

AML 3042

“American” Disability Studies

ONLINE

Dr. Mark B. Kelley

Contact

makelley@fiu.edu (best)

669-228-1906

Zoom Hours

To Be Determined & By Appointment

<https://fiu.zoom.us/j/7624116985>



Ellen Craft. *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom* (1860). [Line-drawing of a woman wearing a top hat, glasses, and a sling.]

Course Description

Is the exemplary American body (politic) disabled?

This seminar will use “American” literature and culture as a case study for the methods and value of the intersectional turn in Disability Studies. This shift acknowledges that disability is often the modality through which race, sexuality, national identity, and gender are lived; to separate these categories into component parts disregards their interdependent relationships. The racialized body in slavery or immigration history was also a disabled or “diseased” body; women’s bodies in the late 19th century were defined within medical and psychoanalytic protocols; the nation itself was framed according its (un)stable constitution.

A major focus of the seminar will be disability’s constitutive role in American aesthetics, the degree to which judgments about cultural value and artisanal perfection are founded on nontraditional bodies. Literary works often include a disabled figure who serves as prosthesis for narrative or poetic coherence. Literary history is filled with blind soothsayers, hunchbacked despots, madwomen in the attic, and tubercular heroines. Such figures reinforce social and cultural attitudes about populations that must be monitored, institutionalized, and stigmatized, lest they challenge ideas of bodily and cognitive normalcy. We will consider a number of stories, films, paintings and performances that feature disabled characters, and we will further complicate these by discussing cultural productions by disabled writers and artists.

Your Professor



His bio.

[Selfie photo of Mark Kelley, a white man in his mid-30s wearing glasses, a red hoodie, and a respirator mask while receiving an intravenous infusion]

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course you will be able to

- critically examine American literature/culture as indebted to disability.
- apply and improve your analytic skills through written and oral investigations of this fact.
- evaluate the intersections between disability and constructions of race/sex/gender/class/other categories.
- practice and improve your academic and workplace communication skills.
- create ties between our chosen theme & modern ecological, political, or social issues.

Course Texts & Technology

Course Reader: Available on Canvas.

ACCESS TO THE INTERNET, CANVAS, AND ZOOM ARE REQUIRED.

COVID-19 and My Responsibility to You

This course is taking place at unprecedented time, a global pandemic. You have no doubt undergone- and continue to undergo- many forms of hardship since last spring. My aim is not to add to those hardships, but to create a space where you can continue to learn. This will not be easy given the uncertainties ahead. My responsibility to you therefore goes beyond a transactional exchange. **Your health, safety, and happiness matter more than any course or grade.** Above all, I want to do my small part in enriching your life over these next eight weeks. I will continue think of ways to do so and welcome your feedback and suggestions.

I will log into the course at least three times a week. I will respond to emails within 24 hours (48 hours if sent on the weekend). I will grade assignments within 7 days of their submission. I will respect you.

Attendance and Assignments

There is no set “attendance” for this asynchronous online course, although there will be a timeframe to complete tasks. The main schedule is organized in five content modules and one final module. That means there is a set of **readings and assignments that are due before 10am on the following days:**

Mon. Aug 31 (10am); Mon. Sept. 7 (10am); Mon. Sept 14 (10am); Wed. Sept. 23 (10am); Sept 30 (10am) Wed. Oct. 7 (10am); Sun. Oct. 11 (10am)

It is in your best interest to do these assignments on time and in order since they build on one another. Nonetheless, please do let me know if anything arises. **Extensions are automatic if you request them before the due date!** See the schedule and assignments pages for more.

Grading Scale

A = 94-100 **A-** = 91-93
B+ = 88-90 **B** = 82-87 **B-** = 79-81
C+ = 77-78 **C** = 71-76
D = 65-70
F = 64 and below

Close-up photo of Marsha P. Johnson (1945-1992), a black trans, and disabled activist, smiling while wearing a colorful floral wreath.



Graded Tasks

TEN DISCUSSIONS: 55 POINTS
(5.5 PTS EACH)
FIVE RESPONSES: 30 POINTS
(6 PTS EACH)
FINAL RESPONSE: 15 POINTS
TOTAL: 100 POINTS

Canvas

Info about the course, changes in readings or other announcements may be presented on Canvas. (<https://canvas.fiu.edu/>) Please email me or IT Support (<https://fiu.service-now.com/sp>) for help if elements of Canvas are not working as they should.

Assessment & Google Docs

Since this is an online asynchronous course, your reading is self-directed. Quizzes do not allow you to develop ideas, but I also need to know that you have read. I want to help give you structure as well as space to explore ideas individually and in groups. Therefore, course assignments take three forms.

- 1: TEN POWERPOINT RESPONSES:** These brief responses stem from specific PowerPoints that directly relate to that section's readings. You will be recording brief audio clips or making written responses via "VoiceThread" software embedded in Canvas. See Canvas for more details.
- 2. FIVE FREE-RESPONSE PAPERS:** These 300-word responses stem directly from your reading but are otherwise rather open-ended. You are free to respond to questions posted in the guided PowerPoint lectures and/or discuss ideas developed independently. You will receive full credit for these responses as long as 1) You meet the word count 2) Include specific reference to the section's texts and/or PowerPoints 3) Analyze rather than summarize. You will **post all of your responses via CANVAS to an individual and private Google Document.**
- 3. FINAL OPEN-ENDED ANALYSIS/REFLECTION:** Your final will be a 600+ word response in which you begin to apply course concepts and themes to a specific text/artifact of your choosing.

I will comment directly on your work as it develops (most likely by voice memo). See the "Course Access Map" and the "Assignment" pages for more info.

Academic Integrity

If you are having trouble with a task for any reason, please let me know. Most academic integrity cases are the result of a misplaced idea—often due to late-night panic or grade pressures—that misconduct is the only way to completing the assignment. "Academic Misconduct" includes:

Cheating – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not.

Plagiarism – The use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own.

Learn more about the [academic integrity policies](#) as well as [student resources](#) that can help you prepare for a successful semester. Again, please consider me your #1 resource and advocate!

Accommodations

Above all, I strive to provide access to all students according to their needs. Please let me know if there are ways I can better support you. Also, the Disability Resource Center (DRC) works with students, faculty, staff, & community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable.

If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305/348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center (GC) 190. Please also notify me of any DRC accommodations as soon as possible. We can then work together to best coordinate your official as well as informal accommodations for this course.

Additional Resources

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students Office (305-348-2797). Furthermore, please let me know if you need additional support in accessing these resources below.

Violence and Harassment Resources

Title IX makes it clear that violence & harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, sexual orientation, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can file a complaint through FIU's Equal Opportunity Programs & Diversity Office. Alternatively, you may file an anonymous complaint using our **Ethical Panther Reporting Line** at 844-312-5358 or online at <https://compliance.fiu.edu/hotline.html>

Crisis Resources

If you are in crisis, you can find the appropriate resources at Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). CAPS provides free and confidential mental health services to students.

CAPS Modesto Maidique Campus: UHSC 270, 305-348-2277

CAPS Biscayne Bay Campus: WUC 320, 305-919-5305

Food Insecurity Resources

The Student Food Pantry is an initiative to address the prevalence of food insecurity on campus. This project assists students who are experiencing financial difficulty to purchase groceries. No proof of need is required and students can access the pantry once a week.

Modesto Maidique Campus: DM 166, 305-348-6995

Biscayne Bay Campus: WUC 307, 305-919-5620 Ext. 4

Center for Excellence in Writing & Center for Academic Success

The CEW (GL 120) can help you brainstorm, draft, revise, or polish your written work. It is open Mon-Thu 9:00-8:00 and Fri 9:00-5:00. The CAS can assist you with reading skills, study techniques, and grammar. Open Mon-Thu 8-8 and Fri 8-5. Tutoring assistance begins at 9:00.

Course (Access) Guide

This schedule is a checklist as you guide yourself in the course. You start at the top and work your way down. In the first module “Defining Disability,” for example, you will do an intro PowerPoint, perform six brief readings (1-3 pages), explore a second PowerPoint, and then write a brief response. The entire first module should be completed before August 31 at 10am, but otherwise the pace is up to you. Only then should you move on to module two. The format continues for each module except the final, which contains only one longer assignment.

Definition of terms used in the schedule:

- “READ”** refers to scholarly or literary texts that are central to the course; you should analyze them closely and prepare to respond.
- “WATCH”** refers to videos that you should analyze as texts.
- “EXPLORE”** refers to guided lessons and discussions; you should explore these **AFTER** you have read & will post responses in the PowerPoint itself.
- “WRITE”** refers to assignments that should be completed **BEFORE** the due date & posted on Canvas. Specifics are on the ‘Assignments’ pages at the end of this doc.

SCHEDULE (Move from top to bottom)

Module 1: “Defining (Dis)ability”

This module is to be completed between Mon. Aug 24 & Mon. Aug 31 (10am) in the order below:

- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 0: “Welcome!” (Canvas)
- READ: Jim Ferris, “Poems with Disabilities” from *Hospital Poems* (2004)
- READ: Kanta Kochar-Lindgren, “Disability,” in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Tanya Titchkosky, “Normal,” in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Jillian Weise, “Nondisabled Demands,” From *Cyborg Detective* (2019)
- READ: Fiona Kumari Campbell, “Ability,” in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Sander L. Gilman, “Madness,” in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas) First two pages only, ending with, “...seeing madness as a diminution of one's humanity.”
- READ: Gertrude Stein, from *The Making of Americans: Being a History of a Family's Progress* (1925)
- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 1: “the poem_is right_where it_Belongs” (Canvas)
- WRITE: Response 1(Post on Canvas)

Module 2: “Accessing Social and Medical Models”

This module is to be completed between Mon. Aug 31 (10am) & Mon. Sept. 7 (10am) in the order below:

- READ: Bess Williamson, “Access” in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Jim Ferris, “Poems with Disabilities” from *Hospital Poems* (2004) (Canvas) (Yes, please read it again)
- READ: Howe, “Map of Florida,” in *Atlas of the U.S. Printed for the Use of the Blind* (1837) (Canvas)
- READ: Douglas C. Baynton, “Deafness” in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- WATCH: Vox, “How Sign Language Innovators are Bringing Music to the Deaf” (2017)
- READ: Sayantani DasGupta, “Medicalization” in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Martha Stoddard Holmes, “Pain” in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Emily Dickinson, “There is a languor of the life” (1880)
- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 2: “You feel the northern boundary line...” (Canvas)

- READ: Tom Shakespeare, "The Social Model of Disability" in *Disability Studies Reader* (214-222)
- READ: Tobin Siebers, from "Disability and the Theory of Complex Embodiment" in *The Disability Studies Reader* (288-297). Start with "Feminist philosophers have long argued..." under the bolded heading rather than at the start of the essay.
- READ: Emily Dickinson, "I am afraid to own a body" (1880) (Canvas)
- READ: Herman Melville, "Leg and Arm" from *Moby Dick* (1851) (Canvas)
- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 3: "abjectly reduced to a clumsy landsman" (Canvas)
- WRITE: Response 2 (Post on Canvas)

Module 3: "Disability Narratives and Aesthetics"

This module is to be completed between Mon. Sept. 7 (10am) and Mon. Sept. 14 (10am) in the order below:

- READ: Frida Kahlo, "The Broken Column," 1944 (Canvas)
- READ: Michael Davidson, "Aesthetics," in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Leonard Cassuto, "Freak," in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- WATCH: Amanda Baggs, "In My Language" (2007)
- READ: Tobin Sibers, "Disability Aesthetics" (Canvas)
- READ: Frida Kahlo, "The Broken Column," 1944 (Canvas) (*Yes, you should read the image again*)
- READ: Leslie Jamison, "[Frida's Corsets \(The Paris Review, 2011\)](#)" (Canvas)
- READ: Salvador Dali, "[Venus de Milo with Drawers](#)" (1936) (Canvas)
- READ: Anne Bradstreet, "The Author to Her Book" (1678)
- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 4: "the emotions that some bodies feel in the presence of other bodies"
- READ: David Mitchell & Sharon Snyder, "Narrative," in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Katherine Ott, "Prosthetics" in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, "Rsi," from *Bodymap* (2015)
- READ: Mitchell & Snyder, "Narrative Prosthesis" in *The Disability Studies Reader* (222-35)
- READ: Herman Melville, "Ahab's Leg" from *Moby Dick* (1851) (Canvas)
- READ: Jillian Weise, "The Old Question," From *The Amputee's Guide to Sex* (2007) (Canvas)
- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 5: "To be ill is to produce narrative" (Canvas)
- WRITE: Response 3 (Post on Canvas)

Module 4: "Disability and the 'Pathological Other'"

This module is to be completed between Mon. Sept. 14 (10am) and Wed. Sept. 23 (10am) in the order below:

- READ: Nirmala Erevelles, "Race," in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- WATCH: "[#RaceAnd: Kay Ulanday Barrett](#)" (Canvas)
- READ: "Cooperation Often Begins With Haldol" (1974 Advertisement) (Canvas)
- READ: Kiese Laymon, "My Head Is a Part of My Body & My Middle Name Is Makeba" (2020) (Canvas)
- READ: Ross Gay, "A Small Needful Fact" (2015) (Canvas)
- READ: Albion Tourgee, from *Bricks Without Straw* (1880) (Canvas)
- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 6: "the construction of the pathological Other" (Canvas)
- READ: Ellen Samuels, "Passing" in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Susannah B. Mintz, "Invisibility" in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Lynn Manning, "The Magic Wand" (2009) (Canvas)
- READ: Ellen and William Craft, From *Running A Thousand Miles to Freedom* (1860) (Canvas)
- READ: Allison Carrey, "Citizenship," in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Image, "Putting our Immigrants Through the Sieve at Ellis Island" (1913) (Canvas)
- READ: Dr. Allan McLaughlin, "Immigration and the Public Health" (1904) (Canvas)
- WATCH: Xine Yao, "[Rethinking Masks](#)" (2020) (Canvas)
- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 7: "Who feels immune and who is disproportionately vulnerable"
- WRITE: Response 4 (Post on Canvas)

Module 5: "Queer/Crip Critique"

The first part of this module is to be completed between Wed. Sept. 23 (10am) and Wed. Sept 30 (10am) in the order below:

PART I

- READ: Tim Dean, "Queer," in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Victoria Ann Lewis, "Crip," in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Robert McRuer, "Compulsory Able-Bodiedness and Queer/Disabled Existence." in *The Disability Studies Reader* (369-78)
- WATCH: Movie Trailer, *As Good as It Gets* (1997)
- READ: Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, "crip non haiku," "crip sex moments: 1) Cancel" and "Rsi," from *Bodymap* (2015) (Canvas)
- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 8 (Canvas) "our favorite slutty adaptive device"
- READ: Faye Ginsburg and Rayna Rapp, "Family," in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: *Harper's Bazaar* Advertisements (1887) (Canvas)
- READ: Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, "Two Friends," *Harper's Bazaar* (1887) (Canvas)
- READ: [Harper's Bazaar 2020](#). Skim the front page for any connections to Advertisements/ "Two Friends"/disability. (Canvas)
- READ: Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, "Rsi," from *Bodymap* (2015) (Yes, you should read the poem again) (Canvas)
- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 9: "your wrist braces like corsets" (Canvas)
- WRITE: Response 5A (Post on Canvas) (only needs to be 150 words)

PART II

The second part of this module is to be completed between Wed. Sept. 30 (10am) and Wed. Oct 7. (10am) in the order below:

- READ: Jasbir K. Puar, "Disability," in *Transgender Studies Quarterly* (2014) (Canvas)
- READ: Kim Q. Hall, "Gender" in *Keywords for Disability Studies* (Canvas)
- READ: Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, "Disability Justice/Stonewall's Legacy, or: Love Mad Trans Black Women When They Are Alive and Dead, Let Their Revolutions Teach Your Resistance All the Time." (2019). (Canvas)
- WATCH: "Pilot," *Pose* (2008) (Canvas)
- WRITE: Response 5B (Post on Canvas) (only needs to be 150 words)
- EXPLORE: PowerPoint 10: "if Marsha was here_Marsha is here" (Canvas)

Module 6: Catching Up & Final

This module is to be completed between Wed. Oct. 7 (10am) and Sun. Oct 11 (10am) in the order below:

- WRITE: Final Response (Post on Canvas)
- READ?: Faye Ginsburg, Mara Mills and Rayna Rapp, "From Quality of Life to Disability Justice: Imagining a Post-Covid Future" (2020) (Canvas) **This reading is OPTIONAL.**

Please contact me if you feel yourself falling behind this schedule at any time- I will do everything I can to adapt to your needs and foster your success.

Assignments

I. PowerPoint Discussions (10 discussions, 5.5 points each, brief audio notes, see schedule for due dates)

For each section, there will be two PowerPoints embedded with “Voicethread” software in which I record lecture notes and promote discussion questions. You will be able to respond to these questions via the embedded reply function. Your task is to provide FIVE TOTAL responses to either myself or a classmate in each of the PowerPoints. You will receive full credit if you:

1. Provide an audio or written response to the “Question of the Day.” This question (sometimes in two parts) is at the beginning of a PowerPoint and helps frame the discussion.
2. Provide three additional audio or written responses to the main content. These vary in length, but certainly should be more than a few seconds or sentences. You are free to use the “reply” function to direct the response to myself or another student.
3. Provide one response on the final four content slides (I want to spread out responses).

Again, this means EACH PowerPoint in a module requires five responses. Do not worry if your thoughts/replies are half-formed. My aim is to reproduce a low-stakes discussion despite our physical distance from one another. You are welcome to expand on your initial response thoughts in the free response for each section, but do not merely copy/paste them. I will listen to each person’s replies at the end of the module and incorporate any feedback I have in your free response.

II. Free Responses (six responses, five points each, 300 words, 1 is due: 8/31; 2 is due 9/7; 3 is due 9/14; 4 is due 9/23; 5 is due 9/30; 6 is due 10/7)

Each module will conclude with a response in which you reflect/respond to the module’s readings and discussions. There are only **three rules** for reading responses: **1)** include at least **one specific passage** from a course theoretical text from the section (so a keyword essay or a longer essay)—place it at the top of your response **2)** write at least **300 words** **3)** **Promote ideas/analysis** rather than summary.

High Pass: 5 points (contains all three elements)

Pass: 4 points (is missing one element)

Incomplete: 2 (is missing two elements)

It is my hope/expectation that everyone will receive full credit for responses by writing what THEY are interested in. The **PowerPoints may prime** that interest- you could reference or expand on initial responses- but they are **not the sole source and prior responses should not merely be copy/pasted**. Some questions you could address include:

- 1) How does something we’ve read connect to other courses? Your personal interests? Current events?
- 2) How does the chosen passage change your (mis)understanding of prior concepts?
- 3) What research questions could you derive from a reading? What do you want to know more about?
- 4) Do you disagree with how I have framed a concept or analysis? Do you have questions about it?

It is possible that you will cover multiple ideas in a response or you can focus on one theme. You may return to concepts from prior responses and/or brainstorm for your final response. I am happy so long as you meet the criteria above!

III. Final Response (one, fifteen points, 625 words, Due Oct. 11th)

It is my hope that you will be able to see/apply aspects of disability studies to your own interests. I also want to create space for assessment and reflection despite a truncated schedule. Therefore, your final is less of a formal essay than a slightly longer free response that is straightforward to receive full credit for.

Post a literary/creative text (poem, painting, graphic novel, novel, song, etc) that you think connects to one of the theoretical texts/themes we've discussed in the course. The text does not need to expressly be "about" disability- perhaps it is a text that you've long loved and never thought of in relation to disability. It could also be a text of your own creation! Then, write a 600+ word response that treats to object as a point of reflection and analysis for your work in the course.

You will receive full credit if you:

- 1) Provide a link and a brief summary of your artifact: what is it, where did you find it, and what is its plot/narrative? (50 words or fewer).
- 2) Include at least one specific element from your chosen literary creation (examples: a passage from a narrative text, a frame from a film, a lyric from a song, a zoomed-in figure in a visual text)
- 3) Include two specific passages (2-4 sentences) from scholarly, theoretical texts that frames your understanding of the artifact. So two passages total, but from different authors.
- 4) Write a 625-word response/analysis in which you use the artifact to consider our course concepts and reflect on what you have learned. What attracted you to this artifact initially and/or in relation to this course? How is (dis)ability represented in this work? What course concepts/ideas inform your reading of it? What argument would you be interested in making about the piece's overall meaning or importance in disability studies? Please note, elements 1-3 do not count towards the word count.

A sample submission sheet is on Canvas, so please make sure you follow the correct format. It is my hope/expectation that everyone will receive full credit for the assignment, so focus on testing out ideas. If possible, we will also have a 'Zoom' session to share/discuss our items!

Thank you for joining me this semester!

-Professor Kelley