

Wielogłos

Call For Papers

“Disability in Literary Studies”

“Wielogłos. Journal of the Faculty of Polish Studies of the Jagiellonian University” welcomes submissions for the new monographic issue: **“Disability in Literary Studies”**.

The origins of academic disability studies can be traced back to the British and American social movements of people with disabilities in the 1970s and 1980s. The result of this unique alliance between theory and activism was a rejection of the previously dominant medical paradigm in thinking of disability as a bodily/intellectual impairment or personal tragedy, and shifting attention to the socio-material processes of creating disability as a cultural (but yet, to some extent, ableist) construct. For obvious reasons, the crucial role in further development of the discipline was played by researches in sociology and social work, history, anthropology, ethnography, pedagogy, and law. Nevertheless, artistic, literary – or more broadly, textual – practices have remained an extremely important tool for producing this critical knowledge/theory.

Contemporary critical disability studies and feminist disability studies raise questions about the epistemic limitations of the social model of disability stemming from, among other things, the focus on the public sphere and the omission of what is considered a private experience. They encourage rethinking of “impairment effects” (C. Thomas, A. Król) and a more intersectional analysis of discourses that produce the materiality of disability. Some researchers also postulate the destabilization of the category of disability itself by unsealing its boundaries (e.g. Dan Goodley's concept of “dis/ability”).

Excellent books by Rosemary Garland-Thomson and Lennard Davis, recently translated to Polish, as well as current attempts by Polish researchers to apply perspective of disability studies to literary studies (e.g. in studies of A. Wang (Fidowicz), K. Muca, M. Dubiel, M.

Ładoń, K. Ojrzyńska, N. Pamuła, A. Galant, M. Duda, G. Gajewska or W. Śmieja) indicate enormous critical and reinterpetative potential of the category of disability in reading premodern, modern and contemporary cultural texts, not only in relation to motifs or literary representations of disability, which are located both on the margins and in the very centre of cultural imagery, but also in terms of thinking about the formal, linguistic, and somaesthetic aspects of “poetics of disability” – that is, the strategies and tools necessary for transforming the experience of disability into a literary/performative text.

For critical disability studies, which “begin with disability but do not end there” (D. Goodley), as well as feminist disability studies, the main goal is the analysis of the intersections of different forms of oppression and different strategies of resistance. In literary studies this may take form of reading practice involving, as Lennard Davis puts it in *Constructing Normalcy*, “thinking through disability”, which influences the perception of any cultural text, not necessarily one in which the figure of disability appears explicitly. Perhaps we should not so much search for disability in texts, but rather look with analytical attention at the “construction of normalcy”, which very often remains culturally, socially, and aesthetically transparent. Is literature more of an imaginative “republic of liberated bodies” (O. Laing) or rather another institution, through which modern “regimes of ability” (A. Król) affect us?

With the perspective of critical disability studies in mind, we would like to encourage you to explore the specificity, limitations and possibilities of looking at disability through the lens of literature and literary studies (though our aim is not to petrify artificial boundaries between humanities disciplines).

We invite you to submit both classic interpretative texts analysing Polish and foreign literary works from the perspective of disability and articles or review articles from the interdisciplinary borderland of literary studies, cultural studies, anthropology, sociology, performance studies or history of art.

We invite proposal in the following areas (but not limited to these areas only):

- deconstructions and revisions of representations of disability in Polish and world literature;
- literary “regimes of ability”: the construction of the ableist norm in literary texts and communication; (non-)normative forms of reception of literary texts; non-verbal forms of creative expression; relations between word - writing - voice/body;

- historical and contemporary testimonies of the experience of disability (in the geopolitical context of wars and armed conflicts, communism and post-communism, political transformations, early and late capitalism, but also practices of everyday life);
- “disability culture”: histories of magazines and journals intended for / created by people with disabilities; cabarets, theatres, literary groups, creative collectives; online and liberatory creativity of people with disabilities, literary genre, new media in relation to disability;
- disabled identity politics in literature and “dismodern neo-identities” (L. Davis), class, gender, sexual, national, ethnic, etc.; entanglements of disability; feminist-queer-postcolonial alliances and tensions;
- autobiographies, epistolography, and autoethnographies of disability; disability as an artistic “technique of self-writing” (M. Foucault); reclaiming voice/visibility through writing/performance practices; literary/performance work by people with disabilities as a discussion with the academic model of the production of knowledge;
- Crip Theory in literature; crip resistance, time, and pleasure; disability as a “resource” in creative and reading practices; affirmation of disability;
- aesthetics and stylistics of disability in cultural texts: embodied and contextualized materiality of disability, disabled irony, humour, pastiche; connections between word and image (disability in comics, zines, literary performance, avant-garde poetry, e-literature);
- non-anthropocentric alliances between critical disability studies and animal studies, plant studies and ecocriticism; cyborgian and anti-cyborgian relations of disability with technology in literature and cultural texts;
- relations between disability and neurodiversity; representations of neurodiversity and the autism spectrum in literature; cultural history of neurodiversity *versus* cultural history of disability;
- relations between deaf studies and disability studies; sign literature/poetry, D/deaf reading/writing practices in historical and contemporary perspectives.

The above list does not exhaust the repertoire of possible approaches. We are also open to other proposals that relate to the field of literary disability studies.

We eagerly await the submission of your texts by **31 August 2025**.

For instructions, see <https://ejournals.eu/en/journal/wieloglos/page/guidelines-for-authors>.

Papers can be submitted via e-mail: wieloglos.redakcja@uj.edu.pl or via “Submissions” link on our website (<https://www.ejournals.eu/Wieloglos/>).

All articles will be submitted to a standard double blind, peer-review procedure. Accepted articles will be published **in issue 4/2025**.