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### Disability Culture Poetry: The Sound of the Bones. A Literary Essay

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#### Abstract

This essay looks for myths in disability culture poetry, and uses this lens, searching for different and welcoming spaces, countries, bodies and songs, to look at two questions: what does poetry do for crip culture? And what does crip culture do for poetry? Through close readings of poems by Jim Ferris and Philip Dowd, new lands emerge, and Neil Marcus's *Disabled Country* comes into view. The essay frames this discussion through a poetry banquet, held as part of a disability culture course at the Institute for Medical Humanities, UTMB, Galveston, Texas.

**Keywords:** poetry, Jim Ferris, Philip Dowd, Neil Marcus, T. S. Eliot, Roland Barthes, Greek myth, crip culture, disability culture, pedagogy, close textual analysis, embodied reading

#### Introduction

Since I was a little girl, I have been fascinated with Greek mythology, sung in verse. That world explained my world to me. In these stories, there were always so many people I could feel myself into, try out different characters at a time. Of course, I would not just be limping Eurydice, her foot bitten by a snake, now on wobbly feet trying to escape the world of the shades, only to be betrayed by her lover's glance — I would be searching Orpheus, too, using his sweet words to extricate his beloved out of Hades, only to lose her again. <sup>[1]</sup> And I would also be Agave, the Queenly leader of the Bacchae, those wild women who eventually rip the singer apart in their drunken, ecstatic revels, or, even, Bacchus or Dionysius himself.

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laughing at the young king who wants order in his kingdom and tries to defy a god who has set the king's people on fire with wine and love. [2] Transformation, transgression, cruelty and sex: these were the Greeks I devoured from early on.

And although I would have to reach far, far back to find actual memories to support my observation, as I grew older I felt sure that this fascination had an origin in my own bodily being, in the difference I finally pronounced and outed as 'disabled' many years later. I have found on Mount Olympus my land, my people. People who limped, fell down where they stood with inexplicable pain, people who were daily visited by tortures, and yet lived, and were defiant, not meek. I found the Sirens - women with body parts made of brass, called disfigured and yet singing beautifully. I found my avenger fantasy, Medusa, the woman who could kill with one look - who could turn to stone any boy who'd come to laugh at her.

Long before Xena the Warrior Princess reinterpreted Greek mythology for a new generation, I remember being read or told Greek stories as a toddler, then reading them in prose in grade school. Ultimately, though, my interest in these complex stories became an interest in poetry, and stood me in good stead when we began to translate Ovid's poetry in my Latin classes, or interpret Goethe in Literature, in my state-sponsored co-ed convent school in rural Germany. And I was much taken by the images we found in those poems: the perfect boy Ganymede rejoicing in being drawn into Zeus's lustful arms, and Prometheus spitting proud defiance at this god who had chained him to a stony cliff to be eagle's food.

Greek myths, and Greek themes - I still find them, and they find me, in the pages of disability poetry. Sometimes, they seem obscured by a political will that denounces them for their meaning, their hold over our cultural lives. But they are names of old stories, and powerful, as feminists know when they long to hear Medusa's laugh: they are not easily contained, not framed and done away with. Just like tricksters and other figures of many other traditions, they infiltrate, and their longings leave their mark deep in our bones. We better make peace with them, or at least call them into our dances, or else they will haunt us in the night.

In this essay I am moving out to look for my Greek myths in disability culture poetry, and as I unfold that theme, I will look at two questions through this perspective, themes that set the tone for this essay series: What does poetry do for crip culture? And what does crip culture do for poetry?

### **What does poetry do for crip culture?**

In the summer of 2006, during a disability culture graduate seminar at the Institute for Medical Humanities in Galveston, Texas, we held a crip poetry banquet. We had just spent an afternoon watching and discussing poetry in non-written formats, such as Shelley Barry's film/video *Trilogy*, which shows us that 'scars need to be crowned, too', stitched and loved and clad in beads, and a video of Peter Cook and Kenny Lerner's Deaf performance poetry where hands give birth to words and worlds in wide swooping gesture. That evening, we went low-tech over crab meat and shrimps in the private room of a restaurant. Dionysian wine prepared us for the task: a reading of crip poetry, after making our way through the sheaf of material and readings handed out the previous week. [3] Students identified which poem they wanted to read to us all, and we discussed the work.

And we began, reading a work by Jim Ferris, an American poet well known in crip culture circles. His poetic universe is explicitly shaped by larger stories, and bodies are never just 'natural': Catholicism and humanist traditions dance a slow waltz through the rhythm of his first two poetry collections. The poem we read together opens Ferris's collection *The Hospital Poems*.

#### **Poet of Cripples**

By Jim Ferris

By Ann T. Ooms

Let me be a poet of cripples,  
of hollow men and boys groping  
to be whole, of girls limping toward  
womanhood and women reaching back,  
all slipping and falling toward the cavern  
we carry within, our hidden void,  
a place for each to become full, whole,  
room of our own, space to grow in ways  
unimaginable to the straight  
and the narrow, the small and similar,  
the poor, normal ones who do not know  
their poverty. Look with care, look deep.  
Know that you are a cripple too.  
I sing for cripples; I sing for you.

Sitting in that restaurant at the edge of the ocean, we listened to this poem as a song rushing out over a landscape of forces, of ups and downs, expansions and contractions, of contour lines, moving out from the central lines of 'place', 'room', and 'space'. As we talked about the poem, we charted those spaces, followed them along and over lines, trying to find the territory.

I shared that to me, the poem sings over a landscape of caverns and rivers: it sings like Orpheus sings, mourning for limping Eurydice left behind in the hollow tunnels of the underworld, Eurydice who reaches back— for the living. Limping like Oedipus, groping like Tiresias, below ground like Persephone in her cavern, reaching towards mysteries: reading this poem in a writerly way, opening it up to my sense-world, this poem invokes the time of singers, bards upon the land. As I read the lines, I see different 'spaces to grow' layered over each other: Dantean rings and Olympian terraces, full of gods and demi-gods of the Greek world, with their mythological impairments. They are crips we can call into our circle if we try hard enough, if we willfully wish for our history to come forth and emerge from tunnels and hiding places.

Look deep: deep under, below, is the underworld, the under-lit world of institutions of any kind, the wards and waiting rooms of hospitals, crypts, asylums— and the institutions of gendered, embodied difference much too quickly ordered into valid/invalid. In this void within, difference can flourish: that is the hopeful message I take from the poem. The space for growth is in the hollow itself, in the delicious absence that creates the echoing chamber: in the o's of 'whole', the expansiveness and breathy rolling of the 'room's oo, in sharp contrast with the sibilants of the straight, the small, the similar that narrow toward my tongue's roof, call me to tighten up. That hollow, that absence is for me the enabler of longing: the piece missing from wholeness which keeps tumbling humanity in motion. I remember that in the *Lover's Discourse*, the poet of criticism, Roland Barthes, writes about what sustains longing: this sigh, the breath, that enables sound to emerge from the hollow pipe and rush away: "the two halves of the androgyne sigh for each other, as if each breath, being incomplete, sought to mingle with the other" (15).

The poem sings to me of Greek halves, longing to be united, moving aimlessly and disoriented, teetering, groping. In the *Symposium*, Plato explains that Zeus divided the three wholenesses (man/man, woman/woman, and man/woman) in his jealousy. This origin myth of human sexuality does not condemn any love, and puts homosexual love on an equal rolling path with heterosexual desire. Round, full, o's rolling, moving, with the full abandon of breath roaring out in lusty oratory— no small straightness, whose narrowed poverty is in a loneliness that is so old that it is forgotten. A cripple: that's what becomes of human love after Zeus's violence. But a breath remains, and remembers, and seeks to mingle— sending out sound, song, on its journey.

And Zeus threatens - if humans do not swallow their pride, he might split them further, leaving one leg, one eye— surely a vision not alien to crip culture. As I read on from the force of the poem's draw, it celebrates a pride, a humanity in those cripples: it is an ode to the fierceness and survival of longing.

The poem offers up other references, too, and, while sipping our wine, the students remembered half-forgotten literature classes. In Eliot's *Hollow Men*, we can find those denizens of Ferris's landscape:

We are the hollow men  
We are the stuffed men  
Leaning together  
Waiting and leaning, drawn, they stand in that  
Shape without form, shade without colour,  
Paralysed force, gesture without motion;

flaccid in the face of waiting, purgatory, like straw men. They are those that have not crossed yet, 'Gathered on this beach of the tumid river' — they have not shipped over with the ferryman, or followed the river Styx to their lover's resting place, as Orpheus did. They know not the mystery of death, the fullness of abandon, and even the echoing and painful passion of the wounded Fisher King.

'This is the way the world ends  
Not with a bang but a whimper.'

That whimper runs out, off, ending in dactylic feet shuffling off into nowhere. These hollow men know that they are not full— and yet, the whimpering closure of Eliot's poem allows me to mouth back the words of Ferris's version, where those hollow men, slipping in the fashion of The Wizard of Oz's scarecrow, on Eliot's 'crossed staves' like crutches, move on. Breathing, and breathed, they move, with a second step always following in the trochee of the cripple, with the line running over, enjambed.<sup>[4]</sup>

If Eliot has to use paralysis ('paralysed force') as a negative image, a being held in place (on the river's edge), then crip culture can un-maroon these sounds, mobilize them differently— for these words do sound differently when spoken in our world, where paralysis does not need to mean death. Recognizing the erotics of non-normate limbs configured to question any notion of 'natural' bodies, cripples might be those who feel the void inside move, call, sing, drawing them on.

And this, then, was the question my students in the disability culture class posed: whom does this sonnet address? Who is sung to here? Who is asked for permission to 'let me be the poet of cripples' - members of crip culture, addressed by their singer who knows the weight of words on our lives, or 'the mainstream', addressed by an Orphic poet who, like Eliot, uses the crippling metaphor for the human condition, the Fisher King's wound, the fallen step, those hollow men?

This question points to the conundrum at the heart of mythic language: to be specific *and* general, to open up to different scales, and to hold ambivalent meaning in all of them. Poetry lives in and on our bones. To dismiss its musical sounds as mere metaphor is doing it injustice: for cannot a line in a poem clasp a heart, and press it?

So if we acknowledge that power, we need also address the sway our larger words, our myth-fragments, can hold over our bodily imaginations. As a writerly reader of poetry, I want to reclaim the whimpering 'cripple', and let it move, rather than stand like a forceful crip. For while my bodily being engages in the breath of reading, and makes sense through my personal experience, I am also moved out on that precipice where no word holds meaning, and my singularity opens up 'toward the cavern/we carry within, our hidden void'. And thus I can claim no safe

ground, no river's edge: I teeter, a cripple.

In *The Pleasure of the Text*, Roland Barthes looks for that teetering, unsure footing, and distinguishes between the "text of pleasure," which confirms "the consistency of [our] selfhood," and the "text of bliss (jouissance)": "the text that imposes a state of loss, the text that . . . unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories, brings to a crisis his relation with language" (14). Reading poetry and weaving myself into myth rehearses these pleasures of texts for me, and allows me to breathe: an undoing and doing that binds me to a story, to a people, to a land. In that land, I can lose myself, unbind and gather again.

Making spaces of words our own, fitting our bodily hollows to them as resonating chambers: that's the labor of poetry. And just as Virginia Woolf had to call for a room of our (female) own, crips continue to have to fight for rooms of their own, motion of their own, control over movement, access and expansion. To call out an I is to raise that bar up in the flow of history, stemming the tide: 'I sing... I sing'. Those I's gather up the energy of hollows, allowing connections, making a space, an 'o': I's, cripples, and 'you'— reaching across, closing the circle the poem makes, firmly, with its final rhyme: 'Know that you are a cripple too/I sing for cripples; I sing for you'.

'Let me be': the poem becomes a song ritual of space-making, allowing the hollow to vibrate and reach out. Celebrating the song of cripples, boundaries between experiences and selfhoods can become labile.

Walt Whitman sings in *Song of Myself*:

I celebrate myself, and sing myself,  
And what I assume you shall assume,  
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

Whitman is at pains to tell us a few lines later that he is in perfect health — well, good for him, but I might be mean to read against the grain. There is such sadness in that joy, in that embracing, bounded clasping ('myself...myself') that repetition and rhythm make out of a celebration of unboundedness. Sounds mitigate against the commingling, the dissolution, the joint ownership of the body electric— and yet, the longing moves against these borders, is enabled by them.

In Ferris's poem, the world 'cripple' provides the borders and shapes that constrain: that awful word which we are only slowly reclaiming, that word that holds too much pain, too much disgust to be whitewashed, whitefaced, the word many of us made hip into 'crip'. And yet, 'cripple', rippling with a wave through my mouth, setting off explosions on my curling tongue, can become resonant in that old search for connection in song— for the breath. Poetry can rename a word, making it anew, crippling ripples of white water, liquid in my mouth. In the void, breath can bloom, and sound like the hollow reed of antiquity, Pan's flute.

*Poet of Cripples* finds a space in the old metaphors, so alive with physical and sensory difference and yet often so cruelly devoid of the lived experience of disabled people. The poem's voice does not reach out towards a political correctness that would stifle the poetic material that shapes Western thought patterns, police it, and set it in narrow tracks. Instead, I read it as finding spaces within, hollows from which to nourish ourselves and give us a different vocabulary of beauty, a beauty that emerges out of connection and movement.

That evening of the poetry banquet, around the table, my students and I discussed this word that vexes me and thrills me, 'cripple', and how it echoes so differently to disabled and non-disabled audiences— an issue often on the table in our shared time, and one that provides much exciting material for discussion. The language-skills of my bones, as well as others in our class community who identify as disabled, read a halting step meter differently than those of someone who strides

out straight and full, and we found often that members of crip culture are attuned to the small shifts of pain breath, or fluttering fingers, or a furrow building between the eyes.

In *Angel of Healing*, Welsh poet laureate Gwyneth Lewis gives voice to a form of the old dicta of ars poetica, of making meaning. Her angel, another mythological figure of poetry, speaks: 'Every disease is a work of art/if you play it rightly:'

She teases out the implications:

'By this he meant: whatever the form  
Imposed by arthritis, or by the gout.  
Your job's to compose yourself around about  
Its formal restrictions, and make that sing,  
Even to death [...].'

And yes, the poet's body as the source of a poem's breath shapes the specific alignment of contour ridges and experiences that make sound. Her own sound lilts strongly on my tongue, a tongue that got used and familiar to English sounds in the bilingual valleys of Wales. Lewis's Welsh-English tones are still so much closer to home to me than American poetry. But while I share that kinship with her, crip culture offers me another land and language. To go beyond the individual form, tensely just on the limit, self and non-self, communicating-just-about: that is the trajectory of poetic force. To give a poem a home in the country called disabled, as American poet Neil Marcus does in *Disabled Country*, means to stake out a claim that goes beyond one's individual body:

If there was a country called disabled,  
I would be from there.  
I live disabled culture, eat disabled food,  
make disabled love, cry disabled tears,  
climb disabled mountains and tell disabled stories.

To claim disability as an identity, rather than a shape for an individual body, means struggle, submission, elation, comradeship and a location. The form around which a body of work composes itself is no longer the tension between the abstraction of language and the specificity of one's individual bodily being. Instead, a third can enter: a way of knowing, of feeling, of being in community that does not subsume the individual, but can provide a different baseline, one in which 'the disease' or 'difference' has a different register, and where some things can be left unsaid, implicit, homely— a shared myth. Marcus ends his poem:

In my life's journey  
I am making myself  
At home in my country

To make oneself at home: to find stories, fit old ones to new landscapes, invent traditions, give birth to language. When American poet Mary Oliver visits the *The River Styx, Ohio*, and stands at that riverbank, she finds some tenuous connections with her mother and grandmother, but no land to live in:

Dim with arthritis, time, the muddied seasons,  
Grandmother poised in the back seat again,  
Counting the cows. My mother's tightening fingers  
Scratched at the roads that would take us home. On the wheel  
I tensed my knuckles, felt the first stab of pain.

I am moved by these lines, by the women's journey, the reach towards connection and touch, and by the weight of that stab in the fingers, holding a pen or moving a keyboard. But my experiences of Styx are more variant, more open, as are my pains after a brief stop by a river. Neither darkness nor claws are 'natural' associates of that pain to me, and what I should enjoy as good poetry riles me

associates of that pain to me, and what I should enjoy as good poetry ties me, instead. But, Reader, I am not looking for poetry that speaks of thin veils of crystals wrapping themselves around joints, crumbly cartilage in a bloody desert, or plaster casts that break my back. I am not looking to find my own personal imaginary mirrored in crip culture poetry. What I am looking for is the complexity of imagination, the drive towards death *and* life, and how to find shape and heft that sustains.

Publishing in the UK mental health system survivor journal *Poetry Express*, Wilma Kenny writes in her poem *Odyssey*, 'Like a reptile/I clung to a tree of normality', and again, it is myth that gives shape to that which can hardly be spoken, and only painfully heard, as Odysseus, lashed to the mast after stopping up his sailors ears, endures the songs of the sirens. Scavenging on ancient wanderings provide the building materials for shape-shifting habitations. Here, chameleons can find tenuous purchase, a claspings of vowels and consonants that offer a hold.

That land, disabled country, has many shapes, forces and myths— and the Greek myths are some of the building stones, some of the books, that those who claim disabled country can use. We can build contradictory homes, with different keys for different people, make people think of their limbs and their senses, their breath, as they enter our world.

One of the citizens of disabled country is Philip Dowd, an Australian poet. In his poem *New/Unnamed*, he rides on a different river, catches a different wave, finds and lives a different breath. He also acknowledges access issues in disability culture poetry: an asterisk opens up meaning and explanation, asking me to bring different sensibilities to poetry appreciation, to look beyond a poem's shape on a page. I read and honor this gesture as a commentary on the histories of exclusion crip culture people have faced in education and beyond.

### **New/Unnamed**

By Philip Dowd

Cerebral palsy moves as in tides  
Sometimes high, sometimes low,  
And I must follow.

Tidally something cosmic  
Moves through me  
The comic  
The forge  
Haphaestus.\*

My body changes  
Patterns  
Become  
Shifting  
Desert like  
The sand and time.

Born again  
With each muscular contraction,  
The excitement  
The challenge  
The new me.  
begins

\*Greek god of fire and Volcanism was the artisan of the gods and perceived disabled.

This poem opens me onto a land of contradiction, of watery dryness, tidal burn. Here is a desert forge, a dry basin that is old and new. The lines are short, condensing as they go, to the 'begins'— open-ended, a new sentence, pushing forward. An 'I' appears belated, entering the land of the poem after the conditions of being, those tides— beholden to some other star, or moon, or something that exerts its force. What could be elegiac, long-flowing - an acknowledgment of a control elsewhere, a surrender in romantic verse— is precise, specific, condensing downwards into individual words: 'Haphaestus' and 'begins'. To read this poem, I gasp, quickly, as the lines chop across my breath, making me weigh the length of each syllable, the cost of the word. The intake and outflow of breath are audible to me as I read, again and again, following the punctuations into pauses. Again, a different bodily being presses against my ear, onto my tongue, into my windpipe. I sing a new rhythm into my bones, and enjoy the ride.

Is Dowd singing himself into being, like Whitman did, willing connection—or is he sung? Who sings, and how do Haphaestus's anvil and hammer strike sparks out of movement? The forge is at the heart here: the heat of creation, of coming into being. Hephaestus is the maker-god, the anvil-god, the one who makes nice playthings (like the first woman, Pandora) for the other inmates of Olympus. He is the craftsmen of the gods, who can create out of nothing: poesis. Vulcan in his Roman guise, this god remembers the material of his body. He doesn't just hasten away, unthinking -- for he limps, and better thinks through where he's going. His foot is an undefined mass, yet-to-be-shapen (like Byron's, the devil, the fallen angels) -- always a draw with the poets. He is also Venus's husband, horned a few times, but game for a laugh about it, it seems, if one reads Ovid.

I can hear that hammer coming down, hammering matter into fiery shape, in each breath drilling the lines of the poem, the *New/Unnamed*, that can be made by the god of cripples. The weight of the hammer, 'a muscular contraction': words are heavy, and create a new beginning. The 'I' of the poem is wrenched between forces of astral bodies, god-bodies, but can withstand the heat, and spreads itself out, 'like sand and time' across a new land, a new body, a new breath. What 'I' this 'begins' will point to, mould and sing, is not fixed yet.

Would a non-crip culture reader read differently? Would the first two words of this poem, 'cerebral palsy' paralyze the reading, would the chopped breath become the in-take of the breath of fear, or worse, of pity? I do not know, since I live by the by-laws and rules of my land, disabled country, even if I rally against them from time to time. I like my insider-status, even if it gives me no more insight into Dowd than my German passport gives me into another citizen there. Tourists are always despised, and there's fun to be had in the crip culture game, where I can suspend the attack of 'palsy', 'paralysed', 'cripple', and 'limp', and riff around their wordy sound.

Poetry, and this skillful rearrangement of words and myths into new countries to live in, can add much to crip culture, measure its width and depth, turn our faces away for moments, at least, from the sub-cultural paradigm that requires us to bravely grin as we grope towards pride. Poetry offers a respite, a site of contradiction, a land uncharted: here be dragons. Indeed, poetry is one of our favorite genres, and many websites, anthologies and performance events speak to the vitality of a form in which structure and freedom can dance around one another for the length of a breath.

### **But what can crip culture do for poetry?**

At the end of that party, the poetry banquet, after much wine and alcoholic desserts, we read our last poem. Someone had selected another one of Ferris's poems, also from the *Hospital Poems: Normal*. I personally hadn't spent much time with this one before this evening: at first reading, it had left me a stranger, a foreigner.

## Normal

By Jim Ferris

Across Oak Park Avenue  
is a city park, lush  
and busy, where men play softball all

evening, too far away  
to watch, their dim voices  
drifting across the green. Their cars line

the streets as far  
as I can see. Sammy and I,  
Robert and I, Hoffman and I call out

the makes and models  
as the cars pass. *Dodge Dart*.  
*Chevy Nova*. We are seldom wrong— *Corvair*,

*Pontiac GTO*—we who drive  
wheelchairs and banana carts—  
*Mustang, VW, Rambler American*— who have not yet

Rounded second—  
'57 *Chevy!* My dad had one of those—  
who watch out windows a world so soft—*T-bird* —

so fair—*Corvette* —  
so normal—*Ford Fairlane*—  
a world going on, going by, going home.

My students enjoyed, and talked, and shared car stories, remembered those names. And they talked about childhood, and counting games, and - there's an Oak Park Avenue everywhere! And remembering ourselves, we grew quieter as we looked at the bones of the poem. And then one student spoke, one who had been quiet for most of the evening, an older man, and presented his reading, which turned the poem around for us all. <sup>[5]</sup> He told us that after studying disability culture with us this term, he saw something now that he wouldn't have seen before. He began with the soft light he saw that evening, at the softball game, the dim voices, and he remembered what he would have been doing that glorious golden evening, busy fielding the ball, and who it was who was sitting by the side of the street, having time to note the cars. He spoke of going home. There was nostalgia, memory, and difference— but no pity, or sadness beyond the growing old in the bones. A new geography settled over the grid of the poem, telescoping us into a time and place of childhood experienced as a foreign country, where the incantation of car names spell an American myth.

What can crip culture do for poetry? It can turn things on a dime, open up layers of living like the petals of a rose, see our world with different eyes. It does so by not condensing difference to individual instance, but by allowing us to see our cultures as lived, as experienced, and as a shaper of the forms of people's lives. We share roots, and many stories, but our different twang, our own breath animates these stories, making them sing as they are compressed against our specific bodies. 'Going home'— who does not long for connection, location, a place? I want foreigners to see how our country lies, and find familiar living tales, sung with a different melody.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> And this story is told in so many ways in many places. For a rich introduction, see Ovid: *Metamorphoses*, Book 10: Orpheus and Eurydice. My personal imaginary of this story is also much shaped through my ear, listening and singing the mezzosoprano part of Orpheus in Gluck's opera (1762, but only made into female voice by Berlioz in 1856, changing sex and register), who bellows out: *Che farò senza Euridice? Dove andrò senza il mio ben? Euridice!... Oh dio! Rispondi! Io son pure il tuo fedel! A different liquidity of language speaks of pain and longing.*

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<sup>2</sup> This particular story is told through performance, in bodies that have to act as gods, in Euripides' drama *The Bacchae*—but the god is taunting his own mortal family, adding a different layer to the distinctions between gods and humans.

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<sup>3</sup> The material included poetry by Neil Marcus, Jim Ferris, Kenny Fries, Stephen Kuusisto, Johnson Cheu, and stories by Anne Finger and Julie Trahan.

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<sup>4</sup> Jim Ferris's essay *The Enjambed Body* provides a rich mining ground for this reading.

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<sup>5</sup> We read this poem by itself, not as part of the *Hospital Poems*. I am honoring here this particular student's perspective on the poem. I am discussing *The Hospital Poems* in more detail in my forthcoming essay collection, *Disability Culture Poetry: Pleasure and Difference*.

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Cultural Mestizaje in the Essays and Poetry of Nancy Morejón — Jstor and essays during the first fifteen years or so of the After the the Fundacion Pablo Milanés promoted many black inte. Poetry analysis — Wikipedia analysis is the process of investigating a poem 39;s form, content, structural semiotics and Like poetry itself, poetry analysis can take many forms, and be undertaken for many different reasons. . to conveying wit and sardonic humor, as in the opening of Pope 39;s An Essay on Criticism. . . Poetry in different cultures edit . A Literary Essay looks for myths in disability culture poetry, and uses this lens, searching for different and welcoming spaces, countries, bodies and songs, nbsp; How Dead Is Poetry? Literature both reflects and creates cultural messages about ability and disability, “normal” and “abnormal.” Literature can help us understand the experience of the disabled, as well as understand our own responses to disability in our own lives and in our culture. Learning Objectives: ¶ To become familiar with the history of the portrayal of disability in literature. ¶ To make connections between literary portrayals and real-life situations. ¶ To gain understanding of the varied experiences of the disabled community. ¶ To develop skills of close and careful reading. ¶ To enhance discussion s To compose a poetry analysis essay, one must first read the poem carefully. It is essential to reread the literary piece several times to get a full grasp of the numerous ideas and concepts. This also gives you an opportunity to make note of the rhyme scheme (if there is one), the type of poem (Limerick, ode, sonnet, lyric, haiku, free verse, etc.) and other poetic techniques that the poet used (such as enjambment, meter, end-stopped lines, figurative language, etc.). This means that one may find it beneficial to look up the poet, the date that the poem was written, and the cultural context of the work.