

Zine
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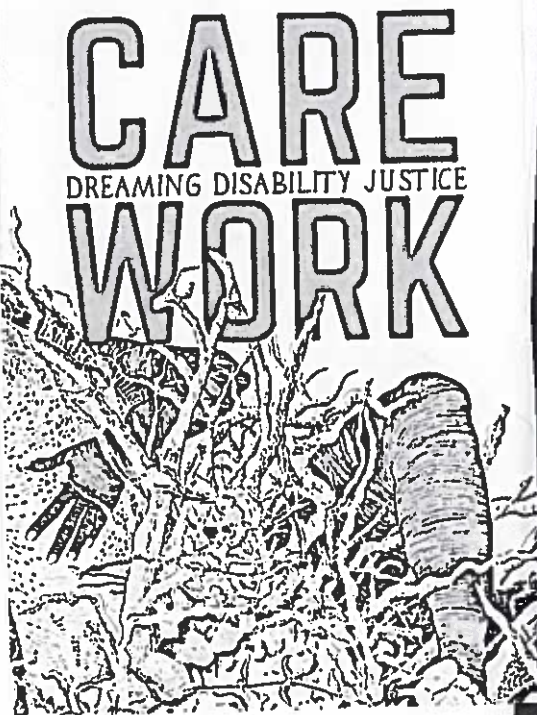
#AntiAbleistComposition

#AcademicAbleism
#WhyDisabledPeopleDropOut

DISABILITY LABOR JUSTICE

Re-Imagining a Discipline

LEAH LAKSHMI PIEPZNA-SAMARASINHA



ALL BODIES ARE CAUGHT IN THE BINDINGS OF ABILITY, RACE, CLASS, GENDER, SEXUALITY AND CITIZENSHIP. WE ARE POWERFUL NOT DESPITE THE COMPLEXITIES OF OUR IDENTITIES, BUT BECAUSE OF THEM.

ONLY UNIVERSAL, COLLECTIVE ACCESS CAN LEAD TO UNIVERSAL, COLLECTIVE LIBERATION.

THIS IS DISABILITY JUSTICE.



Written by Aurora Levins Morales, Patty Eleme, and Micah Bazant for Sins Invalid.

FIG. 1. Micah Bazant with Sins Invalid, *This Is Disability Justice*. Courtesy of Micah Bazant and Sins Invalid.

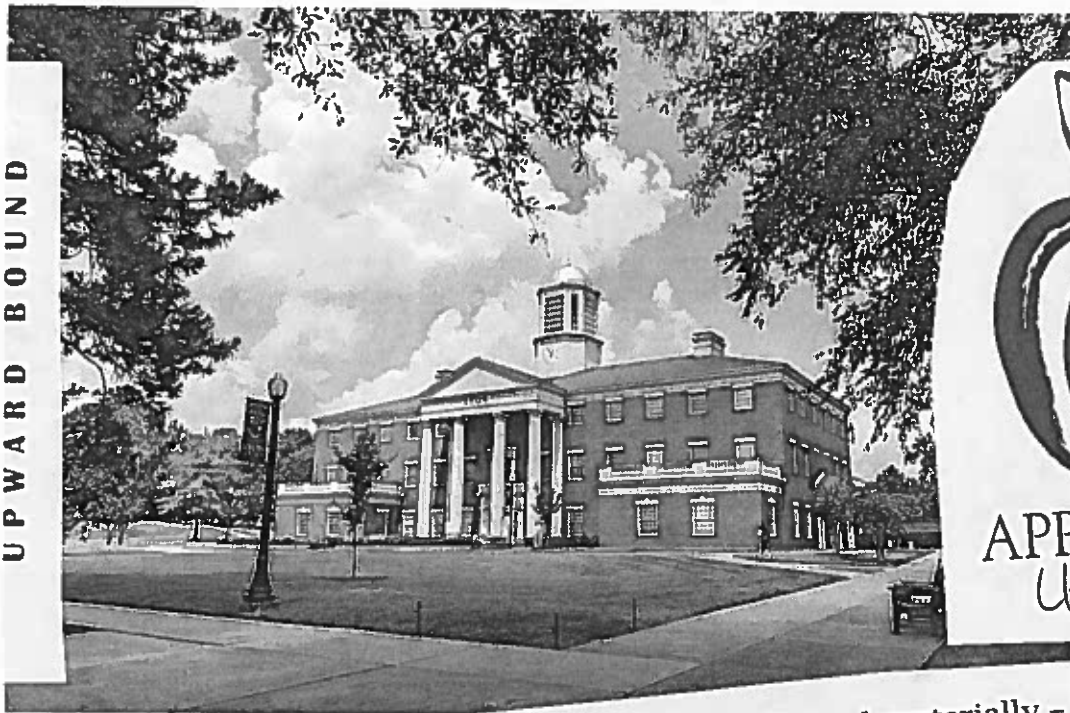
ZINE NUMBER THREE...IF YOU'RE COUNTING...

As a high schooler in rural Arkansas, and as a first generation college student from a low-income family, I was fortunate to be admitted to the Upward Bound program at Lyon College in Batesville, Arkansas, called the APPLE Project.

I participated in this program for four and a half years. It opened an entirely new world to me: higher education. Each time I enter the pristine buildings on TCU's campus, I am reminded of my time at Lyon and in the APPLE Project, a federally-funded program meant to ensure entry into higher education for poor and/or first-generation college students across the country.

TRIO

UPWARD BOUND



APPLE Project
Upward Bound

I remember the ways my body still inhabits - virtually and materially - the commonplaces of my youth: I smell the burning of fields, I feel the long grass in the fields, I hear the rumbling for four-wheelers roaming the pasture, and I remember the cold water on the Spring River in Hardy. I remember the trailer parks I grew up in, and how so many literacies are embodied in the space of my dad's newly built workshop in his backyard.

But this little story must end without resolution, as all stories at some point must.

This zine is not an indictment of any individual, organization, or collective. Rather, it is a gesture to possibilities of world-making, of (re)creating the university and discipline *otherwise*. Before we do that, however, we must come-to-terms with at least a few things...

Or maybe it is an indictment? So be it.

Why Ugliness Is Vital in the Age of Social Media

ALOK talks with writer and disability justice organizer Mia Mingus about beauty, body positivity, and ableism.



BY ALOK
October 26, 2018

"What if we took more time to dream accountability? What it could be and the kind of magic it could grow? What we need in order to practice it more and better, both individually and collectively? What if accountability was so normalized, so run-of-the-mill, that it was second nature? We can start with our everyday relationships and those closest to us: our families, our friends, our partners, our coworkers, the earth."
- Mia Mingus, "Dreaming Accountability," May 5, 2019

Alok Vaid-Menon (AVM): I think we are all in a constant state of transformation. The ways that we are able to transform are totally linked to the conversations and people we have access to. Encountering the work of Sins Invalid has been foundational not just to my thinking about these questions, but my embodiment of them. As a gender non-conforming, trans feminine person, I am often told that I am ugly. Sins Invalid has created the space in me and in the world to challenge that, to find power in what they call despicable, and to rally in solidarity with all who are disenfranchised by normative beauty and ability.

"Beauty Always Recognizes Itself": A Roundtable on Sins Invalid

Invalid

Patricia Berne, Jamal T. Lewis, Stacey Milbern, Malcolm Shanks, Alok Vald, Alice Wong

WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly, Volume 46, Numbers 1 & 2, Spring/Summer 2018, pp. 241-251 (Article)

Berne: And I would love to connect with other disabled women of color who are directors, artistic directors, and hear their stories and their process. I'd love to collaborate on making this work happen again. In terms of defiant memory, I think pulling our ancestors into our living work is a practice I'm still developing, and I think it's key to our work as organizers, to see ourselves as part of a living legacy. We need to invite our ancestors and our animal friends and our plant friends to help us come to our collective sensibilities if we're going to survive as a species. I think the idea of defiant memory ties very much into what it means to live. That's why it's come up time and again how we're living as a species. Or how we're going to *leave* as a species. We can go down oppressing each other, or we can go down holding each other. And my hope is that we're able to find each other and find connection within communities, across communities, across nations and borders.

Access Intimacy: The Missing Link

Access intimacy is not just the action of access or "helping" someone. We have all experienced access that has left us feeling like a burden, violated or just plain shitty. Many of us have experienced obligatory access where there is no intimacy, just a stoic counting down of the seconds until it is over. This is not access intimacy. There have been numerous relationships in my life where I have loved people very deeply, but never fully felt safe with them around my access. So many relationships where I knew I could only ask for or share so much, without getting snapped at, chided or being punished with reluctant passive aggressive access. So many times where I was too afraid, because of the lack of access intimacy, to speak up and voice what I needed or what I couldn't do, resulting in being isolated or getting very badly physically hurt from pushing myself too hard, in some of the worst cases.

MIA MINGUS May 5, 2011

In "The Bodymind Problem and the Possibilities of Pain," disability rhetorics scholar-teacher Margaret Price asks us to consider "the ways pain complicates disability desire, as well as the possibilities for...collective forms of care" (2015, p. 269). While I promise no fully-developed answers or solutions in this zine, I do hope this is a space of dialogue and transformative discussion toward "collective modes of care."

Here are two elements of rhetoric-composition's contemporary landscape that I, admittedly a junior scholar and PhD student, see as locations or sites to curate "the possibilities" of "collective forms of care." Our divergent approaches to these questions may work to transform our discipline and call attention to the ways that minoritized bodyminds are rendered unintelligible or outside the possibility of a future:

1 The widespread lack of guaranteed summer funding for rhetoric-composition graduate student-workers is not merely an effect produced by an increasingly neoliberalized higher education landscape. Rather, such a lack is structural to the very disciplinary foundation of rhetoric and composition.

2 Structural issues have, and always have had, local contexts, possibilities, and solutions. While various structural problems – such as low pay, dismal job security for contingent faculty, and lack of summer funding for graduate students – are, indeed, structural, too often the possibilities for transformative, justice-oriented work are obscured within discourses of "the structural." We cannot continue to obscure our collective responsibilities at the programmatic, institutional, departmental, and organizational levels.

Moving Toward Disability Justice

Octavian E. Robinson

National Technical Institute for the Deaf at the Rochester Institute
of Technology

10/3/2019

Moving Toward Disability Justice | Robinson | Disability Studies Quarterly

The haphazard lumping of everything that even touches upon disability or anything related to disability (e.g. language and material culture) into the discipline of Disability Studies calls for the need for a distinct critical Disability Studies. Critical Disability Studies demands the centering of disabled people, while critiquing ones' own positionality and privileges. The former writes *about* disability, the latter *engages* with disability and disabled people.

Defiant Memory as Disability Justice: An Interview with
Patty Berne of Sins Invalid

Allison Kopit

Berne: I'm a cofounder of Sins Invalid, along with Leroy Moore. My title is the executive and artistic director of Sins Invalid. I locate myself within a long history of resistance, both as a Haitian Japanese woman and as someone who's participated in justice movements for over thirty years.

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American Quarterly, Volume 71, Number 2, June 2019, pp. 415-423 (Article)

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2019.0036>

Hire disabled academics.
Patzak disabled academics.
Pay disabled academics.
PAY US.

A wall of text a wall of words spilled.

bodyminds.⁴ Crip beauty fractures the ableist assumption that beauty is reserved for the nondisabled bodymind. It urges that there is pleasure and eroticism in bearing witness to disability, in cultivating a space where bodyminds that are traditionally forced into invisibility can gather together. Sins Invalid's fostering of crip beauty challenges the long and painful history of the institutionalization of disabled folks. Their tagline, "An unshamed claim to beauty in the face of invisibility," references this history, reinforcing the fact that disabled folks will no longer exist in isolation or in invisibility. The visibility and public nature of crip beauty reminds us that disability is something to celebrate and not something to hide.

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west, the tsunamis, the fires, the earthquakes—there is a clock ticking. We have to see each the human ecosystem and the body of the earth as part of this beloved "we." As we move toward a liberatory moment or vision, we must "each one bring one." This moment can and needs to be that moment to allow us to survive.

Patricia Berne is cofounder and executive director of Sins Invalid and has a professional background in mental health support to survivors of violence. A Japanese Haitian queer disabled woman, she sees her work to create "liberated zones" for marginalized voices. She can be reached at pattyberne@sinsinvalid.org.

Jamal T. Lewis is an emerging multidisciplinary artist, writer, and activist living in Bedstuy, Brooklyn, hailing from Atlanta, Georgia. Lewis produces work around the body, specifically exploring and interrogating identity formation, race, gender, sexuality, desire, beauty, and ugliness. Contact Jamal at jamalterror@gmail.com.

Stacey Milbern is a disability justice community builder with over twelve years of experience working in disability communities, particularly at the intersections of race and queerness. She can be reached at stacey.milbern@gmail.com.

Malcolm Shanks educates to build decolonial knowledge and movement. Malcolm works at Race Forward providing training and coaching on racial equity. They are cocreator of the zine *Decolonizing Gender: A Curriculum*. They can be reached at malcolm.shanks@gmail.com.

Alok Vaid-Menon is a nonbinary writer and performance artist. Their work grapples with themes of intimacy, alienation, and transmisogyny. Contact Alok at info@alokvmenon.com.

Alice Wong is a media maker, research consultant, and disability activist based in San Francisco, California. She is the founder of the *Disability Visibility Project*, a community partnership with StoryCorps and an online community dedicated to creating, amplifying, and sharing disability media and culture. Contact Alice at disabilityvisibilityproject@gmail.com.

PB: Do you know Don Cherry or Charles Lloyd, both musicians, or the poetry of Aurora Levins Morales? Exquisite artistic work brings me to connect with myself, and also to connect with something greater. That openness and joy is a spiritual experience, a site of love. I think that oppressive forces are not trying to cocreate this experience! I think people feel a deep love, a mirroring experience at a Sins Invalid performance. There's a synergy between the audience and the performers, the backstage crew and performers are casting a love-net out to the audience, envisioning and cocreating this liberated zone, loving the shit out of our crip lives and bodies and trying to hold everyone in that. That's what I can only imagine what liberation is like, so sign me up! It's worth this struggle.

Malcolm Shanks (MS): I came across Sins Invalid's work in 2012, about six years after they were founded. As a political educator, I realized that it is impossible to talk about race and gender without using a disability justice lens, which has since impacted me greatly. Though I come to this conversation from the vantage point of someone with able-bodied privilege, I also feel affirmed by Sins's paradigm. My later interaction with Sins Invalid's brilliance has been through the spiritual elements that Stacey mentioned: ancestors, reproduction, and legacy. While looking for ancestors who reflect me, I was only finding evidence of black, trans ancestors in court records and institutional clinical documents. I realized that colonialism has a logic that ranks people by our usefulness to capitalism. Those who are more easily exploited outside of wage labor are considered useless or monstrous, accusations that are consistently hurled at people with disabilities. Racism, transphobia, and ableism all believe that our bodies aren't shaped correctly or that we aren't using them correctly. This is all part of a body-reasoning that steals our agency to find beauty in our own experiences and in our own bodies; it even takes away a community's abilities to recognize that beauty.

These moments are brief excerpts from Sins Invalid's performances. They express a range of what crip beauty looks like and how it shifts normative framings of beauty. As an audience member, these performances urge me toward radical bodymind love, reminding me that crip beauty is political and self-crafted, that it is about more than just appearance. Most critically, Sins Invalid's works extend feminism's call to decenter and disrupt the normative narratives that rigidly define beauty. Sins Invalid serves as a reminder, as an intervention, that demands feminism acknowledge disability as an identity, as a part of its plurality. To claim stake to crip beauty, here, becomes a rising of unheard voices: deliberate, present, and always, always unshamed.

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magically create for ourselves, and I think that is really from the outsider's perspective. They see all these people are well-adjusted or people who love themselves. Loving yourself takes so much work and I think that's a real evolution. However, the work and process of coming to love yourself is invisibilized in our communities. We talk about beauty and we talk about self-love and us being unapologetic; those aren't buzzwords. Pride comes out of your identities and getting there takes a lot of work. I think that's what's misunderstood by a lot of people when they're outside looking within our own communities.

AVM: So often work around beauty gets dismissed as superficial, but I think activism at the level of aesthetics is incredibly important. Beauty is part of the way that these foundational systems reproduce themselves. We are taught to desire the very things that destroy us, and we are taught to fear the very things that have the potential to set us free. Finding beauty in that which we have been told is abject and disposable has profound implications. It's about challenging the core logics and hierarchies that underpin, well, everything.

JTL: Sins Invalid's call is linked directly to the everyday ways disabled, queer, and trans people use technology and creative collective power to display their own beauty, which serves as counternarratives to manipulated notions of beauty presented by mainstream media through magazine covers, billboards, television, and infomercials that seek to make people feel bad about themselves in order to buy in to products and enhancements for instant gratification.

"Beauty Always Recognizes Itself" 243

Alice Wong (AW): I am the founder of the Disability Visibility Project, an online community that creates, shares, and amplifies disability media and culture. There is power in storytelling. Before I can even tell you a story, you need to really love and praise yourself. You need to say that "I do have a story, that I do matter." These are all intimately linked with the ideas of beauty and liberation and disability justice. It's a lot about giving us space and also reveling in who we are, being open, and sharing that with the world. That to me is part of the labor of creation. Each act of storytelling is not just an individual thing, but it's definitely a collective effort. It's really about bridging out to the world and sharing who we are and our stories with the world. All of these things add up to a larger purpose and I think I see that with Sins Invalid's work.

AVM: Liberalism has confined the demands we are allowed to make. We are granted superficial recognition, and rarely permitted our entirety. When we ambition beyond and have the audacity to assert our full personhood, we are punished for it. Desire is often one of the first aspects of ourselves we are made to give up. Sins Invalid has profoundly shifted the terms of engagement for both disability justice movements and queer and trans movements (and where they intersect). The goal is not just about inclusion, it's about desire. Do we just want to be acknowledged or do we want to be desired?

AW: Yes, I think that when we talk about beauty and art, it's not this superficial thing, right? Creating art can be a struggle and a lot of work to get to that place. It is an unfortunate thing that people think artists

On May 20, 2019, a number of disabled disability activists were arrested for protesting cuts to funding for programs that actively benefit disabled people and sustain the lives of disabled bodyminds. Much like on March 12, 1990 Capitol Crawl, during which disabled bodies descended upon Washington and ascended the steps of the Capitol building to fight for the passage of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA), disabled people are continuously putting their bodies on the line for justice, budget increases, and the continuation of programs that enable the survival of disabled bodyminds.



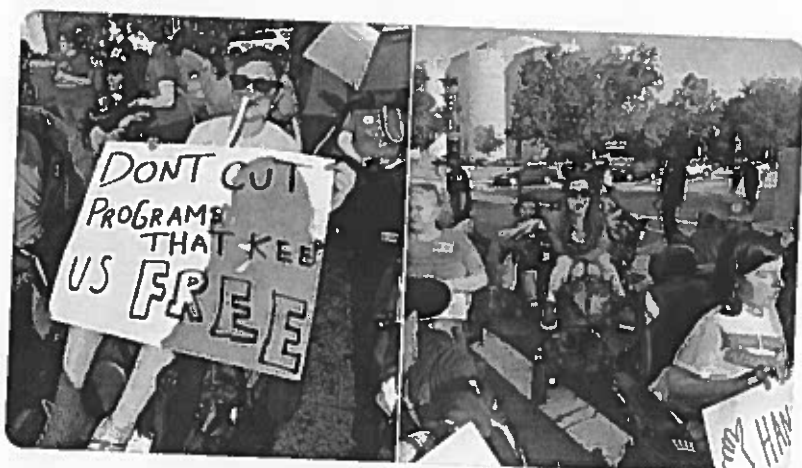
Rabbi Rutl Regan
@RutiRegan

We are about to be arrested for demanding our freedom.

#DIAToday

#ADAPTandRESIST

#DisabilityFreedom



6:52 AM · May 20, 2019 · Twitter for iPhone

Sins Invalid reminds us that reclaiming beauty as a liberatory practice and acknowledging liberatory practices as constituting a unique and transformative beauty (re)instills in oppressed people the capacity to know and experience beauty within ourselves and one another freely; that is, to live in beauty unfettered from the obstacles, noise, and false conceptions of beauty foisted upon us to perpetuate settler-colonial capitalism. Excavating from our internal worlds all the space that internalized oppression has occupied—not merely in our psyches, but in our viscera, our veins, our sinew, and our nervous systems—brings with it a new sense of realism, a renewed sense of power to know our bodies as our own. Our shared crip communities are spaces in which we can see our beauty reflected back to us and magnify a spectrum of human ability and potential, all completely and utterly invaluable. Where shame and isolation once were, the beauty of interconnection, interdependency, and mutual recognition takes shape. From this emergent beautiful liberatory space, the grounds of collective justice and its possibility emerge.

Medical Cohen Elliger is adjunct faculty at the California Institute of Integral Studies, where he teaches critical science, technology, and medicine studies. His research focuses on the neurobiology of the social nervous, trauma, historical trauma, and resilience. He is the author of the forthcoming book, *We All Hold Up the Sky: Lessons in Health Justice for the 21st Century*. He can be reached at mettinger@cis.its.edu.

The most unique aspect of *Sins Invalid*'s community, for me, is how they move us beyond the traditional, limiting rhetoric of beauty. They instead create crip beauty; an expression of the communal honoring of crip

Sami Schalk, author of *Bodyminds Reimagined: (Dis)ability, Race, and Gender in Black Women's Speculative Fiction*, suggests that disability is a critical methodology of inhabiting the world. In her words, disability-as-methodology is “a critical perspective, an approach to interpreting the world” (2017). To this, I would add that disability-as-methodology is also a way of creating alternative realities, of reimagining new worlds to inhabit together.

If you are not actively working for the improvement of



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local contexts and local spaces, you are complicit.

In our current moment, one that is not unlike the historical trajectory of our discipline, contingent faculty, graduate student-workers, and marginalized bodyminds in rhetoric and composition are living in pain and despair. That is no secret, and to deny this fact is to defer the work we must engage in together. At this very moment (this portion was written in the Summer of 2019) graduate students are struggling to survive: seeking out blood/plasma donation banks, taking out predatory payday loans, and working additional full-time jobs on top of their summer responsibilities that are uncompensated: preparing Fall syllabi, working on examinations or examination reading lists, fulfilling foreign language requirements, etc. Rhetoric-composition may well be working toward diversity and equity, but it has largely yet to reimagine structural ways to move beyond inclusion, *beyond the admission of Others into the normative frameworks of whiteness, able-bodied productivity, and inherited wealth.* Rhetoric-composition is a choreography of bodies that simultaneously inhabit the discipline *and* resist the discipline's ongoing devaluing of our material conditions and material labor.

In "Bodyminds Like Ours: An Autoethnographic Analysis of Graduate

School, Disability, and the Politics of Disclosure," Angela M. Carter, R. Tina Catania, Sam Schmitt, and Amanda Swenson explore the ways that disability justice can, and should, inform higher education's responsibilities toward disabled bodies and equity.

Citing Margaret Price's article that I began this piece with and to which I'll return shortly, they write:

"The culture of academia presumes that the bodyminds (Price 2015) best suited for academia are those that demonstrate discipline, restraint, productivity, and autonomy. Too often, disabled, neurodivergent, and chronically ill bodies are framed as unproductive, impaired, dependent, disorderly and, therefore, of little intellectual or productive value." (95-96)

Not only are fast-paced temporal frameworks of funding, usually four to five years, structural limitations for disabled bodyminds in the academy, but the day-to-day spatial and temporal structures function in similar ways. In their words, academic "networks are typically built through traveling to conferences, but can be as simple as going out with your cohort or attending dinner events with visiting scholars. For disabled graduate students, it can be very difficult, if not impossible, to keep up with our daily lives and attend these 'off the clock' engagements" (97).

Carter, Catania, Schmitt, and Swenson state a reality that many graduate programs are simply (or *seemingly*) not ready to admit:

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“The expectation that graduate students should engage in multiple physically, spiritually, and psychically demanding academic activities such as teaching, research, professional development, writing, networking, funding, and job searching is not a sustainable way of life for anyone. However, these expectations disproportionately impact students with disabilities... [Disabled] students should not be considered financial burdens on departments because they require more funding... Departments and programs cannot see disabled students as financial burdens if we value critical theory and destabilizing capitalism and other oppressive structures.” (110)

Disability-as-methodology may not be what saves us, but it could be one alternative — among many others — that enables us to cultivate and curate collectivized forms of care that will propel us into transformative dialogue.

Guaranteeing summer funding, extending time-to-degree or completion, reexamining demands in course work, and exploring alternatives to “off-the-clock” labor requirements that are often forms of “hidden curricula” are only some steps to ensuring a disability justice-informed rhetoric-composition graduate education.

Unless any and all conversations about accessibility are led and facilitated by disabled people who are also disability justice activists, then they are not about “accessibility” inasmuch as they are the same reiterations of ableism that make disability justice a necessity in the first place. The work is already being done by disabled people and disabled activists, and unless our conversations, conference sessions, and events on “accessibility” foreground the embodied and lived realities of disabled people, we will continue to reinstate the ableist trajectories of both society at-large and rhetoric and composition. In the words of disabled disability activist Annie Segarra, “The future is accessible,” but this is a future that is materialized through the active, ongoing struggles of disabled bodies-in-alliance.

If your discussion about accessibility isn’t led by disabled disability activists, I want no part of it.

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In his 2004 article in *JAC*, disability studies teacher-scholar Robert McRuer accurately explains that rhetoric-composition continues to be haunted by disability:

“De-composition and disability always haunt the composition classroom intent on the production of order and efficiency.” (55)

More recently, disability and rhetoric-composition teacher-scholar Caitlin Ray, echoing McRuer and others in her response essay “Disability in Rhetoric and Composition Research,” urges us to keep in mind the ways that such “hauntings” have “material consequences” for disabled people in and out of our discipline. Ray writes:

“Unless we name and claim the ways that disability haunts our research... we will continue to elide these voices and experiences [of disabled people].” (2018)

Indeed, the ways that disability continues to haunt our discipline and research does have material consequences. Some of these consequences are imbedded in the very budgets that govern our discipline and programs at the local level. Many disabled people cannot work “just any” job outside of the university, cannot apply for dozens of temporary jobs for the summer, and, importantly, oftentimes cannot find **accessible** workplaces outside of the university. The lack of summer funding is not just an economic justice issue; it is most certainly a disability justice issue. For many universities — though, not all — the issue is not as much a matter of having *enough* money, but reimagining budgetary movements that prioritize the bodyminds that uphold the very foundation of the university.



HelenRottier
@helenrottier



Because schools that don't guarantee summer funding for graduate students force disabled students to spend more time and energy on summer job searches and accommodations processes so they can afford basic living, rent, and health care costs. #WhyDisabledPeopleDropout

♡ 10 2:07 PM - Apr 23, 2019



The overwhelming lack of summer funding in rhetoric-composition's commonplaces — approximately 83% of rhetoric-

composition graduate programs do not guarantee summer funding for graduate student-workers — is not only a reminder that the discipline is haunted by disability-to-come. By recognizing the fact that an overwhelming number of graduate student-workers who are effectively laid-off in the summer term are, in fact, disabled, we can also safely say that **rhetoric-composition is haunted by the disability already “in the room.”**

“I felt I had exhausted my other options and, with a sigh of ‘I’ll try anything at this point,’ wrote my deafness into the essay... I had spent so long resisting the notion that I write about being deaf that I had not fully considered how my experience of continuously navigating environments in which I am almost always the only deaf person enabled by theorizing of difference-in-interaction.” Stephanie Kerschbaum (2014 66)

Sims Invalid.org



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Kerschbaum

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One thing we are noticing is that many graduate students are relying on family/partners to help fund their graduate work, or have to work a full time summer job while still being expected to take exams or produce scholarship.

74 2:15 PM - May 24, 2019

See Kairos Journal's other Tweets

Kairos Journal @kairosRTP

“To lack privilege is to live with constant bodily and spatial awareness. Because I’m rendered hyperaware of my body within my own entered-into spatial environments, I think of others’ body-spaces and deliberately aim to create and hold space for Othered others. This intention requires a whole new orientation, a reorientation that foregrounds rather than ignores the everyday realities and physical needs of non-normative bodies.”

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— Christina Cedillo (2018)

From
“What Does It Mean to Move?”
Composition Forum

Writing in-dialogue with Lauren Berlant’s (re)conceptualization of “slow death,” Jasbir Puar contends, following McRuer (2004), that “we might not (only) be haunted by the disability to come but also disavow the debility already here” (2011 152). Puar’s essay theorizes sensation by navigating the space between debility and disability, and is an important text I do not have space or time to adequately engage with. Suffice it to say that rhetoric-composition — through overwhelming lack of summer funding, accelerated paces of time-to-degree, lack of disability-focused curriculum, lack of paid health leave and adequate, affordable health benefits — actively repels the entry of disabled bodyminds into the discipline **and** “disavows” the debility or disability *already here*.

7/28/2019

A Policy on Disability in CCCC - Con

Conference on College Composition and Communication
November 2006, Reaffirmed April 2011

Maybe it's time
to see this
policy statement
fully implemented?

- CCCC recognizes that students, staff, and faculty on college campuses include people with a wide range of visible and invisible disabilities—cognitive, learning, emotional, psychological, and physical.
- CCCC affirms that people with disabilities bring a valuable source of diversity to college composition classrooms, university communities, and to our professional organization.
- CCCC understands that the participation of educators, staff, and students with disabilities requires fully inclusive environments.
- CCCC acknowledges the important contributions disability studies makes to composition and rhetoric, to the promotion of access, to literacy studies, and to theories of difference, especially in its critique of “norms” and “normalcy.” The questions posed by disability studies ask us to rethink language, the body, the environment, identity, culture, power, and the nature of knowledge itself, enabling a meaningful engagement at multiple levels: bodily, personal, social, cultural, and political.
- Recognizing that people with disabilities have been oppressed and continue to be relegated to the margins, we affirm the centrality of disability to the human experience and the value of disability as a critical lens.

ad Latin c	cedere Latin to go, move
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accedere
Latin
approach, go to, come near, enter upon

accessus
Latin
a coming near, an approach; an entrance

accessibilis
Late Latin

accessible
Middle French

accessible
1400
affording access, capable of being approached or reached

accessible (adj.)

www.etymonline.com/word/accessible

“The power of access intimacy is that it reorients our approach from one where disabled people are expected to squeeze into able bodied people’s world, and instead calls upon able bodied people to inhabit our world.” Mia Mingus — “Access Intimacy, Interdependence, and Disability Justice”

“Aristotle’s famous declaration that man is a rational animal gave rise to centuries of insistence that to be named mad was to lose one’s personhood... I believe in learning the terms, listening to others’ voices, and naming myself pragmatically according to what the context requires. I believe that this is language.” Margaret Price, *Defining Mental Disability*, p.298; p. 305

“[Disabled] not only explains my body, but it also describes the ramps you refuse to build. It calls out the wages you refuse to pay. It shows the world the inclusion you are slow to produce. I think your discomfort with the word disabled doesn’t merely describe me, but you too. Because every time I make you say it, it holds a mirror to your inaction, and you’re scared to look yourself in the eye.” Imani Barbarin, “#WhenICallMyselfDisabled” (July 11, 2019)

How are they
your comfort
disability justice?

HOW DOES IT MEAN TO MOVE?

The history of rhetoric is laden with the bodies of disabled people whose embodied experiences have always been cast out as arhetorical and, as a result, inhuman. And, to be quite honest, the ongoing currents in what some might call “posthuman rhetorics” are oftentimes written by people who’ve seemingly never struggled to inhabit the category of “human” in the first place. This must be a starting point in any conversation about accessibility.