## **DS 3321-001: Disability in Comics**

**Fall 2016**

**Instructor:** Cathy Corder, Ph.D.

**Course Information**: TTh 12:30 – 1:50pm, UH 01

**Office/Hours**: Tues 2 – 4pm and Wed 10am – 12 noon and by appointment

**Email**: ccorder@uta.edu

**Faculty Profile:** https://www.uta.edu/profiles/catherine-corder

Graphic literature (comics, graphic novels, manga, etc.) provides a format for vivid narratives that involve characters who exist outside the boundaries of the normal human. These characters may be mutants, monstrous, alien, deformed—or they may be subtly or secretly different in mind and body. This class will examine the use of disabled characters as stereotypes for social and moral disorder, the phenomenon of the “supercrip” comic hero, and the graphic novel as a disability memoir. Readings will include well-known and unfamiliar comic series, as well as critical works by Susan Sontag, Edward Said, and Donna Haraway and others as foundational theories for the critical analysis of disabilities in graphic literature.

**Core Objectives**

* To become familiar with the techniques and terminologies of visual storytelling through close readings and analyses.
* To understand some of the principle ideas currently being articulated in literary disability studies.
* To learn about how literature “marks” characters who are outside the normal and how those marked characters function within a narrative
* To create a graphic narrative that incorporates aspects of visual storytelling and literary depictions of disability. (NO art ability required!)

**Required Texts**

* Bell, Cece (w), and David Bell (a). *El Deafo*. New York: Amulet Books, 2014.
* Forney, Ellen. *Marbles: Mania, Depression, Michelangelo, and Me: A Graphic Memoir*. New York: Avery, 2012.
* Inoue, Takehito. *Real*, Vol. 1. San Francisco: VIZ Media, LLC, 2008.
* Miller, Frank (w), and John Romita, Jr. (p). *Daredevil: The Man Without Fear*. New York: Marvel, 2015.
* Moore, Alan (w), and Brian Bolland (w, a). *Batman: The Killing Joke*. Burbank. CA: DC Comics, 2012.
* Small, David. Stitches: A Memoir. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009.

Other comics (available on Blackboard)

* Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006.
* Brabner, Joyce (w), Harvey Pekar (w), and Frank Stack (a). *Our Cancer Year*. New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1994.
* Engelberg, Miriam. *Cancer Made Me a Shallower Person: A Memoir in Comics*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006.
* Kreisberg, Andrew (w) and Matthew JLD Rice (a). *Helen Killer*. Issues #1 - #4. Vancouver: Arcana Comics, 2007-8.
* Lambert, Joseph. *Annie Sullivan and the Trials of Helen Keller*. White River Junction, VT: The Center for Cartoon Studies, 2012.
* Marchetto, Marisa Acocella. *Cancer Vixen: A True Story*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006.
* Rich and Rene Productions. *Amputee Love*. Berkeley, CA: Last Gasp, 1975.
* Wolfman, Mary (w) and George Perez (a). *Tales of the New Teen Titans: Cyborg*. Vol. 1, No. 1. New York: DC Comics, June 1982.

Critical Readings (available on Blackboard)

* Alaniz, José. “Supercrip: Disability and the Marvel Silver Age Superhero.” *International Journal of Comic Art* (Fall 2004): 304-23.
* Cocca, Carolyn. “Re-booting Barbara Gordon: Oracle, Batgirl, and Feminist Disability Theories.” *ImageText*: Interdisciplinary Comics Studies. n.d. Web. 17 August 2016.
* Donaldson, Elizabeth J. “The Corpus of the Madwoman: Toward a Feminist Disability Studies Theory of Embodiment and Mental Illness.” In *The Madwoman and the Blind Man*: Jane Eyre, *Discourse, Disability*, eds. David Bolt, Julia Miele Rodas, and Elizabeth J. Donaldson. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2012.
* Haraway, Donna. “The Cyborg Manifesto.” In *The Cybercultures Reader*, eds. David Bell and Barbara M. Kennedy, pp. 291-324. (excerpts)
* Hatfield, Charles. “How to Read a …” *English Language Notes* 46.2 (Fall/Winter 2008): 129-49.
* Mitchell, David T. “Narrative Prosthesis and the Materiality of Metaphor.” In. *Disability Studies: Enabling the Humanities*, eds. Sharon L. Snyder, Brenda Jo Brueggemann, and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, pp. 15-30. New York: Modern Language Association, 2002.
* Nye, Emily F. “The Rhetoric of AIDS: A New Taxonomy.” In *Embodied Rhetorics: Disability in Language and Culture*, eds. James C. Wilson and Cynthia Lewiecki-wilson, pp. 229-43. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2001.
* Sontag, Susan. *Illness as Metaphor*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1978. (excerpts)
* Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994. (excerpts)
* Schalk, Sami. “Reevaluating the Supercrip.” *Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies* 10.1 (2016): 71-86.
* Pantozzi, Jill. “Oracle Is Stronger Than Batgirl Ever Will Be.” *Newsarama.com*. Purch. 6 June 2011. Web. 17 August 2016.

**Class Participation:** I encourage you to make thoughtful contributions in response to the readings, to ask and answer questions, and present a general attitude of interest in the course content. You are expected to attend class regularly and to arrive on time. Excused absences include official university activities, military service, death of a close family member, and/or religious holidays. You must inform me in writing at least one week in advance of an excused absence, except for a death**.**

**If you miss a class,** **I will not supply what you miss by email or phone. It is your responsibility to contact one of your classmates to get this material or make an appointment to see me in person.**

**Attendance:** At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students’ academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients “begin attendance in a course.” UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

**My Attendance Policy:** As the instructor of this section, I will take attendance at the beginning of each class. You may take **four** unexcused absences, for whatever reason, and those will not affect your grade. However, if you miss more than **four** classes, I will deduct 10 points for each additional absence.

Your final grade for this course will consist of the following:

Discussion boards (6 x 50 points) 300 points

Reading responses (5 x 50 points) 250 points

Midterm exam 200 points

Close reading paper 200 points

Final project 300 points

Final presentation 50 points

**Total 1300 points**

Final grades will be calculated as follows: A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, F=69%-and below.

**Turning in Assignments to Blackboard:** You must submit all assignments in this course to Blackboard, with the exception of some in-class writing. I do not accept any assignments via e-mail. All assignments submitted to Blackboard must be saved as a .doc or .docx file to ensure that I am able to open them on my computer. It is your responsibility to ensure that all of your work is saved in this way and submitted in the correct format. If you submit work in the wrong format, then you will receive a zero for the assignment.

**Late Assignments.** Papers must be submitted to Blackboard by the beginning of class on the due date specified. **I do not accept late assignment**s, unless you have spoken to me and I have officially agreed to late submission *in advance of the due date*. If you must be absent, your work is still due on the assigned date

**Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**: Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional nine hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

**Grade Grievances**: Any appeal of a grade in this course must follow the procedures and deadlines for grade-related grievances as published in the current undergraduate / graduate catalog. Please following the link for university policy on grade grievances: <http://wweb.uta.edu/catalog/content/general/academic_regulations.aspx#10>.]

**Late Enrollment Policy:** Though I realize that sometimes enrolling in a course after the start date is unavoidable, please be advised that you will be held responsible for the class periods that you have missed, even if you were not enrolled in the course. I will not allow you to make up attendance, missed opportunities for participation points, or any other assignments that occurred before you enrolled. If you enroll in class after the start date, it is your responsibility to contact your peers in order to get caught up on the schedule and any announcements that might have been delivered in your absence. This policy also applies to students who drop and add.

**Classroom behavior.** Class sessions are short and require your full attention. You must have access to the required readings on Blackboard, so you may use laptops, tablets, or cellphones to do just that. Students are expected to participate respectfully in class, to listen to other class members, and to comment appropriately. I also expect consideration and courtesy from students. Professors are to be addressed appropriately and communicated with professionally.

According to *Student Conduct and Discipline*, "students are prohibited from engaging in or attempting to engage in conduct, either alone or in concert with others, that is intended to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with, or that in fact obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with any instructional, educational, research, administrative, or public performance or other activity authorized to be conducted in or on a University facility. Obstruction or disruption includes, but is not limited to, any act that interrupts, modifies, or damages utility service or equipment, communication service or equipment, or computer equipment, software, or networks” (UTA Handbook or Operating Procedures, Ch. 2, Sec. 2-202). Students who do not respect the guidelines listed above or who disrupt other students’ learning may be asked to leave class and/or referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

**Classroom Visitors:** Only students officially enrolled in this section are allowed to attend class meetings. You may not bring guests (children, spouses, friends, family) to class unless an academic request has been submitted and approved by the instructor well in advance of the proposed class visit. Children are not allowed in class as visitors at any time.

**Academic Integrity.** All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. "Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts" (Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Series 50101, Section 2.2)

You can get in trouble for plagiarism by failing to correctly indicate places where you are making use of the work of another or colluding with another to prepare assignments. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the conventions of citation by which you indicate which ideas are not your own and how your reader can find those sources. Read your textbook and/or handbook for more information on quoting and citing properly to avoid plagiarism. If you still do not understand, ask your instructor. All students caught plagiarizing or cheating will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

**Disability Accommodations:** UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [**www.uta.edu/disability**](http://www.uta.edu/disability)or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [**www.uta.edu/disability**](http://www.uta.edu/disability)**.**

**Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** [**www.uta.edu/caps/**](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) **or calling 817-272-3671** is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**Nondiscrimination Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://www.uta.edu/hr/eos/index.php)**.**

**Title IX Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit* [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](file:///C:\Users\rowntreem\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.IE5\IGVYXPA0\jmhood@uta.edu).Drop Policy. Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Student Support Services**:UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include [tutoring](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/current/academic-support/learning-center/tutoring/index.php), [major-based learning centers](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/college-based-clinics-labs.php), developmental education, [advising and mentoring](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/advising.php), personal counseling, and [federally funded programs](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/current/academic-support/mcnair/index.php). For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** for semester-long courses**,** a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should leave the room, -----------------. When exiting the building during an emergency, you should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist you in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

**Conferences and Questions:** I have four regularly scheduled office hours each week. These times are reserved for students to drop by or to make an appointment to discuss course assignments, grades, or other class-related concerns. I will be happy to make other appointment times for you if your class schedule conflicts with regular conference times or if I am not available on certain days. If you receive a grade on an assignment or quiz about which you have questions, please wait twenty-four hours before discussing it with me. This gives you time to process the assignment comments and to think about how your course work meets the requirements set forth for each assignment. I do not discuss individual student issues in the classroom before, during or after class.

**Syllabus and Schedule Changes.** I try to make my syllabus as complete as possible; however, during the course of the semester I may be required to alter, add, or abandon certain policies/assignments. Instructors reserve the right to make such changes as they become necessary. I will inform you of any major changes in class and in writing.

**DS 3321 Course Schedule**

(BB) = Reading is on Blackboard

Th 8/25 Introductions, syllabus, schedule, and assignments  
Reading comics

T 8/30 Reading comics  
**Read:** Charles Hatfield, “How to Read a . . .” (BB)

Th 9/1 Reading disabilities  
**Read:** Edward Said, *Orientalism* (excerpts), and David Mitchell, “Narrative Prosthesis” (BB)

T 9/6 Reading disabilities  
**Read:** *Annie Sullivan and the Trials of Helen Keller* (BB)

Th 9/8 Reading disabilities  
**Read:** *Helen Killer*, #1-4 (BB)  
**Due:** Discussion Board #1

T 9/13 The Supercrip  
**Read:** José Alaniz, “Supercrip” and Sami Schalk, “Reevaluating the Supercrip” (BB)

Th 9/15 The Supercrip  
**Read:** *Daredevil*

T 9/20 The Supercrip  
**Read:** *Daredevil*

Th 9/22 Illness as metaphor  
**Read:** Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor* (excerpts) and Emily F. Nye, “The Rhetoric of AIDS” (BB)  
**Due:** Discussion Board #2

T 9/27 **Read:** Three cancer comics (BB)

Th 9/29 Graphic disability memoirs (cancer)  
**Read:** *Stitches*

T 10/4 Graphic disability memoirs (cancer)  
**Read:** *Stitches*

Th 10/6 Disability and literary markers (adaptive technology)  
**Read:** *El Deafo* **Due:** Discussion Board #3

T 10/11 Disability and literary markers (adaptive technology)  
**Read:** *El Deafo*  
**Assign:** Take-home midterm

Th 10/13 Out-of-class assignment

T 10/18 Disability and literary markers (the body)  
**Read:** *Amputee Love* (BB)  
**Due:** Midterm exam submitted to Blackboard

Th 10/20 Disability in manga  
**Read:** *Real,* Book 1  
**Due:** Discussion Board #4

T 10/25 Disability in manga  
**Read:** *Real,* Book 1

Th 10/27 Disability and technology  
**Read:** Donna Haraway, “The Cyborg Manifesto” (excerpts) (BB)

T 11/1 Disability and technology  
**Read:** *The New Teen Titans: Cyborg* (BB)

Th 11/3 Disability and other literary markers (gender/sexual orientation)  
**Read:** *Fun Home* (BB)  
**Due:** Discussion Board #5

T 11/8 Disability and villains  
**Read:** *Batman: The Killing Joke*

Th 11/10 Disability and villains  
**Read:** *Batman: The Killing Joke*

T 11/15 Disability and rehabilitation  
**Read:** *Birds of Prey* (BB)  
**Read:** Carolyn Cocca, “Re-booting Barbara Gordon” and Jill Pantozzi, “Oracle Is Stronger” (BB)

Th 11/17 Graphic disability memoirs (mental illness)  
**Read:** Elizabeth J. Donaldson, “The Corpus of the Madwoman” (BB)  
**Due:** Close reading paper

T 11/22 Graphic disability memoirs (mental illness)  
**Read:** *Marbles*

Th 11/24 No class – Thanksgiving holiday!

T 11/29 Graphic disability memoirs (mental illness)  
**Read:** *Marbles***Due:** Discussion Board #6

Th 12/1 Presentation of final projects

T 12/6 Presentation of final projects  
Last day of class