



Disabling Characters: Representations of Disability in Young Adult Literature (Disability Studies in Education)

Patricia A. Dunn

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Disabling Characters provides detailed analyses of selected young adult (YA) novels and short stories. It looks at the relative agency of the disabled character, the behavior of the other characters, the environment in which the character must live, the assumptions that seem to be underlying certain scenes, and the extent to which the book challenges or perpetuates an unsatisfactory status quo. Class discussions about disability-themed literature, however well intentioned, have the potential to reinforce harmful myths or stereotypes about disability. In contrast, discussions informed by a critical disability studies perspective can help readers develop more sophisticated views of disability and contribute to a more just and inclusive society. The book examines discussion questions, lesson plans, study guides, and other supplemental materials aimed at students studying these texts, and it suggests more critical questions to pose about these texts and the positive and/or negative work they do, perhaps subliminally, in our culture. This book is a much-needed addition to college classes in YA literature, literary analysis, methods of teaching literature, disability studies, cultural studies, contemporary criticism, special education, and adolescent literacy.

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