Literature and Disability Studies: Cognitive Disabilities

ספרות ולימודי מוגבלויות: מוגבלויות קוגניטיביות

Dr. Dalit Alperovich

Course no.: 0626293201 academic year: 2018 semester: spring number of hours: 2 degree: BA

Class will be held on: Wednesday, 10-12
Reception hours: Wednesday 12-13, Webb 513
E-mail address: leizarov@post.tau.ac.il

Reading material:


Mitchell, David T. and Sharon L. Snyder. *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the*


Course Description
Disability Studies is a growing field of study which sheds light on the ways in which society constructs the boundaries of normalcy. This course examines literary representations of the more “hidden” disabilities – mainly cognitive and intellectual. How does cognitive disability function in narrative? How does literature shape the ways in which we think about cognitive disabilities? How do definitions of disability change in different historical, political, social and cultural contexts? What is the relation between disability and identity politics in literature? How does literature give voice to the subjectivity of the disabled person and what are the ethical considerations of such representations? The course engages in these issues by closely examining literary works and by discussing theoretical and analytical essays that address these questions.

Course Requirements
Students are expected to attend class, read assigned material and bring it to class, contribute to class discussion, hand in assignments on time and regularly visit course website.

A midterm paper – 35%

Three short forum assignments – 15%

A final exam – 50%

Important dates:

Mar. 28th: midterm paper handouts

Apr. 25th: midterm paper due date

Mar. 26th: first forum assignment

May 9th: second forum assignment

June 6th: third forum assignment

Moed A: 9.7.18 9:00

Moed B: 8.8.18 9:00
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<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required Reading</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Mar. 7th</td>
<td>Introduction to Disability Studies: this lesson will discuss the field’s major issues, methodologies, history, current and future trajectories by examining the relation between Disability Studies and Cultural Studies</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Mar. 14th</td>
<td>Important terms in Disability Studies: Lovern: the meaning of the term “cultural relativism” in disability Studies; Davis: disability vs. a modality; the “normal” and the “ideal;” disability as appearance and function; ableist discourse</td>
<td>Lovern, “Indigenous Perspectives on Difference” Davis, Intro to Enforcing Normalcy</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Mar. 21st</td>
<td>Textual analysis of “Recitatif” Morrison’s Maggie: representations of intellectual disability in literature; an examination of Maggie’s character through Davis’ definition of disability as appearance and function.</td>
<td>Morrison, “Recitatif”</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Mar. 28th</td>
<td>Ethical considerations of disability in O’Connor</td>
<td>O’Connor, “The Lame Shall Enter</td>
<td>Midterm paper handouts</td>
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| Apr. 11th  | The dys/disarticulate in Malamud                                      | Malamud, “Idiots First”  
Berger, *The Disarticulate*                                                                 |
| Apr. 25th  | Voice in “Flowers” and the boundaries of normalcy                    | Keyes, “Flowers for Algernon”                                                                                                                  |
| May 2nd    | Berger’s dys/disarticulate and Keyes’ Charlie  
The medical model, the social model and the affirmative model in Keyes’ work | Keyes, continued                                                                                                                                |
| May 9th    | Reading autism into Haddon’s novel                                   | Haddon, *The Curious Incident*                                                                                                               |
| May 16th   | Literary strategies of representing autism in the novel              | Haddon, continued                                                                                                                              |
| May 23rd   | The savant syndrome: ethical considerations of representing autism   | Haddon, continued                                                                                                                             |
| May 30th   | Autism as metaphor for modernity                                      | Melville, “Bartleby the Scrivener”                                                                                                            |
| June 6th   | Reading autism into Melville                                         | Melville, continued                                                                                                                           |
| June 13th  | Concluding remarks: How does disability function in narrative?       | Melville, continued                                                                                                                           |
|            | How does literature shape the ways in which we think about disability? |                                                                                                                                            |

Note: This schedule is tentative and may change as the course progresses.
Bibliography


Halliwell, Martin. *Images of Idiocy: the Idiot Figure in Modern Fiction and Film.* New York: Routledge, 2004.


Kristiansen, Kristjana; Vehmas, Simo; Shakespeare, Tom (Eds.). *Arguing About Disability: Philosophical Perspectives.* Oxon: Routledge, 2009.


Nixon, Kari “If you don’t know me by now: the Failure of Care in ’Bartleby the Scrivener.’” *Disability Studies Quarterly* 34.4 (2014).


Quirici, Marion. “Geniuses without Imagination: Discourses of Autism, Ability, and


