



ELIZABETH A. WHEELER

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[Wheeler Faculty Profile](#) | [Disability Studies](#)

[Perfect Circle Theater YouTube Channel](#)

EDUCATION

- 1996 Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, University of California, Berkeley.
- 1992 to 1993 University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica. Dissertation Fellowship.
- 1988 M.A. in Comparative Literature, City University of New York
Graduate Center.
- 1981 A.B. in English and German, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine.
Summa cum laude. Phi Beta Kappa.
- 1979 to 1980 Ludwigs-Maximilians-University of Munich, Germany. Study abroad.

EMPLOYMENT

University of Oregon

Professor of English | 2020 to 2026 retirement

- Disability studies, comics studies, young adult and children's literature, community-based education and arts, environmental and urban studies.

Founding Director, Disability Studies | 2017 to 2023

Associate Professor of English | 2002 to 2020

Assistant Professor of English | 1996 to 2002

Ottile Wildermuth Chair Visiting Professorship, Eberhard-Karls-University of Tübingen, Germany, Funded by DAAD | Fall 2018 to Spring 2019

GEO Study Abroad Program, London | Summer 2023 and Spring 2014
Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program, Oregon State Penitentiary | Spring 2013
Interim Director of Undergraduate Studies, English Department | 2010 to 2011

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Co-Authored with Harper Bryant Shin. *Don't Just Tell Me to Breathe: Comics from Kids and Teens with Anxiety*. In progress.

HandiLand: The Crippest Place on Earth. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2019.

- Corporealities: Discourses of Disability series.
- *Choice* Outstanding Academic Title.
- Reviewed in: *Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies*, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, and *Choice*.

Uncontained: Urban Fiction in Postwar America. Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001.

- *Choice* Outstanding Academic Title.

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

Co-Authored with Tison Pugh. "A Bubble of Freedom: Disability, 'The Middle Part,' and the Lost Possibilities of a Racially Progressive HandiLand in L. Frank Baum's Mary Louise Series." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 51.2 (Fall 2026).

"The Joker's Shifting Face: Eighty Years of Mad History in *Batman* and American Culture." *Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies* 18.3 (Fall 2024).

- Special issue: Crippling Graphic Medicine II: Access and Activism at the Crossroads of Intersectionality.

"Disability." *Blackwell Companion to Children's Literature*. Eds. Karen Coats, Vivian Yenika-Agbaw, and Deborah Stevenson. Hoboken: John Wiley, 2022.

- Invited book chapter.

"Masculinity at the Orthopedic Preschool." *Constructing the (M)other: Narratives at the Intersection of Motherhood and the Politics of Normal*. Ed. Priya Lalvani. Bern: Peter Lang, 2019: 83-92.

- Invited book chapter.

"Runoff: Afroaquanauts in Landscapes of Sacrifice." *Literary Afrofuturism in the Twenty-First Century*. Ed. Isiah Lavender III and Lisa Yaszek. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2020.

- New Suns: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Speculative series. *Choice* Outstanding Academic Title.

Co-Authored with Chloë Hughes, "Introduction: Mainstreaming Literature for Young People." *Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies* 12.3 (Fall 2018): 261-7.

- Literature for Young People special issue co-editor.

"Moving Together Side by Side: Human-Animal Comparisons in Picture Books." *Disability Studies and the Environmental Humanities*. Ed. Sarah Jaquette Ray and J.C. Sibara. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017: 594-622.

- Invited book chapter.

"No Monsters in This Fairy Tale: Wonder and the New Children's Literature." *Children's Literature Quarterly* 38.3 (Fall 2013): 335-350.

"Don't Climb Every Mountain." *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 20.3 (Summer 2013): 553-573.

- Editor's Choice" for issue's best article.

"Outwitting Our Captors." *The Berkeley Literary Women's Revolution: Essays from Marsha's Salon*. Ed. Hudson, Connelly, et al. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2005. 153-8.

- Invited book chapter.

"More Than the Western Sky: Watts on Television, August 1965." *Journal of Film and Video* 54.2-3 (Fall 2003): 11-26.

"A Concrete Island: Hisaye Yamamoto's Postwar Los Angeles." *Southern California Quarterly* 10.1 (Winter 1996-7):19-48.

- Doyce B. Nunis Award for best article by an emerging scholar.

"'Most of My Heroes Don't Appear on No Stamps': The Dialogics of Rap Music." *Black Music Research Journal* 11.2 (Fall 1991): 193-216.

"Bulldozing the Subject." *Postmodern Culture* 1.3 (May 1991): n.p.

REPRINT

"Bulldozing the Subject." *Essays in Postmodern Culture*. Ed. Eyal Amiran and John Unsworth. Oxford University Press, 1993. 199-227.

NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL

"Courthouse should offer 'open door' to everyone." Editorial, *The Register-Guard* (Eugene, Oregon), 13 August 2003: 3.

DISABILITY ARTS

Perfect Circle Theater

Artistic Co-Director | 2016 to present

- Disability-inclusive productions from scripts based on the life stories, fiction, and songs of the cast: university students together with actors from the community with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Who Knew?

Producer and Scriptwriter. University of Oregon, June 10 and 11, 2023.

Heroes from Another Earth

Producer, Scriptwriter, and Director. University of Oregon, June 8 and 10, 2018.

- Disability Studies Takes Center Stage

Life Stories: The Self-Made Musical

Producer and Scriptwriter. University of Oregon, June 3, 2016.

- Life Stories

Arts Consulting

Full Radius Dance Company, Atlanta, GA | 2022-3 season.

- Literary Consultant for full-length production "Alice, Peter, and Dorothy."
- Advised the artistic director, wrote program notes and website essay, and facilitated artists' panel at premiere of show based on disability in classic children's literature.

AWARDS, GRANTS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

2023	Faculty Excellence in Universal Design Award, University of Oregon.
2020	Dean's Diversity Grant, University of Oregon.
2020	CAS Program Grant for Disability Studies Speaker Series.
2020	Division of Equity and Inclusion Grant for DS Speaker Series.
2019	Teaching Online Fellowship, UO Summer Teaching Institute 2019.
2018	LILAC Award, Lane Independent Living Alliance, 2018. ▪ Annual prize recognizing community outreach to people with disabilities and advocacy for independent living.
2017	Publication Subvention Grant, Oregon Humanities Center.
2017	Fund for Community-Engaged Teaching Grant for Living Theater class.
2015	Faculty Research Grant, Center for the Study of Women in Society.

2015	Faculty Research Grant, Children's Literature Association.
2015	Williams Instructional Grant for Life Stories class and performance.
2015	CAS Program Grant for Disability Studies Faculty Development Seminar.
2015	Faculty-in-Residence, Center on Diversity and Community.
2014	Oregon Humanities Center Research Fellowship.
2014	CAS Program Grant for 2014 Disability Studies Forum.
2013	CAS Program Grant for 2013 Disability Studies Forum.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Invited Lectures: International

"Young Activists with Disabilities Changing the World." German-American Institute, Tübingen, Germany, October 2020. (Virtual)

Plenary Lecture: "Disability Studies and Inclusion in the US: The Next Generation." Hildegard Union for Inclusion in Higher Education, annual national conference, Berlin, Germany, January 2020.

"Superheroes with Disabilities: What They Say About American Culture." German-American Institute, Tübingen, Germany, February 2019.

"Heroines of the Flood: What Afrofuturist Science Fiction Can Teach Us About Environmental Injustice, Disability Politics, and Sustainable Leadership." Otto-Friedrich University of Bamberg, Germany, November 2018.

- Making America speaker series.

Wildermuth Chair Lecture. "When Inclusion Works: Cautionary Tales from African American Youth Literature." Eberhard-Karls-University of Tübingen, November 2018.

Keynote Lecture, "Understanding Disability Through Literature." International Conference, Korean Society for Literature and Religion, Sahmyook University, Seoul,

South Korea, July 2016.

Invited Lectures: National

Keynote Speaker, Family Café Youth Summit: “The Anxious Generation: Is That a Thing?” and “Tell Your Story Through Comics and Improv Theater.” Orlando, July-August 2026.

Keynote Speaker, Pacific and Western Disability Studies Symposium: “Disability Studies, Justice, and Arts.” University of Washington Seattle, May 2015.

International Presentations

“A Bubble of Freedom: Progressive Disability Representations in L. Frank Baum’s Books for New Girls.” Crip Kid Lit Conference, Centre for Research in Children’s Literature, University of Cambridge, UK, April 2024.

“Why K-12 Schools Need Disability Studies.” German Association for American Studies virtual conference, June 2021.

Virtual Workshop Co-Organizer with Judith Rauscher, “Critical Environmental Education and American Popular Culture: Transatlantic Conversations, Local Practices.” March 2021.

“Roundtable: International Perspectives on Inclusion.” Reutlingen County Government Inclusion Conference public event series, Reutlingen, Germany, March 2019.

Panel Co-Organizer with Chloë Hughes, “Exploring Public Discomfort Through Young Adult and Children’s Literature.” Disability and Disciplines International Conference, Liverpool Hope University, UK, July 2015.

“In One End and Out the Other” and “Moving Together Side by Side: Human-Animal Comparisons in Picture Books.” Disability and Disciplines International Conference, Liverpool Hope University, UK, July 2015. (Presented in absentia)

National Presentations

"Daynamo: The Musical." American Studies Association, New Orleans, November 2022.

Panel Organizer, "Sustaining Black Lives: Ecological Imaginaries in African American Books for Young Readers." Children's Literature Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta, June 2022.

"Afropolitan Hair and Skin: Sustainable Futures for African Diaspora Youth in Young Adult Speculative Fiction." Children's Literature Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta, June 2022.

Moderator, "Shifting the Narrative: A Conversation on Race and Identity in Children's Books." Featuring Debbie Reese, Kimberly Johnson, and Keith and Shenoa Egawa. *Eugene LRCS*, 28 October 2021.

"See Us as We Are: Community Theater Across the Ability Spectrum." Society for Disability Studies virtual conference, April 2021.

"Co-Conspirators: Professors and Child/Teenage Activists with Disabilities as Allies." Society for Disability Studies virtual conference, April 2020.

"Humanities in 5: A Contest." Modern Language Association Annual Meeting, Seattle, January 2020.

"Heroes of the Flood on Both Sides of the Black Atlantic." Children's Literature Association Annual Meeting, San Antonio, June 2018.

"Runoff: Young African Americans with Disabilities in Landscapes of Sacrifice." Modern Language Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, January 2017.

"Surreal Abandonment: Science Fiction, Environmental Racism, and Disability." Modern Language Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, January 2017.

"Epistemology of the Toilet." Society for Disability Studies Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA,

June 2015.

"Disability and Environmental Justice: Reckoning with Legacies of Imperialism." Panel Respondent, Society for Disability Studies Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, June 2015.

"No Monsters in This Fairy Tale: *Wonder* and the New Children's Literature." Society for Disability Studies Annual Meeting, Orlando, June 2013.

"Intense, Extravagant, and Problematic: Seizing Space in Disability Narratives." Society for Disability Studies Annual Meeting, San Jose, CA, June 2011.

"Masculinity at the Orthopedic Preschool." Society for Disability Studies Annual Meeting, Tucson, AZ, June 2009.

"The Whiteness of Disability: Helen Keller and Harriet McBryde Johnson." Society for Disability Studies Annual Meeting, Seattle, June 2007.

"Intersections of Disability, Gender, and Race." Panel Respondent, Future of Minority Studies National Conference, University of Oregon, November 2006.

Panel Organizer, "Performing Both and Between--Theorizing Bodies on the Hyphen." American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Oakland, CA, October 2006.

"Seeing the Forest for the Trees: Nature Writing and the Visibility of Whiteness." American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Oakland, CA, October 2006.

Panel Organizer, "As Bodies Collide: Ecocriticism Meets Disability Studies." Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment (ASLE) National Conference, University of Oregon, June 2005.

"Disabled Bodies in the Landscape." ASLE Conference, Eugene, Oregon, June 2005.

"Disabled Bodies in the Landscape." Society for Disability Studies Annual Meeting, June 2005, San Francisco State University.

Regional and Local Presentations

"Tell Your Story Through Comics." Eugene Public Library Youth Services, March 2026.

National Coming-Out Day Panelist, University of Oregon, October 11, 2023.

Keynote Speaker, Oregon Resource Association annual conference, April 2022, Eugene.

Organizer/Moderator, Disability Studies Speaker Series: "Careers in Disability Equality."

Lydia X.Z. Brown, Day Al-Mohamed, Anais Keenon, and Sofia Webster. May 2021.

Books-in-Print Talk, Oregon Humanities Center, October 2020. (Virtual)

HandiLand reading and book signing, Knight Library Special Collections, October 2019.

"Learning from the Stories of Patients with Disabilities." Raising Voices: The Ethics of Dialogue and Communication in Healthcare. Annual Kinsman Statewide Bioethics Conference, Eugene, Oregon, April 2019.

"Nobody's Job, Somebody's Job: Recruitment and Retention of Students with Disabilities." President's Diversity Advisory Community Council quarterly meeting, University of Oregon, April 2017.

"Inclusive Course Design." Workshop, University of Oregon Teaching Effectiveness Program, January 2016.

"Disability and Deaf Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences." Advancing Disability Rights Globally: UO 25th ADA Anniversary. Eugene, November 2015.

"Kids on the Autism Spectrum in Books and Media." Workshops with A Team Justice League and EC CARES Child's Garden parents' groups, November 2015.

"Moving Together Side by Side: Human-Animal Comparisons in Picture Books." Oregon Humanities Center, University of Oregon, December 2014.

TEACHING

University of Oregon English Department

English 104: Introduction to Literature: Fiction
English 200: Public Speaking as a Liberal Art
English 205: Genre: Fantasy
English 208: Shakespeare
English 240: Introduction to Disability Studies
English 313: Teen and Children's Literature
English 385: Graphic Narratives and Cultural Theory
English 386: Bodies in Comics
English 392: American Novel
English 395: Twentieth Century Literature
English 404: Community Literacy and Disability Studies Internships
English 410: Perfect Circle Theater
English 467/567: American Literature, 1900-Present
English 615: Advanced Studies in Literary Theory: Disability Studies
English 660: American Literature: Contemporary American Literature
English 660: American Literature: Urban and Social Ecologies
English 660: American Literature: Teen and Children's Literature
English 660: Race and Disability in American Literature and Culture

University of Oregon Clark Honors College

- HC 424: Identity Colloquium: Disability Studies (Fall 07, Fall 09)

GEO International Study Abroad Program, London

- Advancing Your Academic Success (Summer 2023)
- Black and Brown London (Spring 14)
- Graphic Narratives and Cultural Theory (Spring 14)

Eberhard-Karls-University of Tübingen, Germany | Winter Semester 2018-19

- Escaping the Asylum: Introduction to Disability Studies
- Teen and Children's Literature
- Body Comics

SERVICE

Professional Service

- 2023 External Dissertation Reviewer, Faculty of Education, Cambridge University, UK
- 2018 Co-Editor with Chloë Hughes, special issue on Literature for Young People. *Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies* 12.3 (2018).
- 2015 Proposal Reviewer, Society for Disability Studies Annual Meeting.
- 2012 Organizer, Power and Privilege strand of panels for Society for Disability Studies Annual Meeting.
- 2011 to 2019 Creator and Fundraiser, Chris Bell Scholarship, Society for Disability Studies.
- 2009 to 2011 Manuscript Reviewer, Routledge Press.
- 2007 to 2008 Manuscript Reviewer, *Twentieth Century American Literature*.

University Service

- 2017 to 2023 Founding Director, Disability Studies Minor, University of Oregon.
- 2019 to 2021 Provost's Teaching Academy.
- 2019 to 2020 College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee.
- 2017 to 2018 University of Oregon Disability and Inclusion Advisory Committee.
- 2016 Organizer, Disability Studies Faculty Development Seminar.

2013 to 2019 College Admissions Essay Advisor, Summer Academic to Inspire Learning.
2013 Organizer, University of Oregon Disability Studies Forum.
2014 Organizer, University of Oregon Disability Studies Forum.
2014 to 2018 UO Disability Studies Initiative Steering Committee.
2012 to 2017 Service-Learning Roundtable.
2011 to 2017 Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program Steering Committee.

Departmental Service

2019 to 2021 Co-Chair, Diversity Committee.
2017 to 2019 Graduate Appointments Committee.
2017 to 2019 Career Instructor Faculty Committee.
2016 to 2017 Graduate Admissions Committee.
2014 to 2016 Graduate Committee.
2013 to 2017 English Major Designated Undergraduate Advisor.
2013 to 2014 Search Committee, Asian American Literature.
2010 to 2014 Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Committee.
2009 to 2010 Graduate Committee.
2007 to 2011 Curriculum Committee.
2001 to 2006 Curriculum Committee.
1997 to 2007 Composition Committee.
1996 to 2013 English Major Undergraduate Advisor.