

Example Keyword Entries

First Example (Shared in Second Week of Semester)

Inspiration Porn

“Inspiration Porn” is a term used to refer to examples of disability—in images, stories, or videos/advertisements—where a person with a disability is held up as an “inspiration” merely because of the disability. These messages are used to motivate able-bodied persons by suggesting that “if X disabled person can do Y, then you should be able to achieve even more!” We can think of this term by breaking it down into its two constituent parts: *Inspiration*—as the example is intended to inspire (particularly able-bodied persons); and *porn*—as pornography objectifies and Others the subject. Thus, we can understand that “Inspiration Porn” turns the disabled person into an object with little or no attention to the personhood or humanity of the one who is objectified. Disability activist Stella Young critiques how Inspiration Porn works in “I am not your Inspiration” which according to the Wikipedia page, is the first use of the term.

There are many examples of Inspiration Porn, but perhaps the most famous is the one that Young herself used to explain this concept. This image (shown to the left) shows para-Olympian



Oscar Pistorius running next to a young white girl in a yellow sundress, both using prosthetic legs (photo by Andy Hooper). Plastered over this photo is a quote by Scott Hamilton (himself, an ice-skater who has survived cancer). Together, the photo and quote reduce the complexity of disability to merely a burden to be “overcome”—and in overcoming it, serve as an inspiration to viewers. The quote is also problematic, as it implies that disabilities are merely self-imposed limitations (e.g., like a bad attitude), thus making disability primarily an individual issue and experience, separated from larger systemic and structural issues. (The social model of disability explains how various elements of social design create barriers and

further produce disabling conditions.) **Inspiration Porn** like this also perpetuates the idea that persons with disabilities can overcome; yet, no amount of “positive thinking” ever turned steps into an accessible ramp—something that activists like Young consistently point out. Other examples include “feel-good” news-stories that invoke the charity model, like a Prom-posal involving a person with a disability which is framed as the non-disabled person being “good” for including the PWD. Again, the PWD is ‘othered’ and objectified which creates a ‘feel good’ message to ‘inspire’ others to act in similarly charitable ways. Again, the story removes any

critique of society or attention to the fullness of the disabled person’s life, reducing them to only their disability.

References

Image by Andy Hooper. Credit: Andy Hooper (PlusOneFitness.Tumblr.com)

<https://proactivism.tumblr.com/post/26260515605/the-only-disability-in-life-is-bad-attitude>

Young, Stella. “We’re not here for your Inspiration.”

<https://www.abc.net.au/rampup/articles/2012/07/02/3537035.htm>

“Inspiration Porn.” *Wikipedia*, as edited on 30 December 2021

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inspiration_porn

Second EXAMPLE Keyword Entry (Shared in Review activity in second half of Semester)

Crip-Time

In general, “crip time” is a disability community term that could be considered as “jargon”—or specialized vocabulary. It generally refers to the fact that disabled persons may experience *time* in a different way or with different constraints. For example, a disabled person might not be in control of getting to a destination or appointment on time, because the accessible bus doesn’t come, or because all the wheelchair on-the-bus-locations were already in use (sometimes, just by parents with strollers). Situations like these cause the PWD to wait for another transportation option. As disability theorist Ellen Samuel’s writes “When disabled folks talk about *crip time*, sometimes we just mean that we’re late all the time.” Referring to crip time acknowledges the additional labor of time/space movement for persons with disabilities who must engage with a world constructed for able-bodied and minded persons. Only having access via a wheelchair ramp creates “crip time” as the person might need to enter the building from only one entrance, and this might require a less direct commute from point A to point B. Crip-time can also refer to the needed “additional time” for engaging in life-tasks, whether that be different sleep needs, or rest (LeRoy).

However, there is another meaning implied in crip time, too. This meaning encompasses a more forgiving and flexible approach to traditional “normative” timeframes and how labor—even the labor of just being and living—might be distributed. Alison Kafer, cited by Samuel’s, describes this framework as “rather than bend disabled bodies and minds to meet the clock, crip time bends the clock to meet disabled bodies and minds.” In this sense, crip time can also *celebrate* a different-than-normative experience and encourage a flexible and accommodationist approach to making and setting deadlines and appointments. Even as bodyminds may change day-to-day with what can be accomplished due to myriad factors, crip time is able to “bend” with such needs. There is a liberatory or social justice aspect to the use of this term, as well. Instead of calling this phenomena something like “disability time” or “access time” for instance, “Crip Time” reclaims

the use of the word cripple—a traditional disability slur—and instead uses this term to emphasize community and understanding.



An example of crip time can be found in the image to the left. The image originally appeared in *Gazette-News* daily standard (UK) and shows a wheelchair user, Ali Wilkin, and a blue bus in the background. Wilkin has reported issues with accessing the bus, because drivers will not lower the access ramp so that she can enter unless she repeatedly asks for it. Wilkin’s experience of not being able to travel places on the ‘normal’ bus schedule due to access issues is an example of crip time.

Works Cited:

Leroy, Tamar. “What is Crip Time?” *accessibility.com*, November 30, 2021.

<https://www.accessibility.com/blog/what-is-crip-time>

Samuels, Ellen. “Six Ways of Looking at Crip Time. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 37.3 (2017).

<https://dsq-sds.org/article/view/5824/4684>

Palmer, Katherine. “Arriva bus drivers ‘refused to lower wheelchair ramp’ for Colchester mum.” *Daily Gazette Standard*, 8th August, 2017. <https://www.gazette-news.co.uk/news/15458320.arriva-bus-drivers-refused-to-lower-wheelchair-ramp-for-colchester-mum/>