

# Diaphanous Bodies

Ability, Disability, and Modernist Irish Literature

A volume in the Corporealities: Discourses of Disability series

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*Diaphanous Bodies: Ability, Disability, and Modernist Irish Literature*

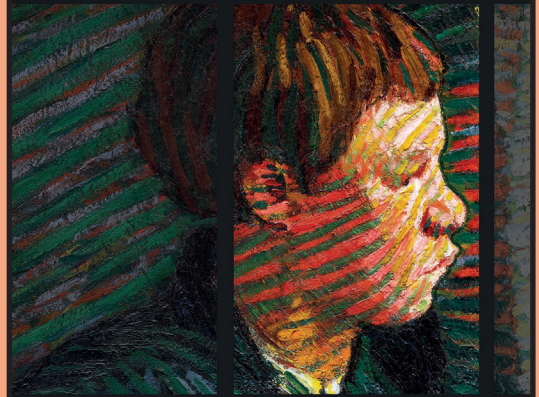
examines ability, as a category of embodiment and embodied experience, and in the process opens up a new area of inquiry in the growing field of literary disability studies. It argues that the construction of ability arises through a process of exclusion and forgetting, in which the depiction of sensory information and epistemological judgment subtly (or sometimes un-subtly) elide the fact of embodied subjectivity. The result is what Colangelo calls “the myth of the diaphanous abled body,” a fiction that holds that an abled body is one which does not participate in or situate experience. The diaphanous abled body underwrites the myth that abled and disabled constitute two distinct categories of being rather than points on a constantly shifting continuum.

In any system of marginalization, the dominant identity always sets itself up as epistemologically and experientially superior to whichever group it separates itself from. Indeed, the norm is always most powerful when it is understood as an empty category or a view from nowhere. *Diaphanous Bodies* explores the phantom body that underwrites the artificial dichotomy between abled and disabled upon which the representation of embodied experience depends.

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Modernist Irish Literature



Jeremy Colangelo

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