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# **Integrating Crip Theory and Disability Justice into Feminist Anti-Violence Education**

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## **Abstract**

In this paper, I critically reflect on my efforts to and experiences of integrating disability justice and crip theory into my intersectional, queer, feminist pedagogy. I begin by grounding my pedagogical practice in my experiences as an anti-violence advocate / activist in order to argue that disability theory and justice have the potential to not only expand anti-violence education, but also to transform it through careful attention to access, care, and interdependence. In this article, access refers to the possibilities of being fully present and supported within a given learning space; care describes the process of creating access through actions that make presence possible; and interdependence recognizes that access and care must co-exist because people need each other. I then identify parallels between anti-violence work and theories and movements against ableism because I have found this intersection to be pedagogically generative. Next, I describe what disability theory and justice, access, and crip politics (McRuer, 2006; Price, 2015) look like within the context of anti-violence education. In the second section of this paper, I write about how disability theory and justice brought to bear on anti-violence education can help to promote radical imagination and hope as well as deeper understandings of foundational concepts like consent. I also critically examine how anti-violence education can expand the possibilities of disability pedagogy through meaningful engagements with intersectional feminist theory and praxis. My purpose in developing these claims is to demonstrate the ongoing importance of bridging disability theory and justice with intersectional feminist practices of education.

## **Keywords**

Pedagogy, Feminist Theory, Disability Theory, Disability Justice, Gendered Violence, Social Justice Education, Crip Politics

## Introduction

For the past decade, I have been actively involved in feminist anti-violence organizing in the Midwestern and Pacific Northwestern United States, especially as an advocate and activist against gendered violence. During this time, disability has rarely been more than a seldom acknowledged presence, except where I have made the intentional effort to prioritize the lived experiences and needs of disabled people. My experiences with and research into feminist anti-violence movements have shown me that, much of the time, disability remains marginalized, as do the guiding principles of *disability justice*, which I recognize as a transformative framework for care (Mingus, 2017a; Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018; Sins Invalid, 2016). In dominant anti-violence organizing, disabled folks are often included in the long lists of groups impacted by gendered forms of violence, yet meaningful work that responds to our experiences and needs is much more difficult to come by. Anti-violence education, including classes and organizational trainings, routinely fails to prepare anti-violence advocates/activists to practice solidarity with disabled people because it rarely promotes an understanding of disability theory or disability justice useful for this work. Too many enabled people present in anti-violence movements lack a critical consciousness of disability oppression, which is an upsetting and dangerous outcome of ableism's infiltration of anti-violence education. Consequently, anti-violence spaces and the resources they seek to provide tend to be severely inaccessible (Munson, 2011).

Despite the many generative connections between feminist teaching against gendered violence and disability theory, justice, and pedagogy, these fields have largely remained isolated from each other, with the exception of some notable texts by theorists and activists crossing this divide. In my work as a sick and crip anti-violence educator, I strive to teach using what Kristina Knoll (2009) terms a *feminist disability studies pedagogy*. I also build on the insightful works of

Margaret Price (2011), Alison Kafer (2019), and Rosemarie-Garland Thompson (e.g. Brueggemann et al., 2005) as well as an array of other disability studies scholars and disability justice activists. Yet, during the past few years as I have researched feminist pedagogical strategies for creating trauma-informed and healing-centered learning spaces, I have become increasingly aware of how habitually feminist educators, even those professing to value *intersectionality*, neglect disability as a primary site of oppression. Intersectionality is a concept that emerged from black feminist theorists to explain the simultaneity and mutually constitutive nature of systems of oppression, like white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and capitalism (Crenshaw, 1991; hooks, 1994; May, 2015). According to intersectionality, ignoring sites of difference, including disability, leads to the recentering of the least marginalized and a more limited understanding of, in this case, gendered violence and strategies for teaching against it.

Moreover, I have also found a frequent disengagement among many disability studies scholars with issues of gendered violence and trauma, which is perhaps indicative of the way that disability studies as an academic field has historically marginalized particular groups of disabled people (Bell, 2017; Meekosha, 2011; Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018; Slater & Liddiard, 2018). Even as many scholars doing work in disability studies today, especially over the past decade, actively acknowledge and delve into the intersectionality of disability (e.g. Ben-Moshe & Carey, 2014; Erevelles, 2014; Schalk, 2018), the field as a whole has frequently engaged in single-axis thinking and, as a result, been complicit in various forms of oppression. The critique is especially true of many of the field's foundational texts. For example, relatively few scholars name how the social construction of disability is connected to the settler occupation of Indigenous lands or to the historical violence against black bodies (Lewis, 2019; Sins Invalid, 2016). Additionally, the frequent disconnections between anti-violence pedagogies and pedagogies emerging from

disability studies harm the people inhabiting both spaces by acting as if disabled victims / survivors do not exist and have their own unique perspectives and needs. The disability justice framework and movement, which I will explore throughout this paper, prioritizes queer and trans, sick and disabled people of color, and it offers a generative space from which to integrate these two pedagogies.

In this article, I critically reflect on my efforts to and experiences of integrating disability justice and crip theory into my intersectional, queer, feminist pedagogy. I begin by grounding my pedagogical practice in my experiences as an anti-violence advocate / activist in order to argue that disability theory and justice have the potential to not only expand anti-violence education, but also to transform it through careful attention to access, care, and interdependence. In this article, access refers to the possibilities of being fully present and supported within a given learning space; care describes the process of creating access through actions that make presence possible; and interdependence recognizes that access and care must co-exist because people need each other. I then identify parallels between anti-violence work and theories and movements against ableism because I have found this intersection to be pedagogically generative. Next, I describe what disability theory and justice, access, and crip politics (McRuer, 2006; Price, 2015) look like within the context of anti-violence education.

In the second section of this paper, I write about how disability theory and justice brought to bear on anti-violence education can help to promote radical imagination and hope as well as deeper understandings of foundational concepts like consent. For my purposes here, radical imagination refers to “the ability to envision possible liberatory futures that acknowledge present injustices” (Pitcher, 2018, p. 157). Further, it “is a crucial aspect of the fundamentally political and always collective (though rarely autonomous) labour of reweaving the social world” (Haiven

& Khasnabish, 2010, p. iii). In this section, I also critically examine how anti-violence education can expand the possibilities of disability pedagogy through meaningful engagements with intersectional feminist theory and praxis. My purpose in developing these claims is to demonstrate the ongoing importance of bridging disability theory and justice with intersectional feminist practices of education.

### **The Interdependence of Anti-Violence Education, Disability Theory, and Disability Justice**

As I reflect back on the three and a half years I worked as an advocate at a shelter for victims/survivors of gendered violence, I cannot recall more than a few instances in which disability was centered in the work I was expected to carry out. The shelter itself was positioned in a structurally inaccessible building that required the ability to climb up and down stairs, so the lack of attention to disability justice in our outreach efforts and crisis response tellingly resembled the physical environment in which we worked. At the same time, my introduction into feminist anti-violence activism as an undergraduate student in Women's Studies marginalized and often altogether erased the lived experiences and needs of disabled people. I struggle to identify even a single moment in which my undergraduate teachers gave sustained, critical attention to ableism, to its intersections with feminist theory / praxis, or to its presence in our learning spaces. I can more readily recall the difficulty I experienced in navigating these classrooms as a multiply disabled, chronically sick person, for along with the conspicuously absent analysis of ableism was an insufficient consideration of the basic tenets of disability justice, such as collective access, interdependence, and liberatory practices of care (Mingus, 2017a; Sins Invalid, 2016). It was especially wounding for me as a crip, queer, and trans person to feel out of place in feminist classrooms which claim to prioritize accountability, community,

and togetherness as tools for critical, transformative learning (Crabtree & Sapp, 2003; Fisher, 2001; Shrewsbury, 1993). I find it both ironic and unsettling that my experiences as an undergraduate and my experiences working at a shelter were both so inattentive to ableism and disability oppression given how they represented themselves as centering feminist values of intersectionality, love, equity, and justice. And I know from my communications with other disabled students and teachers in Women's and Gender Studies that my experiences of ableism are not exceptional but typical.

The problem I am naming here is more than a simple oversight remedied through heightened inclusion and representation, for the notable absences of disability in mainstream anti-violence work actually constrains the usefulness of feminist consciousness and resistance. Lacking a critical analysis of disability and ableism simultaneously pressures disabled victims / survivors to fit their experiences within a normative account of violence and leaves the anti-violence movement underprepared to organize holistically against each of the social systems and structures that contribute to gendered violence. Disability theory and disability justice carry the potential to meaningfully *transform* anti-violence education: they offer critical opportunities for expanding and reimagining feminist-led, anti-violence movements through the transformative lens of collective access, care, and interdependence (Mingus, 2014, 2017a; Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018; Sins Invalid, 2016). For example, one of the most frustrating aspects of being an anti-violence advocate and activist for me has been the harmful association of survival / healing with the devaluation and rejection of disability and weakness (Arielle, 2017; Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018); too much of the time, narratives of survival mimic narratives of cure, in which the individual is imagined to move from a state of helplessness or dependence to one of empowerment, agency, and independence – from brokenness to wholeness, which, according to

the enabled imaginary, can never exist at the same time or in the same bodymind (Clare, 1999, 2017; Taylor & Duguay, 2016). Through a lens of disability theory and justice, however, anti-violence educators can engage students in more critical and complex thinking about what it means to heal / recover from and survive gendered violence. For example, rather than the moving closer to a state of independence, disability justice teaches us that healing might instead mean building meaningful, just relationships that refuse violence and promote care.

Seeking out disability theory, especially texts about disability justice, has been one of the most healing and generatively challenging ways that I have reimagined my engagement with anti-violence education. Especially over the last several years as I have been interrogating the meanings and practices of trauma-informed teaching and learning, I have embraced the crip knowledge that educators cannot effectively support our students, especially queer and trans students, students of color, crip, mad, or sick students, and other marginalized students, without a heightened understanding of disability and ableism as they intersect with white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, capitalism, xenophobia, and the like. Making bridges, pathways, and elevators between anti-violence education and disability theory / justice reveals possibilities for restoration and togetherness which are currently impossible in either space on its own, for they are interdependent, and they call for each other, even though we often segregate them.

A number of activists and theorists, such as Alison Kafer (2013), Susan Wendell (1996), and Rosemarie Garland-Thompson (2011), have explored the generative connections between feminist and disability theory/justice in their works, arguing for the important ways that these knowledge bases can inform and even transform one another through interdisciplinarity and cross-pollination. For example, Kafer explores how applying her “political/relational model” of disability can intervene in long-standing feminist debates and theoretical issues such as those in



feminist science and technology studies. Yet feminist anti-violence work and disability remain to a large degree isolated, especially within educational spaces. This unnatural and often traumatizing separation has been a source of harm for many disabled victims/survivors of gendered violence as well as for many disabled feminists who desire to participate in anti-violence work, yet continuously come up against an absence of meaningful disability representation. Returning to interdependence by holding spaces for disability theory/justice to transform and be transformed by feminist anti-violence theory/resistance calms the ruptures that inhibit genuine healing and empowerment.

Gendered violence and disability each occupy a tricky space of hyper-visibility and coerced silence: they are simultaneously silenced and marginalized and made into spectacles (e.g. in movies). In both cases, privileged or unaffected people often presume to understand the experience of the other, so much so that they often compose over-simplified narratives of our lives and take it upon themselves to determine what is best for us (Brown, 2014).

Victims/survivors of violence as well as disabled people frequently get exposed to what Mingus (2017b) explains as the “norm of forced intimacy”: privileged peoples over the course of their lives often become conditioned by systems of power into feelings of entitlement to the knowledges and emotional labor of people whom they view as other. Marginalized/oppressed people’s access to resources and well-being, even including our very lives, often comes to depend on our willingness to expose the intimate details of our lives to a more privileged, “normal” subject (e.g. a social worker). For victims/survivors and disabled folks alike, forced intimacy, which is simultaneously about hyper-visibility and coerced silence, precedes access to care, resources, and accommodations; our willingness to tell our stories as well as our capacity to align them with normative scripts and social expectations determines how more empowered

subjects judge our deservingness of kindness and compassion and justice. Enabled peoples then forge their self-perceptions and identities against the intimate revelations of the other – often through learned feelings of pity, fear, and disgust. Forced intimacy is predicated on the conditioned distrust, anxiety, and hatred of people expressing their access needs and calling for the care of another person, community, or the state.

While forced intimacy may at first appear to be a mode of expression or revelation through which our stories are articulated and internalized, this concept actually demonstrates the “contradiction of having to survive in the oppressive world you are trying to change,” and how this process of surviving as we resist “is always complicated and dehumanizing” (Mingus, 2017b). Accordingly, the concept of forced intimacy more accurately resembles Foucault’s notion of “confession” (1978), wherein individuals are compelled to perpetually expose themselves to the judgements of power and normativity before being appropriately rewarded and punished. According to Foucault (1978, p. 59), confession exists as “one of the West’s most highly valued techniques for producing truth” and for mediating judgment, discipline, and punishment. As a form of confession, forced intimacy is not about articulating the authentic lived experiences of disability or of encounters with violence, not does it have much to do with inciting the recipient into a critical consciousness of power; rather, forced intimacy as a mediator of access coerces people into alignment with normativity by granting resources to those who conform and withholding resources from the divergent others. In this sense, the norm of forced intimacy seeks to preclude and silence transgressions by compelling people to inhabit particular scripts and patterns of behavior, such as travelling from victimization to survivorship and from disability to cure (Arielle, 2017; Clare, 2017). Critical examination of this nexus is one the many opportunities for connection between anti-violence education and disability theory/justice.

As I describe the parallels between anti-violence work and disability justice, I want now to recognize the transformative possibilities of bringing these things together in learning spaces, for anti-violence education informed by and reconstructed through disability theory and justice fundamentally changes the pedagogical landscape. Disability theory and justice brought to bear in the context of anti-violence education implicates feminist educators in the ongoing project of interrogating dis/ability as a site of social, political, and historical dominance predicated on compulsory able-bodiedness and able-mindedness (Kafer, 2013; McRuer, 2006). Accordingly, it becomes necessary for educators to center in our pedagogies critical analysis of gendered violence as it materializes relative to normative ideas about bodyminds – both their expected forms and functionalities. Moreover, turning to disability theory and justice brings anti-violence educators back into responsibility with disabled people, especially victims and survivors, while encouraging our students to embrace such responsibility for themselves. Ableism/sanism move from marginal rarely named considerations on the periphery to more central positions in our theorizing and organizing as we intentionally explore how these structures undergird all manners of gendered violence. By teaching with a mindfulness of the experiences and needs of mad, sick, and disabled people, anti-violence educators further invest students in a care-full, reflective practice through which we as advocates/activists come to understand our own participation in different sorts of harm and suffering. In particular, through the integration of disability theory and justice with anti-violence education, we make access(ibility), interdependence, and practices of care central facets of our work (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018).

Perhaps most importantly, at the nexus of anti-violence education and disability theory and justice, we can guide students to ask vital questions about how anti-violence work makes itself relevant and useful to victims / survivors. In the intersectional feminist pedagogy I strive to

enact, which is derived from the educational theorists whose work I have cited (e.g. hooks, 1994, 2010; Thompson, 2017) as well as the feminist teachers I have witnessed, the most foundational questions I ask students have to do with identifying the presence of normativity and its influences on access(ibility). Normativity here refers to the sociopolitical and historical processes by which specific bodyminds become anticipated and valued while others become marked as strange and unnatural and unwelcome as they are. Normativity vilifies difference and those seen to embody and enmind it, which leads to a pervasive distrust and hatred of accessibility and accommodations (Knoll, 2009); normativity warps access needs into a signifier of non-belonging that separates those who are welcome in a space from those who are infiltrating it, often to the presumed detriment of the legitimately present. Thus, normativity is implicated in multiple systems/structures of dominance ranging from white supremacy to fatphobia to queer and transphobia, but it always reaches back to ableism/sanism given that these systems establish the conditions needed to isolate bodies based upon dis/ability (Mingus, 2011). Starting with conversations about normativity in relation to access(ibility) generates opportunities for critical interventions in anti-violence education. I often do this first through a classroom activity in which students examine the learning space itself – of the entryways, the chairs and desks, the lighting, the smell of the white board markers, and anything else that can keep people from being present. From this activity, I then ask them to consider who is absent from our shared space and what impacts this might have on our knowledge creation.

Building upon this understanding of normativity as the traumatizing inversion of access(ibility) through which presence and belonging are mediated, it becomes clear that anti-violence movements, especially in terms of the educational spaces and pedagogical practices through which they seek to bring people into critical consciousness of gendered violence,

urgently need to engage with crip politics and *cripping*. Margaret Price (2015, p. 269) asserts that crip politics, which are similar to but also distinctive from queer politics in their unique historical trajectory, endeavor to resist ableism/sanism through the subversive enactment and embodiment of disability against normativity: “By crip politics, I mean a way of getting things done – moving minds, mountains, or maybe just moving in place (dancing) – by infusing the disruptive potential of disability into normative spaces and interactions.” The purposes of crip politics are to render visible and subsequently dismantle able-bodied and able-minded normativity, along with the multiple other sites of power and difference with which they intersect. Accordingly, the action of *cripping* verbalizes in particular ways states of madness, sickness, and disability, such that the identities, experiences, and desires of crip folks, in addition to our access needs, contribute to the transformation or reconstruction of social narratives and institutions. Pedagogically, *cripping* stimulates educators and learners to continually reinterpret knowledge and understanding through the lens of disability and with a critical slant against ableism as both a violent belief system and a harmful mode of social organization producing inequity and injustice (Fox, 2010; McRuer, 2006).

For me as a sick and multiply disabled person, *cripping* anti-violence education begins with a centering of crip bodyminds, including my own and my students, as well as their associated access needs. Doing so at the beginning of a term and throughout subsequent class meetings allows me to establish a shared expectation that the learning space will be one in which each of us present, to borrow the language of Patricia Berne (cited in Sins Invalid, 2016), will learn to move together in interdependence. I center my disablements/access needs both as a means to make the classroom a more comfortable and accessible space for my bodymind and in order to model for students the possibilities of engaging with disability. In their insightful

roundtable discussion, Brueggemann et al. (2005) also describe how the presence of a disabled educator who openly acknowledges themselves as such can generatively shift the dynamics and power relations that flow in a learning space. Approaching this task through a crip politics further opens space for me to extend care to my students and welcome them to extend care to me and to one another in processes of accountable community-building. Intersectional feminist anti-violence theory, grounded in concepts of radical togetherness and transformative justice (Durazo, 2011), benefits from crip politics because it creates spaces for collectivized healing through the mutual recognition of access needs that are oftentimes grounded in histories of gendered violence (Smith, 2014). Disability theory and justice deliver meaningful opportunities for feminist anti-violence educators to more fully live up to our professed ideals of radical togetherness while also thinking more critically about what it means for us to bring justice into our communities and relationships.

### **The Crip Transformation of Consciousness, Imagination, Critical Hope, and Consensual Togetherness**

Teaching from/about/against gendered forms of violence and trauma raises the stakes of education, for educators come to be responsible not just for teaching the often triggering and emotionally charged content of their courses but also for guiding students toward new ways of being in the world grounded in the critical recognition of one another's humanity and in loving relationships formed from sustained consensual practice. In other words, anti-violence education, as with social justice education in general, is invested in the (re)construction of knowledge for the purposes of world-building and space-making, which is quite a different task from that felt by teachers who adhere to a belief in pedagogical neutrality. Indeed, much like the visionary

storytellers in *Octavia's Brood* (Brown & Imarisha, 2015), feminist anti-violence educators and our students are pursuing new worlds liberated from the all too common reality of gender violence and filled up instead with love, community, equity, and justice existing in the spaces where harm once was. From Adrienne Rich's classic text about "re-visioning" the world (1972) to Sara Ahmed's queer reflections about what it means to live a feminist life (2017), feminists have endeavored to generate a critical consciousness of personal experience and intimate violence from which we might come to envision a world forever changed for the better. Yet, making space for this consciousness has often been where we get stuck: while we have become adept at naming problems of the world that need addressing, anti-violence advocates have been less successful in arriving at a common understanding of what it would require to meaningfully address these problems.

Where anti-violence education most often falls short is in the radical imagination of a world undefined by the violence which has become so normalized and invisibilized today; anti-violence educators have become skilled at naming issues of gendered violence, but too many of us struggle to push our students beyond this naming into the space of resistance and creation grounded in radical imagination, visionary dreaming, and generative refusals of what *is* in favor of what *might be*. Walidah Imarisha (2015) captures this limitation: "For all of our ability to analyze and critique, the left has become rooted in what is. We often forget to envision what could be. We forget to mine the past for solutions that show us how we can exist in other forms in the future." (n.p.) The present too readily overwhelms us, causing us to feel stuck. Disability theory, especially the disability justice movement and framework, provides an accessible and interesting route that can guide anti-violence education from identifying/naming violence to collective movement towards liberation, yet a majority of feminist activists have not yet

meaningfully considered the transformative alliances that could exist between anti-violence movements and movements against ableism/sanism. This lasting absence of solidarity is connected to a broader tendency among feminists and other social justice activists to identify the harms impacting us before naming the harms in which we are complicit – to seek out accountability from others before seeking it in ourselves (Koyama, 2006; Perez-Darby, 2011). In other words, many feminists have been quicker to extend critique outward at others than to reflect on our own privileges and the harms we have caused, which has ultimately hindered many of us from building generative solidarities across difference.

In contributing to the radical imagination, disability theory and justice provide a source of radical hope through which the present state of the world becomes, like the condition of our bodyminds, temporary and ever shifting. Disability theory and justice can restore hope in a seemingly hopeless world precisely because communities of disabled folks and the enabled people living in solidarity and kinship with us have already begun to map out what a more just and caring world could be like. Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (2018), for instance, devotes a chapter of her book to describing “care webs,” or attentive and tender relationships between people that center around care in order to make radical togetherness both accessible and desirable. Moreover, disability justice-centered organizations, such as Sins Invalid (2016), have been working for many years on transforming the conversations around disability, gender, and sexuality, among other sites of power and difference, in ways which challenge us all to think about consent, intimacy, and (be)longing differently. From disability theory/justice as well as from my own experiences as a sick/crip person, I have come to understand what it means to build an understanding of consent around and through the access needs and sensations of my bodymind and relative to those experienced by my partners. This crip knowledge has



considerably shifted my teaching by instilling in me a sense of the value of moving beyond over simplistic and reductionist definitions of consent that assume all bodyminds/relationships are essentially the same and moving toward definitions of consent grounded in lived experiences and histories of inequity and injustice.

As a crip feminist teacher, I have witnessed firsthand how teaching with, and through, disability justice can equip anti-violence educators with tools needed to move beyond hopelessness and despair because it promotes a critically liberatory practice of care and access – a vision of restorative and transformative justice that is rooted in our interdependence and collective liberation. Based on the anti-violence work that I have both witnessed and facilitated, I have come to understand that the deepest purpose of anti-violence advocacy, activism, and education alike is to radically transform our togetherness by making possible relationships freed from dominance. At the heart of this transformative process is an assertion that all of our lives matter, that we are worthy of the love and kindness of other people and that each of us is responsible for practicing such things in return. Pursuing the alternative modes of togetherness that we envision necessitates meaningful attention to issues of access and care and the recognition of our interdependence (Mingus, 2017). It is only through the feeling of deep compassion for one another grounded in our interdependence and collective resistance that a consensual egalitarian world becomes thinkable. Figuring out how our lives are entwined, such that we all lean upon each other to accomplish our desires, lays the foundation for *collective resistance*, or unified political action in which we move with each other and refuse to leave anyone behind out of greed for our own power. For in interdependence, we realize that abandoning anyone only hinders our own empowerment and our movement towards a more just world (Sins Invalid, 2016).

The feminist anti-violence pedagogy I strive to practice turns away from independence by encouraging students to turn towards one another with the willingness to consider how their experiences and needs have been shaped by intersecting and coalescing histories. I encourage them to cross over power lines for the sake of alliance (Carrillo Rowe, 2008), and, just as importantly, I push them to understand how systems and structures of power that mediate individual experience are interconnected such that power has a multidimensional context situating us against one another when we are, in fact, on the same sides (Levins Morales, 1998). For a genuinely anti-violence pedagogy cannot attempt to dismantle one source of harm while remaining complicit in another; feminists cannot speak of justice when in our organizing against gendered violence we reproduce ableism/sanism. To do so would implicate us in redistributing harm rather than unmaking or eliminating harm. The bridging of disability theory / justice and feminist anti-violence education prevents us from having to make the choice of whose suffering matters more because in place of either/or logics, we can appreciate how harm and suffering are co-occurring among peoples, how traumatic experiences and their origins share a common infrastructure. And, in line with intersectionality, educators can stir students to move beyond absolute, singular analyses of power and oppression into the more complex and murky territory of both/and, multi-axis thinking. In turn, this stirring creates a revolutionary space for the recognition of mutual humanity and the extension of care across bodyminds, which is one of the hardest tasks of transformative justice and community-building (Durazo, 2011).

The extension of care across difference welcomes transgressive relationships and crip feminist kinship in resistance to power. The extension of care calls people to enter into our lives, just as the refusal of care establishes borders and stairways without ramps or elevators. As the basis of our connection, care is what enables us to feel pleasure, both sexual and other forms of

pleasure, and to reconnect with the erotic sensations often denied to us. Audre Lorde (1984) characterizes the erotic as our deepest source of power and life, as well as something which is routinely suppressed and maligned in heteropatriarchal societies. Similarly, Aurora Levins Morales (1998) explains the erotic as something deeply wounded in the bodyminds and spirits of people who have survived violence, especially intimate forms of violence. Similarly, ableist/sanist social conditions deny disabled people access to our erotic capacities, desires, and experiences, often by desexualizing us and by marking our bodyminds as undesirable, broken, and even disgusting (Clare, 1999; McRuer, 2006). Pedagogically, then, the centering of feminist and disability care practices, articulated through an intersectional critique of power, can effectively intervene in the current landscapes of sexuality and reveal paths to different encounters with erotic desire, (be)longing, and togetherness healed from histories of violence/trauma. Queer, feminist theory prioritizes sexuality as a site of critical resistance, and disability theory/justice reclaim the discarded and supposedly broken from being disposed of, so together these theories reveal the necessity of returning to the fractured or illegitimated pleasures of our bodyminds. And, this returning can be the purpose of a crip anti-violence education.

## **Conclusion**

As I come to the end of this article, I want to conclude with the recognition that disability theory and disability justice are powerful resources which push anti-violence educators to move beyond narratives of sameness that mask the complexity and nuance of gendered forms of violence. Centering disability means attending to embodied/enminded differences and the systems and structures which give those differences meaning. While there are certainly many shared experiences among victims and survivors, and while it possible to identify common

patterns across manifestations of gendered violence, coming into knowledge and understanding through disability theory reminds anti-violence educators to remain grounded in the particular and to never discard the exceptional or the confusing/the strange. Further, reaching deeper levels of insight about gendered violence requires that we examine how the particular experiences of victims/survivors, especially those who have historically been marginalized within anti-violence movements, expose the intersectionalities of power, the ways in which multiple systems and structures are working in unison to distribute and make possible harm within our relationships. Whose encounters with harm are seen to merit social attention and critical response? Whose bodyminds have been so painfully refused or devalued that violence against them becomes unsurprising and forgivable? Disability theory/justice reject logics of disposability by which some people come to matter less than others because of the constructed capabilities of their bodyminds. Through disability theory/justice, anti-violence educators can begin to unlearn these logics of disposability as well, and we can arrive at a space where ableism/sanism are no longer tolerated.

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