



10th December, 2023

ALPAS

-Freedom from the shackles of mundane norms

BISHOP COTTON WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

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NEWSLETTER FROM THE PG DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

On behalf of the P.G. Department of English Studies, I am glad to present our second weekly Wall Journal for the academic year 2023-24. Our Wall Journal is named, "Alpas" a Filipino phrase which means to be free from the shackles of monotony. It is the ability to get away, to feel a sense of freedom and escape the mundane. The journal this week is based on the theme "Disability Literature: A Path Breaking Approach in Literature". The journal attempts to explore and record various themes within the field of Disability Literature. We could reach this stage through the constant support of the faculty and intellectual generosity of the authors and scholars we encounter in our syllabus.

One of the objectives of this journal is to encourage its students and faculty to publish scholarly articles, creative writing and enriching reviews to further the discourse on the weekly themes. Readers can notice the progression of ideas made through book and film reviews, which emerge as an important section of this journal. The book review section this time features "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time" put together by Ms. Vindya student of the 1st MA English. The movie review section features "Black" put together by Ms. Afifa Fathima, of 1st MA English. We also provide a platform for creative writing and critical thinking, towards which Ms. Neha Jha, of 2nd MA English puts her thoughts on the theme Disability Literature: A Path Breaking Approach in Literature in the form of a poem. Ms. Abilin, of 1st MA English wrote an essay on the theme. Ms. Manju, of 1st MA English put her thoughts for the theme in the form of a short story. The poster for this edition was put forth by Ms. Sadia Naaz, of 2nd MA English. The Events of the Week presents to the reader, activities, conference, lectures and book clubs the Department of English Studies as has conducted or participated in through the week. This section in our journal was collated by Ms. Sowmya, of 1st MA

English. The MA English weekly wall journal encourages students from other disciplines to contribute in the areas of creative writing and critical thinking. We would be greatly pleased to have them published in our future editions.

Anushashree N
2nd MA

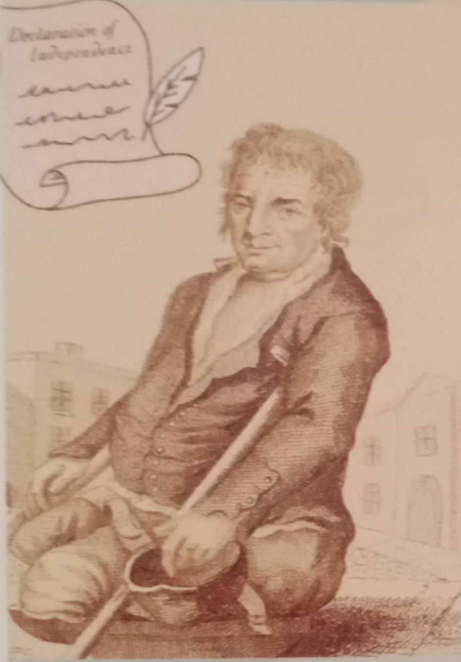
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ALPAS

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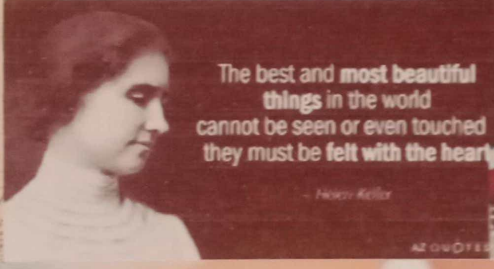


We are a society that treats people with disabilities with condescension and pity, not dignity and respect.

Stella Young

"The downside of my celebrity is that I cannot go anywhere in the world without being recognized. It is not enough for me to wear dark sunglasses and a wig.
THE WHEELCHAIR GIVES ME AWAY."

Stephen Hawking



The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched they must be felt with the heart

- Helen Keller





Hero In The Pages

***In the realms of ink, tales unfold,
A tapestry is woven with stories untold.
Within the lines of literary grace,
The representation of disability finds its space.***

***Beyond the words, a world comes alive,
Where characters with disabilities strive.
Not as tokens, nor mere plot devices,
But as protagonists, with unique vices.***

***Their journeys unfold, a dance with fate,
Navigating a world that may discriminate.
In pages turned, resilience takes flight,
Disabled heroes emerge into the light.***

***In pages turned, resilience takes flight,
Disabled heroes emerge into the light.
From blindness to mobility restrained,
In each affliction, strength is gained.***

A Short Story

In a little village surrounded by hills, there was a girl named Lily. Lily couldn't see well because of her eyes, but she had a strong imagination and a determined heart. Lily enjoyed listening to her grandmother's stories, especially those about brave knights. Despite her disability, she dreamed of going on her own heroic journey.

One day, Lily got a special book. When she opened it, she suddenly went into the world of her favorite stories. In this magical place, she learned that her disability didn't stop her from doing things. In the magical world, Lily's impaired vision became a special gift. She could see beyond how things looked and embarked on a quest to save the kingdom from an evil sorcerer.

Lily faced challenges on her journey but didn't let her disability stop her. Using her imagination and other senses, she navigated forests, solved puzzles, and gained companions who admired her strength and determination. In the final battle, Lily realized her disability was a strength, not a weakness. Using her unique perception, she defeated the sorcerer and brought peace to the kingdom.

Lily returned home, closing the magical book and cherishing the lessons from the fantastical world. She realized disabilities can lead to growth, and everyone has unique strengths within them. Inspired by her story, Lily became an advocate for inclusivity, emphasizing that disabilities should never limit a person's worth or potential.

And so, Lily's story became a beacon of hope and inspiration, reminding us all that with determination, imagination, and a little magic, we can overcome any obstacle, disability or not.

MOVIE REVIEW

Director: Sanjay Leela Bhansali

Cast: Amitabh Bachchan, Rani Mukerji
, Shernaz Patel, Ayesha Kapoor, and
Dhritiman Chatterjee

Genre: Drama

Release date: 4th February 2005

Producer: Sanjay Leela Bhansali



Inspired by Helen Keller's life, it revolves around Michelle McNally, a woman with visual and hearing impairment, and her relationship with her teacher who himself later develops Alzheimer's disease. Michelle was a girl who lost her eyesight and hearing after recovering from an illness at the age of two and exists in a black world where she is isolated in the darkness of her own existence, trapped by her inability to see, hear and express. She grows up becoming more and more frustrated by the black and dark world around her, making her a violent, uncontrollable eight-year-old child. Her parents, Paul and Catherine, are at their wits' end trying to control her, until one day the light shines through the end of the tunnel. From the opening when the blind-and-deaf Michelle (Rani Mukherjee) runs into her old blind and dying teacher Debraj (Amitabh Bachchan), "Black" clamps its emotional tentacles around our heart and refuses to release us until its last dying breath exhales on screen, permeating the film's fragrant and radiant aura with fumes that we have never smelt before.

"Black" unleashes a fury of never-felt emotions. Master-creator that he is, Bhansali peels away layers and layers of passionate pain. The characters stand stark naked on camera, their souls exposed for us to see. It takes a while to come to terms with the awesome and overpowering emotions of Bhansali's world. Getting a fix on Michelle's world isn't easy. We first enter little Michelle's pitch-black world with Debraj. The relationship that grows between the impossibly difficult little girl and the equally difficult teacher is underscored by an immense and acute irony.

As Debraj makes Michelle 'see' into the light through her blindness, he goes blind and finally loses his mind. In the best most heart-wrenching moments of the film, Michelle rattles the chains that are put on her guru to prevent him from causing himself bodily harm.

That frenzied chain rattling becomes symbolic of everything that Bhansali's incredibly grand cinema attempts to do. The darkest most inexpressible thoughts acquire shape in Bhansali's tortured and yet incredibly beautiful realm of self-expression. The film explores the profound challenges faced by Michelle, portrayed by Rani Mukerji, as she navigates a world of darkness and silence. Her disability is portrayed with depth, focusing on her internal experiences and her relentless quest to communicate and connect.

ESSAY

Disability, a multifaceted aspect of the human experience, has found a prominent place in literature, providing a platform to explore the challenges, triumphs, and nuances of individuals facing physical, mental, or emotional obstacles. Through diverse narratives and characters, literature has the power to shape perceptions, foster empathy, and contribute to a more inclusive understanding of the world.

Literature serves as a powerful tool for representation, allowing individuals with disabilities to see themselves reflected in stories. Works like "The Hunchback of Notre-Dame" and "The Elephant Man" delve into physical disabilities, offering complex portrayals that go beyond stereotypes. These narratives empower readers by highlighting the resilience and strength found in those with disabilities.

Many literary works challenge societal stereotypes and misconceptions about disability. "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" confronts perceptions of mental illness, unravelling the impact of institutionalization on individuals. By dismantling stereotypes, literature encourages readers to question preconceived notions and embrace a more nuanced understanding of disability.

Disability in literature extends beyond physical limitations, delving into emotional and mental landscapes. Novels like "The Bell Jar" and "The Silver Linings Playbook" explore mental health challenges, offering insights into the internal struggles of characters. These works invite readers to empathize with the emotional complexities associated with disability.

Disability literature often serves as a vehicle for social commentary, prompting readers to reflect on societal attitudes and policies. "The Miracle Worker" and "The Diving Bell and the Butterfly" shed light on the importance of education, accessibility, and societal inclusion for individuals with disabilities, urging readers to advocate for positive change.

In conclusion, disability in literature is a rich and evolving theme that transcends physical, mental, and emotional boundaries. Through diverse narratives, literature not only represents the experiences of individuals with disabilities but also challenges stereotypes, promotes empathy, and contributes to a more inclusive and compassionate society. As readers engage with these literary works, they embark on a journey of understanding, breaking down barriers, and embracing the diverse tapestry of the human experience.

BOOK REVIEW

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

Mark Haddon's best-selling novel, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, is a detective story about fifteen-year-old Christopher Boone. It received many awards as well as criticism by the autism community for its portrayal of someone with Asperger's syndrome. Christopher is shown as an expert at mathematics who has difficulty reading social circumstances and cannot grasp metaphors. When a dog is killed in his neighborhood, Christopher sets out to solve the case. As he grows involved in the murder inquiries, he discovers the truth about his own life and family. Even though this novel does not directly refer to autism, the book's back cover originally described Christopher as someone with Asperger's, but then the writer says in his blog that he has not done any research on autism. We can see that this novel is not an accurate portrayal of Asperger's. While Christopher does have many traits of someone with autism, this novel teaches readers autism's stereotypes rather than the reality. Characters with Asperger's syndrome have become increasingly common in television shows and films. There are many inaccurate media representations. People with autism are often regarded as having unique talents. Nonetheless, this work became so well-known that it served as one of popular culture's exposures to the autism spectrum. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night time* was transformed into a play that has been praised for encouraging the acceptance of diversity. Many in the autistic community think that the novel and the performance helped raise more awareness of autism spectrum diseases among more individuals.

-VINDHYA SHREE K.S

MA 1st year

