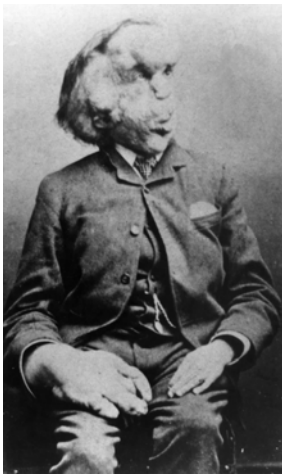


# ENG 147-01 / FS 347-01: Disability in Literature and Film

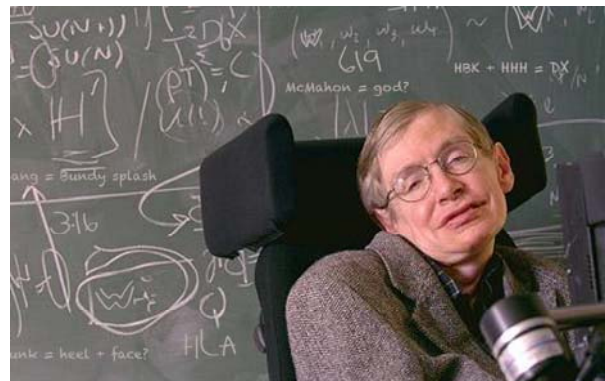
Westminster in London (Fall 2015) Tuesdays 2–5:30 pm Ealing Room, CAPA

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Phone:  
Office hours: (by arrangement)



Our course will investigate how literary and film texts have portrayed people with disabilities in ways that have shaped our understanding of what is “normal” and “abnormal” in human beings. Drawing on a selective sampling of fiction, poetry, drama, memoir, and films, the class will acquaint themselves with a range of writers and characters who cope with physical / mental impairment or developmental challenges and must forge positive perspectives on their resiliency, social identity, and self-realization. The fictional lives of characters we encounter in childhood—Quasimodo, Mad-Eye Moody, Percy Jackson, and all those sea captains (Hook, Ahab, Long John Silver!)—have imprinted themselves on our minds as indelibly as the historical figures Richard III, John Merrick, and Helen Keller. Literary and cinematic representations of disability often do a disservice to those afflicted by perpetuating false assumptions about their personhood, mythologizing their powers, or reducing them to objects of condescension or pity. In conjunction with the SED companion course “Foundations of Special Education,” we shall use London’s civic institutions and cultural offerings to determine what constitutes ethical representations of disability in art and entertainment.



**Required Reading Texts:**

Bauby, Jean-Dominique. *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*. Trans. Jeremy Leggat. New York: Vintage, 1998.

Grealy, Lucy. *Autobiography of a Face*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2003.

Haddon, Mark. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. New York: Vintage, 2003.

Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*. New York: Penguin, 2002.

+ Additional shorter readings electronically provided by the instructor.

**Required Films Texts: (To watch in class)**

- *The Miracle Worker* (1962)
- *Dominick & Eugene* (1988)
- *Mask* (1985)
- *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989)
- *My Left Foot* (1989)
- *A Beautiful Mind* (2002)
- *Murderball* (2005)
- *Temple Grandin* (2010)

**Course Outcomes:** Students enrolled in this course will

1. develop and strengthen critical thinking, writing, and oral communication skills by crafting and supporting literary analyses;
2. achieve broadened literacy by reading and analyzing texts spanning genres of fiction, memoir, poetry, drama, and film, and considering how these texts shape, reflect, and/or critique disability culture;
3. explore the ethical implications of the ways literary and cinematic texts have historically represented persons with disabilities; and
4. recognize the power of texts to develop and/or critique cultural beliefs about disability in ways that provoke questions and create the potential for progressive change.

**Cluster Outcomes:** Students enrolled in this cluster will

1. consider how literature informs our perceptions of disability culture;
2. recognize that a fuller experience of the human condition can be achieved by studying literature and film through the framework provided by SED 201;
3. apply the theory and concepts of special education to the study of literature and vice versa;
4. compare and contrast the ways different disciplines examine and represent the human condition;
5. develop communication, analytical, writing, and research skills.

**Course Requirements**

**Participation: 15%**. As it is a seminar, you are required to participate actively and responsibly throughout the semester. Your failure to attend and to contribute will adversely affect your and your classmates' work. I divide 'participation' evenly into two areas:

- 1) *Attention* – (7.5%). Listening to the instructor and each other, without unrelated chatter
- 2) *Speaking* – (7.5%). Contributing daily, in small-groups or whole-class discussion

**Class Discussant: 10%.** Each of you will sign up for a text listed below, about which you will devise thought-provoking questions to guide the class in meaningful discussion.

**Midterm Exam: 25%.** A take-home midterm on the first half of the course material, consisting primarily of identification and short essay questions.

**Short Papers (2): 30%.** You will write two thesis-driven response papers that develop and support analyses of specific textual passages and their relation to topics concerning disability. Ultimately, your responses should demonstrate critical thought about the course texts. The instructor will suggest possible paper topics to consider.

**Final Group Project: 20%.** In groups of 3-4, you will prepare a 15-minute final presentation that applies concepts from SED 201 to the analysis of a few selected passages of literary text (or 1-2 scenes of film text) that we have NOT read (or viewed) in class. Each presentation should be both informational and analytical. I shall evaluate presentations by averaging the score of your individual efforts with that of your group performance.

### Course Policies

**Attendance:** You must attend every class session at CAPA. If you have to miss a session, contact me ASAP with your very good reason why you won't be in class. An unexcused absence will lower your final course grade by  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a letter grade (e.g., an A- becomes a B+; a C becomes a C-, etc.).

**Accessibility Statement:** Westminster College actively strives for the full inclusion of all students. Students with disabilities who require access solutions for environmental or curricular barriers while in London should work out arrangements in advance with the instructor and with Faith Craig, Dir. of Disability Resources. Tel: 724.946.7192. e-mail: [craigfa@westminster.edu](mailto:craigfa@westminster.edu).

**Cell Phones:** should be out of sight and turned *off* at all times during class sessions.

**Late Work:** All work (drafts, revisions, final papers, homework) is due at the beginning of class on the day I indicate. If you have an emergency, please contact me; as a general rule, however, I will not accept late work. You must be present in class to get credit for your work.

Final grades will be assigned using the standard formula:

<b>A</b>	93-100 points	<b>B +</b>	87-89 points	<b>C +</b>	77-79 points	<b>D +</b>	67-69 points
<b>A -</b>	90-92 points	<b>B</b>	83-86 points	<b>C</b>	73-76 points	<b>D</b>	60-66 points
		<b>B -</b>	80-82 points	<b>C -</b>	70-72 points	<b>F -</b>	0-59 points

Students will conduct themselves in a manner befitting the college policy on Academic Integrity. Consult the "Student Regulations" for official definitions of cheating, misconduct, plagiarism, and providing false information (and their consequences) in your Undergraduate Catalogue.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**  
**(Assignments are subject to change)**

**WELCOME TO LONDON!**

**\*Saturday, Sept. 5 CAPA London Tour:** Guided walking tour of city

**WEEK 1: Disability Studies and Literary Analysis - An Overview**

**Wed – Sept. 9**

Introduction: Review of syllabus and course goals; assigned texts/methods

Discussion: Personal and Cultural Understanding of “normality / disability”

In-Class Reading: Mairs, “On Being a Cripple” (1986)

**\*Saturday, Sept. 12 CAPA Day Trip:** Stonehenge & Bath

**WEEK 2: Identity, Beauty and Social Worth (Part 1)**

**Wed – Sept. 16**

Reading: Fries, Introduction to *Staring Back* (1-10).

Hawthorne, “The Birth-Mark” (1843)

Brothers Grimm, “Snow White” (1812)

Grealy, *Autobiography of a Face* (1994). [pages 1-117]

**WEEK 3: Identity, Beauty and Social Worth (Part 2)**

**\*Tuesday, Sept. 22 CAPA Theatre Trip 1:** *Bend It Like Beckham* (Phoenix Th)

**Wed – Sept. 23**

Reading: Grealy, *Autobiography of a Face* (1994). [pages 118-236]

Film screening: *Mask* (1985, dir. Peter Bogdanovich, wr. Anna Hamilton Phelan).

**WEEK 4: Emotional and Mental Disturbances (part 1)**

**Wed – Sept. 30**

Reading: Wordsworth, “The Idiot Boy” (1798) and letter to John Wilson  
 London, “Told in the Drooling Ward” (1914)  
 Selection from Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (1847)  
 Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (1892) + “Why I Wrote the Yellow  
 Wallpaper” (1913)

<b>WEEK 5: Emotional and Mental Disturbances (part 2)</b>
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**\*Monday, Oct. 5**      **CAPA Theatre Trip 2**      *Measure for Measure* (The Globe)

**Wed – Oct. 7**      **DUE: PAPER 1**

Reading: Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men* (1937)

Bogan, “Evening in the Sanitarium” (1941)

Plath, “Lady Lazarus” (1965); Hughes, “Fate Playing” (1998).

Film: *A Beautiful Mind* (2001, dir. Ron Howard; wr. Akiva Goldsman)

**\*Friday, Oct. 9**      **CAPA Conference**      Intl Human Rights Conference

**\*Saturday, Oct. 10**      **CAPA Day Trip II**      Oxford & Blenheim Palace

<b>WEEK 6: Autism and Interaction</b>
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**Wed – Oct. 14**      **DUE: TAKE-HOME MIDTERM**

Reading: Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (2003)  
[read only pages 1-115.]

Film: *Temple Grandin* (2010), dir. Mick Jackson; wr. Christopher Monger)

<b>WEEK 7:</b>
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**Wed – Oct. 21**

Reading: Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (2003)  
[read only pages 115-226.]

Film: *Dominick & Eugene* (1988, dir. Robert M. Young, wr. Corey Blechman)

<b>Monday to Friday</b>	<b>October 26-30</b>	<b>FALL BREAK</b>
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<b>WEEK 8: War, Recovery, Remembrance</b>
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**Wed – Nov. 4**

Reading: Sassoon, “They,” “The Rear-Guard,” and “On Passing the New Menin Gate”; Owen, “Dulce Et Decorum Est,” “Futility,” “Disabled,” “Letters to His Mother” and “Preface”

Film: *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989, dir. & wr. Oliver Stone)

<b>WEEK 9: Hearing and Visual Impairment</b>
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**Wed – Nov. 11**

Reading: Raine, *Tribes* (2010)

Excerpt from Helen Keller's *The Story of My Life* (1903)  
Letter from Annie Sullivan (1888)

Film: *The Miracle Worker* (1962, dir. Arthur Penn; wr. William Gibson)

<b>WEEK 10: Sensory and Physical Disability</b>
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**Wed – Nov. 18**

Reading: Short plays from *Beyond Victims and Villains*

Wolfe, "Dreaming of Heaven"

Film: *Murderball* (2005, dir. Henry Alex Rubin; wr. Dana Adam Shapiro)

<b>WEEK 11: Talent Transcends Incapacitation</b>
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**Wed – Nov. 25**

Reading: Bauby, *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* (1996)

Film: *My Left Foot* (1989, dir. Jim Sheridan; wr. Noel Pearson)

**\*Wednesday, Nov. 25 CAPA Theatre Trip 3** *U of Minn. BFA Actors* (Globe)

**\*Thursday, Nov. 26 CAPA Thanksgiving Dinner**

<b>WEEK 12:</b>
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**Wed – Dec. 2**

**DUE: PAPER 2**

Reading: Manning, "The Gentle Way"; Ferris, "Poems with Disabilities," "For Crippled Things," "Poet of Cripples" and "Normal."

<b>WEEK 13:</b>
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**Wed – Dec. 9** Course Review & Round-up

**GROUP PRESENTATIONS**