaning," from <i>Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity</i> (pp. 8-33)</li> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Linton, Simi, "Disability Studies/Not Disability Studies" (pp. 525-540)</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments/Come Prepared to Consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Weekly Discussion Posts due (FIRST WEEK ONLY):</b> Initial Posts: Thursday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Saturday @ midnight)</li> <li>▪ <b>First Week Requirements</b> (due dates vary) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Synthesis Sign Up "Quiz"</b></li> <li>○ <b>Syllabus Quiz Discussion Post</b></li> <li>○ <b>D2L Student Profile Discussion Post</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Synthesis Response #1:</b> <u>Dr. Tacke</u></li> </ul>
Week #2: Acts of Naming: Historical and Cultural Perspectives Part II	
<p><b>Week 2, Aug 28-Sept 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Developing norms for classroom discussion and considering the role of trigger warnings</li> <li>▪ Exploring access and universal design</li> <li>▪ What is disability?: acts of naming and identity</li> <li>▪ Tracking disability's origin stories</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments Handed Out:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assignment #3: Short Analytic Paper (due dates vary)</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the role of the trigger warning? What can it do? What might it fail to do?</li> <li>▪ What are some course norms that will allow you to participate fully and safely in our online classroom space?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Clare, Eli, "A Note on Reading this Book: Thinking About Trigger Warnings" from <i>Brilliant Imperfection</i> (pp. xviii-xxi)</li> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Dolmage, Jay, "Universal Design: Places to Start" (np)</li> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Price, Margaret, "Defining Mental Disability" from <i>The Disability Studies Reader</i> (pp. 333-342)</li> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Greenberg, Gary, "Chapter 1" from <i>The Book of Woe</i> (pp. 1-25) <i>*trigger warning: depictions of racial violence, psychiatric violence</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Course Norms and Trigger Warnings Discussion Post:</b> Initial post <u>and</u> response due by <b>Tuesday at midnight</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does universal design suggest about access in our teaching and learning? What do you need? How and why?</li> <li>What critiques of psychiatry and the medical model do our texts offer this week? What are some of the patterns of critical questions they ask? How do they use these critiques and questions to present definitions and arguments?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Please sign up for your analytic response paper using the google form on D2L no later than Tuesday, September 5.</b></li> <li><b>Synthesis Response #2:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<b>Week #3: Disabled Authors Writing Disability History</b>	
<p><b>Week 3, Sept 4-8:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring disability history and the disability rights movement</li> <li>Reading at the intersections</li> <li>Disabled authors writing their own stories</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track the histories of disability activism and consider the implications of <i>who</i> gets to tell one's own history. Consider O'Toole's other arguments regarding disability identification, disclosure, and access.</li> <li>What does Ortiz suggest about the "nature of the Rule-bearer's system"? How and why does her intersectional approach level critique at systems-level oppressions?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Course Text:</b> O'Toole, Corbett, <i>Fading Scars</i> "Foreword," "Editorial Preface" and Chapters 1-3 "Celebrating Crip Bodyminds" (pp. 7-105) <i>*trigger warning: depictions of violence against disabled people</i></li> <li><b>PDF:</b> Ortiz, Naomi, "Liberando las Fronteras" from <i>Sustaining Spirit: Self-Care for Social Justice</i> (pp. 19-31)</li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li><b>Synthesis Response #3:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<b>Week #4: Brilliant Imperfection: Exploring Disability Identity, Cure, and Eugenics Part I</b>	
<p><b>Week 4, Sept 11-15:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading at the intersections</li> <li>Exploring disability and cure</li> <li>Whose lives are worth living? Exploring eugenics</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clare's "mosaic," as he describes it, is a mishmash of intersecting genres. He is writing to many who are already immersed in the fields of disability studies, queer studies, etc., but there is a lot of richness and depth for anyone who comes across his text. I encourage you as you read it to keep track of terms, arguments, ideas, questions, etc. What does he suggest about the intersections of identity (disability, gender, class, sexuality, race, etc.), capitalism, and the medical-industrial complex? (What <i>is</i> the medical-industrial complex)?</li> <li>What complex and nuanced questions does Clare raise about cure? What do we need to consider when talking about cure?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Course Text:</b> Clare, Eli, <i>Brilliant Imperfection:</i> "Introduction: Writing a Mosaic" through Ch 6 "How Cure Works" (pp. xv-97) <i>*trigger warning sexual/gendered violence, violence against disabled people, psychiatric institutionalization</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li><b>Synthesis Response #4:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<b>Week #5: Brilliant Imperfection: Exploring Disability Identity, Cure, and Eugenics Part II</b>	
<p><b>Week 5, Sept 18-22:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading at the intersections</li> <li>Exploring disability and cure</li> </ul>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Course Text:</b> Clare, Eli, <i>Brilliant Imperfection:</i> "Rolling" through "Cycling" (pp. 99-190) <i>*trigger warning</i></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exploring creative genre and method to develop arguments about disabled lives</li> <li>▪ Whose lives are worth living? Exploring eugenics and institutionalization</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Like last week, consider the richness and complexity of Clare’s “mosaic” on identity, disability, society, and culture. Keep track of key terms and important questions.</li> <li>2. This week, consider how Clare uses genre and method to develop questions and arguments. What are some of Clare’s key arguments throughout the text and how does he develop them through craft choices? How does Clare weave his own narrative and the current contexts of disability and health with historical narratives of institutionalization?</li> <li>3. Consider the historical narratives offered by Erevelles and Minear and their call to explore oppression through an intersectional lens. Track their key arguments and the terms they use to support them.</li> </ol>	<p><i>sexual/gendered violence, violence against disabled people, psychiatric institutionalization</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Erevelles, Nirmala and Andrea Minear, “Unspeakable Offenses: Untangling Race and Disability in Discourses of Intersectionality” from <i>The Disability Studies Reader</i> (pp. 381-395) <i>*trigger warning: racial violence, psychiatric/physical violence</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li>▪ <b>Synthesis Response #5:</b> _____</li> </ul>
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## Unit #II: Disability Representation: Nothing About Us Without Us

DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES/TOPICS:	DUE:
Week #6: Nothing About Us Without Us?: Representations of Disability in Media	
<p><b>Week 6, Sept 25-29:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Critiquing representations of disability in popular culture and media</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Before you select your own piece of media to consume this week, read Dolmage’s “Disability Myths” first. What have you noticed before? What “aha” moments do you have in reading? Then, consider how to “read” your chosen media through Dolmage’s archive and our ongoing readings. What effect do these representations of disability and “norms” of disability have on our social and cultural understandings of it?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Dolmage, Jay, “An Archive and Anatomy of Disability Myths” from <i>Disability Rhetoric</i> (pp. 31-61) <i>**Spoilers for Breaking Bad</i></li> <li>▪ <b>YOUR CHOICE:</b> Pick a film, television episode (or two!), podcast episode, etc., to (re)watch or listen to this week. You will be asked in this week’s prompt to analyze its representation of disability alongside Dolmage’s chapter and our ongoing discussions. (<i>Note: Consider both episodes or series that deal directly with disability or those genres that have a tendency to include disability without directly engaging it – i.e., horror, true crime, etc.</i>).</li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li>▪ <b>Synthesis Response #6:</b> _____</li> </ul>
Week #7: Disability in Life Writing	
<p><b>Week 7, Oct 2-6:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exploring “life writing” and authoring the disabled experience</li> </ul>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Course Text:</b> Galloway, Terry, <i>Mean, Little, Deaf Queer</i> <i>*trigger warning: difficult disability experiences, some sexual content</i></li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Resisting narratives of overcoming within disabled life writing</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Track Barrett's argument about autobiographical writing and disability. What are his central claims? What is he pushing back against or making room for?</li> <li>2. How does Galloway make sense of her disability and represent it in her memoir? What might Barrett have to say about her choices according to the arguments he presents?</li> <li>3. To what extent does Galloway engage intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality, and disability?</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Barrett, Timothy, "De-individualising Autobiography: A Reconsideration of the Role of Autobiographical Life Writing Within Disability Studies" (pp. 1569-1582)</li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li>▪ <b>Synthesis Response #7:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Week #8: Graphic Memoirs, Counter-Diagnosis, and Representations of Mental Disability</b></p>	
<p><b>Week 8 (Midterm!), Oct 9-13:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exploring "life writing" and authoring the disabled experience</li> <li>▪ Resisting narratives of overcoming within disabled life writing</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consider how Forney navigates her own diagnosis and experience with mental disability and the medical/therapeutic model in <i>Marbles</i>. How might Barrett or Price discuss Forney's representations of mental disability? Of her narrative choices?</li> <li>2. How does Forney's use of the graphic genre and her illustrations impact her representation of disability?</li> <li>3. How does Forney engage intersections of gender, race, class, sexuality, and disability?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Course Text:</b> Forney, Ellen, <i>Marbles: Mania, Depression, Michelangelo, and Me</i> *trigger warning: some explicit sexual content, psychiatric treatment</li> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Price, Margaret, "Her Pronouns Wax and Wane: Psychosocial Disability, Autobiography, and Counter-Diagnosis" (pp. 11-34)</li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li>▪ <b>Synthesis Response #8:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Week #9: Tracking Gender and Chronic Illness</b></p>	
<p><b>Week 9, Oct 16-20:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exploring the constructions of chronic illness</li> <li>▪ Critiquing the medical model at the intersections</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignments Handed Out:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assignment #4: Choose Your Own Adventure Final Project (proposals due 11/4; final projects due 12/12)</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How does O'Rourke engage some of the disability models we've been introduced to this term?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Course Text:</b> O'Rourke, Meghan, <i>The Invisible Kingdom: Reimagining Chronic Illness</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li>▪ <b>Synthesis Response #9:</b> _____</li> </ul>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are her critiques of various systems as she encounters undiagnosed chronic illness? How does she explore her experiences intersectionally?</li> <li>What might Price or Barrett have to say about how she adopts the autobiographical to engage her experiences of illness?</li> </ol>	
<b>Week #10: At the Intersections of Disability and Trauma</b>	
<p><b>Week 10, Oct 23-27:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding trauma as <i>disabling</i></li> <li>Exploring oppression at the intersections of disability, gender, race, class, and sexuality</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider how both Washuta and Wang track intergenerational trauma through their raced and gendered identities. How is this trauma depicted as <i>disabling</i>?</li> <li>How does Washuta play with form and genre to negotiate her experiences with disability, trauma, the medical model, and her indigenous identity?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Course Text:</b> Washuta, Elissa, <i>My Body is a Book of Rules</i> *trigger warning: sexual assault/violence, violence against indigenous people, institutional violence</li> <li><b>Course Text:</b> Wang, Esmé Weijun, "John Doe, Psychosis" from <i>The Collected Schizophrenias, Essays</i> (pp. 133-144) *trigger warning institutional violence, sexual violence</li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li><b>Synthesis Response #10:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<b>Week #11: Institutions, Othering, and Creating Space for Abolition</b>	
<p><b>Week 11, Oct 30-Nov 3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring institutional "access" and its effects</li> <li>Considering the connections between treatment and control</li> <li>Considering abolition</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is Ben-Moshe arguing about institutional control and correction?</li> <li>How do Shulamith and Wang track institutional Othering? How do the experiences and arguments they present track with Ben-Moshe's claims?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>PDF:</b> Ben-Moshe, Liat, "'The Institution Yet to Come': Analyzing Incarceration Through a Disability Lens" from <i>The Disability Studies Reader</i> (pp. 119-130) *trigger warning: psychiatric institutionalization, problematic language/naming of identities,</li> <li><b>Course Text:</b> Firestone, Shulamith, <i>Airless Spaces</i> from "Of Plastic Wrapping and Cauliflower" to "Y-2" (pp. 9-78) *trigger warning: psychiatric institutionalization, problematic language/naming of identities, explicit sexual content</li> <li><b>Course Text:</b> Wang, Esmé Weijun, "Toward a Pathology of the Possessed" from <i>The Collected Schizophrenias, Essays</i> (pp. 27-41) *trigger warning: psychiatric institutionalization, problematic language/naming of identities,</li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li><b>Final Project Proposals Due Saturday 11/4 at midnight</b></li> <li><b>Synthesis Response #11:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<b>Week #12: Neurodiversity, Narrative, and Othering Part I</b>	
<p><b>Week 12, Nov 6-10:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring neurodiversity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Navigating self and society in acts of sense-making</li> <li>▪ Challenging and nuancing depictions of neurodiversity and mental disability as dangerous</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How does Antonetta make sense of neurodiversity in her creative nonfiction memoir? <i>Why</i> does she write about what she does to make sense of her own understandings of neurodiversity and larger cultural understandings of neurodiversity?</li> <li>2. In our era of true crime podcasts, shows, and other forms of spectacle, what do you think about Antonetta’s engagement with the Kyle Anderson trial? About Wang’s engagement with the Leutner stabbing? What are the authors exploring or trying to argue through their engagement with the cultural representations of mental disability and violent crime?</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Course Text:</b> Antonetta, Susanne, <i>A Mind Apart</i> from “Prologue” through “Ship of Fools” (pp. 1-115) <i>*trigger warning: child abuse/violence, explicit violent content</i></li> <li>▪ <b>Course Text:</b> Wang, Esmé Weijun, “The Slender Man, the Nothing, and Me” from <i>The Collected Schizophrenias, Essays</i> (pp. 113-122) <i>*trigger warning: child abuse/violence, explicit violent content</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight) <i>*trigger warning</i></li> <li>▪ <b>Synthesis Response #12:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<b>Week #13: Neurodiversity, Narrative, and Othering Part II</b>	
<p><b>Week 13, Nov 13-17:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exploring neurodiversity</li> <li>▪ Exploring how authors make sense of disability through acts of writing and exploration</li> <li>▪ Navigating self and society in acts of sense-making</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How does Antonetta make sense of her experiences with mental disability and neurodiversity? How does she explore these experiences through different facets of her intersectional identities?</li> <li>2. Consider Antonetta’s journey of self-exploration alongside other authors we’ve read and concepts/themes we’ve explored.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Course Text:</b> Antonetta, Susanne, <i>A Mind Apart</i> from “Hearing Voices” through “Language Garden” (pp. 116-236) <i>*trigger warning: child abuse/violence, explicit violent content</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li>▪ <b>Synthesis Response #13:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK #14: THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>	
<b>Week #15: Disability Visibility, Disability Access, and Disability Community</b>	
<p><b>Week 15, Nov 27-Dec 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engaging disability community and practices of interdependence</li> <li>▪ Exploring community as activism</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider While You Read:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What patterns and trends about access and experience do you see our authors engage this week? Think back to our early Dolmage reading on Universal Design. How can we shift towards</li> </ol>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Course Text:</b> <i>Disability Visibility</i>. Choose at least <b>three essays</b> to read!</li> <li>▪ <b>PDF:</b> Ortiz, Naomi, “Echo Location” from <i>Sustaining Spirit: Self-Care for Social Justice</i> (pp. 180-185)</li> <li>▪ <b>Review PDF:</b> Dolmage, Jay, “Universal Design: Places to Start” (np)</li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p>

<p>systems of interdependence and care in our daily lives?</p> <p>2. What does Ortiz suggest about interdependence? How is this a “radical call” in a world that supports competition, “credibility,” and individualism?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have a full draft prepared to send to your peer partner by Thursday at midnight</li> <li>▪ <b>Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li>▪ <b>Final Synthesis Response #14:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Week #16: Course Reflections and Final Project Review</b></p>	
<p><b>Week 16, Dec 4-8: Final Project Peer Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reflecting on the course and what we’ve learned</li> <li>▪ Learning from our peers’ projects</li> </ul>	<p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ TBD</li> <li>▪ Your peers’ projects</li> </ul> <p><b>Written Assignments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>FINAL Weekly Discussion Posts due</b> (Initial Posts: Wednesday @ 8pm; Response Posts: Thursday @ midnight)</li> <li>▪ <b>Peer Review Responses</b> due to Dropbox and your partner(s) no later than Tuesday @ midnight</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Final Project due no later than Tuesday, 12/12 @ 11:59pm!</b></p>	