

The New Poetry of Disability: Breaking the Barriers of Ableist Language



Beauty is a Verb: The New Poetry of Disability

by Jennifer Bartlett

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language	: English
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Screen Reader	: Supported
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Word Wise	: Enabled
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Lending	: Enabled



The New Poetry of Disability is a groundbreaking movement that challenges the traditional portrayal of disability in literature. This new generation of poets is reclaiming agency, breaking down stereotypes, and creating a more inclusive literary landscape by embracing and celebrating the diversity of human experience.

Historically, disability has been marginalized and pathologized in literature. Disabled characters have often been portrayed as objects of pity or ridicule, or as one-dimensional figures defined solely by their disability. This limited and often inaccurate representation has perpetuated harmful stereotypes and excluded the experiences of disabled people from the mainstream literary canon.

The New Poetry of Disability seeks to break free from these restrictive conventions. Poets are using their work to challenge the dominant narrative of disability and to give voice to the experiences of those who have been silenced or marginalized.

Reclaiming Agency

One of the most important goals of the New Poetry of Disability is to reclaim agency for disabled people. Poets are using their work to challenge the idea that disability is a deficit or a source of shame. They are instead celebrating the strengths and resilience of disabled people and reclaiming their own experiences as valid and valuable.

For example, in her poem "The Body's Grace," poet and disability activist Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha writes:

"I am not a broken thing I am a survivor I am a warrior I am a poet"

Piepzna-Samarasinha's poem is a powerful declaration of self-acceptance and resilience. She refuses to be defined by her disability and instead embraces her own body and experience as a source of strength and beauty.

Challenging Stereotypes

The New Poetry of Disability also challenges the stereotypes and misconceptions that often surround disability. Poets are using their work to humanize disabled people and to break down the barriers of ableism.

For example, in his poem "The Cripple Dance," poet and disability activist Lawrence Carter-Long writes:

"I am not a cripple I am a dancer I am a poet I am a man"

Carter-Long's poem challenges the stereotype of the disabled person as helpless or pitiful. He instead celebrates the beauty and strength of his own body and the joy of movement.

Creating a More Inclusive Literary Landscape

The New Poetry of Disability is not only about challenging stereotypes and reclaiming agency. It is also about creating a more inclusive literary landscape that reflects the diversity of human experience.

Poets are using their work to create a space where disabled voices can be heard and valued. They are creating new literary forms and challenging traditional publishing norms to make their work accessible to a wider audience.

For example, poets such as Rebecca Tamás, Emily Abendroth, and Jillian Weise are using their work to explore the intersections of disability, queerness, and race. Their poems challenge traditional notions of identity and representation and open up new possibilities for literary expression.

The New Poetry of Disability is a powerful and transformative movement that is changing the face of literature. By reclaiming agency, challenging stereotypes, and creating a more inclusive literary landscape, poets are giving voice to the experiences of disabled people and challenging the dominant narrative of disability.

This new generation of poets is creating a necessary and powerful space for disability in literature, and their work is sure to continue to shape and inspire future generations of readers and writers.

Further Reading

- The Cripple Dance by Lawrence Carter-Long
- The Body's Grace by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha
- The Disable God by Emily Abendroth
- The Book of K by Jillian Weise
- Rebecca Tamás



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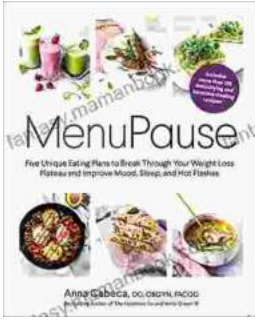
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