

**Faculty of Graduate Studies**  
**Critical Disability Studies Graduate Program**  
**CDIS 5080 3.0: Language, literature & disability**  
**Winter 2020**  
**Course Outline**

- Class Time:** January to March  
 Tuesday, 11:30 am to 2:30 pm
- Venue:** Room 1156, Vari Hall
- Course Directors:** Nancy Viva Davis Halifax, PhD  
 Associate Professor
- Contact Info:** nhalifax@yorku.ca  
 Room 344, Stong Building
- Office Hours:** Professor Halifax: by appointment

*“Were you thinking that those were the words, those upright lines? Those curves,  
 angles dots, No, the real words are more delicious than they.*

*Human bodies are words, myriads of words.”*

- *Walt Whitman*

## **Course Description and Objectives:**

This course has as its focus disability in language and literature – the cultural construction of disability through language, medical and literary texts. We will begin with an exploration of the languages of disability and how historically language has been used to shape what we know of our experiences of disability and impairment.

We will exercise our curiosity and intellect as we explore language, literature and critical disability theory through readings, discussions, lectures, and the occasional media work. The course sets the stage for students to deepen their understanding of theoretical, conceptual, interpretive, representational, and creative practices, as well as to explore the fundamental questions related to who they are as scholars.

Through active participation students will:

- be introduced to the language and literature of critical disability studies thereby gaining an understanding of key historical and contemporary forms of writing in the field;

- increase their capacity to think critically about language and literature that includes disability, through the co-creation of a learning environment;
- develop methods of critical reading and thinking in order to enhance their scholarship

## Assignments

### Participation: ongoing - 30%

I imagine that each of us will have different and at times overlapping interests. Over the semester it is expected that each of you will provide references and examples of texts that are important to your work & writing & are not on the syllabus. This practice provides support, extends what each of us is reading. includes a final evaluation of your learning and the class

### Reflections, responses, work-in-progress: ongoing - 30%

Twice during the semester (date to be decided) each of you will submit a short piece of writing (3-4 pages) that engages a text that you choose and which extends the direction of your writing. These will be shared. Guidelines for sharing work in a writing studio will be discussed.

### Essay\Project - Due: March 31, 2020 - 40%

We will use class time to discuss & develop our chosen area of exploration for the final paper\project. Projects in alternate forms include podcasts, scripts, essays, short films, blogs, artifact analysis, conference paper, draft of paper for a journal, a blurred genre, and so on it goes. If you will be working in a form that you are less familiar with please raise questions in class - there is likely collegial expertise to draw upon.

## Suggested Texts

Antrobus, Raymond. *The perseverance*. London: Penned in the margins. 2018. [Sample \[PDF\]](#), and [AudioBook](#). Available on the Penned in the Margins website. Goldberg, N. (1990).

*Wild mind: Living the writer's life*, 14-18. Bantam.

Rankine, Claudia. *Citizen: an American lyric*. Graywolf Press, 2014.

Stewart, Kathleen. *Ordinary affects*. Duke University Press, 2007.

Berlant, Lauren, and Kathleen Stewart. *The Hundreds*. Duke University Press, 2019.

Mark Doty. *The Art of Description*. Greywolf Press.

## Resources

Morrison, Toni. *Mouth Full of Blood: Essays, Speeches, Meditations*. Random House, 2019.

[Writers of Color Discussing Craft - An Invisible Archive](#). Available on the de-canon website

## Weekly Schedule

### January 7, 2020 -welcome

In our first class we will review the syllabus (likely ongoing & exploratory) with the intent of adding, removing, suggestions of what has been missed, areas, writing and reading practices as well as rules of engagement

Before 14 January, 2020 bring in an article with language that troubles - send it to the class two days in advance.

### January 14, 21, 28, 2020 - words\languages\gestures

we begin by following the languages of disability, chronic illness, difference attending to their effects.

Quayson, Ato. (2007). A Typology of Disability Representation. In *Aesthetic Nervousness: Disability and the Crisis of Representation* (pp. 32-53; n. 215-218). New York: Columbia UP.

Donnelly, W. (1997). Lingua Medica: The Language of Medical Case Histories. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 127, 11:1045-1048.

Pelias, R. J. (2005). Performative writing as scholarship: An apology, an argument, an anecdote. *Cultural Studies - Critical Methodologies*, 5(4), 415-424.

Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's "Infection in the Sentence: The Woman Writer and the Anxiety of Authorship"

Woolf, Virginia. (1984). How should one read a book? In M.A. Leaska (Ed.), *The Virginia Woolf Reader* (pp. 233-245). New York: Harcourt Inc.

### [Dialogue on Teaching Disability Literature](#)

### February 4, 11, 2020 - genre - and - or - crafting language

Cowley, Danielle. "Life Writing, Resistance, and the Politics of Representation: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Eli Clare's 'Learning to Speak'." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 6.1 (2012): 85-95.

Day, Ally. "Chronic Poetics, Chronic Illness: Reading Tory Dent's HIV Poetry through Disability Poetics and Feminist Bioethics." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 11.1 (2017): 83-98.

Haft, Adele J. "The Poet As Map-Maker: The Cartographic Inspiration and Influence of Elizabeth Bishop's "The Map"." *Cartographic Perspectives* 38 (2001): 37-65.

Hicks, Heather J. (1996). Whatever it is that she's since become: Writing bodies of text and bodies of women in James Tiptree, Jr.'s "The Girl Who Was Plugged in" and William Gibson's "The Winter Market" Author(s): Source: *Contemporary Literature*, 37(1): 62-93

Hollinger, Veronica. (1999). (Re)reading Queerly: Science Fiction, Feminism, and the Defamiliarization of Gender. *Science Fiction Studies*, 26(1):23-40.

Fanny Howe. "[Bewilderment](#)." How2, Vol 1, no 1, March 1999, unpaginated.

Melancon, Michael. "'A River that No One Can See': Body, Text, and Environment in the Poetry of Stephen Kuusisto." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 3.2 (2009): 183-194.

Meagher, Michaëlle. "Letting Something Else Happen: A Collaborative Encounter with the Work of Sharon Rosenberg." *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* 10.2 (2014): 1-16.

Schalk, Sami. "Reevaluating the supercrip." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 10.1 (2016): 71-86.

Titchkosky, Tanya. "Life with dead metaphors: Impairment rhetoric in social justice praxis." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 9.1 (2015): 1-18.

## **READING WEEK - no class on February 18 2020**

### **March 10, 17 2020 - affect, auto\ethnography – poetics & politics**

Adams, Tony E., and Stacy Holman Jones. "Performing identity, critical reflexivity, and community: The hopeful work of studying ourselves and others." *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* 9.2 (2013): 1-5.

Adichie, C. N. (2010). The Writer as Two Selves: Reflections on the Private Act of Writing and the Public Act of Citizenship (transcript of Spencer Trask Lecture, Princeton University, October.)

Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a new consciousness*. In *Borderlands/La frontera: the new mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books. 99-

113. Berlant, Lauren, and Kathleen Stewart. *The Hundreds*. Duke University Press, 2019.

Ferris, Jim. (2008). Just Try Having None: Transforming Transmuting Transcending Transfixing Transfiguring Transcribing Pain. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 28, 1,2: pp. 242-255. 15 pp.

Ferris, Jim. (2008b). Thirteen Ways of Looking at Crip Poetry. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 28, 1, 2: pp. 6-7. 2 pp. . (2004). The enjambed body: A step toward a crippled poetics. *The Georgia Review* 58, 2: 219–33. 14 pp. Johnson, Jessica. "Autoethnography as a Poetics of Worlding and a Politics of Becoming: Claudia Rankine's Citizen and Kathleen Stewart's Ordinary Affects." *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* (2019): 1532708619879207.

Lorde, Audre. "Poetry is Not a Luxury." *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, Crossing Press, 1984, pp. 36-39.

Moore, Lisa. L. ["Sister Arts: On Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, and Others."](#) *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 8 Feb. 2013. Accessed 17 Sept. 2017.

Rankine, Claudia. *Citizen: an American lyric*. Graywolf Press, 2014.

Reid, Jenna, et al. "Mobilizing mad art in the neoliberal university: Resisting regulatory efforts by inscribing art as political practice." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 13.3 (2019): 255-271.

Stewart, Kathleen. *Ordinary affects*. Duke University Press, 2007.

### **March 24, 31 2020 - activist texts, texts of witness**

Benaway, G. (2017). *Passage*. [League of Canadian Poets](#).

Curtis, Claire. "Utopian Possibilities: Disability, Norms, and Eugenics in Octavia Butler's Xenogenesis." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 9.1 (2015): 19- 33.

Imarisha, Walidah, ed. *Octavia's Brood: science fiction stories from social justice movements*. AK Press, 2015.

Kafer, Alison. "Un/safe disclosures: Scenes of disability and trauma." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 10.1 (2016): 1-20.

Kuusisto, Stephen. "When is a failure of imagination dangerous?." Letters, Hastings Centre Report. November-December 2012.

Lorde, A. (1984). Uses of the erotic: The erotic as power. In *Sister outsider: Essays and speeches*. Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press. 53-59.

Piepzna-Samarasinha, L. L. [bodymap](#)

Piepzna-Samarasinha, L. L. (2018, May 21). [To survive the trumpocalypse, we need wild disability justice dreams](#). Retrieved from [Truthout website](#)

Savarese, Ralph James. "Lyric Anger and the Victrola in the Attic: An Interview with Stephen Kuusisto." *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies* 3.2 (2009): 195- 207.

Thom, kai cheng (2017). [a place called NO HOMELAND](#). Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press. Pulp Press. diaspora babies, in your mouth, there is a poem, what the moon saw, its name was The Body Without a Penis, good communication, we did not ask for. excerpt

Tiptree, J. [Sheldon, A.] (). The girl who was plugged in. In M. Flanagan, A. Booth (Eds.) *Reload: Rethinking women and cyberculture* (pp. 546-577). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Wade, C. M. (2006). I am not one of the. In L. Davis (Ed.). *The Disability Studies Reader* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.), (p. 411). New York, NY and London, UK: Routledge.

Wade, C. M. (2006). Cripple Lullaby. In L. Davis (Ed.). *The Disability Studies Reader* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.), (p. 412). New York, NY and London, UK: Routledge.