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CAT 2, Section DO2

1 – 13 – 22

<div align="center">What it truly means to be #DisabledandCute</div>

Throughout the quarter, Professor Jenni Marchisotto has taught that meaning is established through symbols, particularly hashtags. Jenni also heavily lectures on challenging the concept of inspiration porn. Elizabeth Heidman, in her article *Gabby Giffords and her Problem with 'Inspiration Porn'* writes, "The people and children depicted in them are objectified in the same way figures in pornography are often objectified" (Heidman 1). Inspiration porn, indeed, objectifies people with disabilities by making them an object of inspiration, just as pornography objectifies its subjects as something of pleasure. Such a concept is something many media outlets, activists, and able-bodied people in general fall guilty to. It is a social normality that needs to change, since disabled people are just as NORMAL as anyone else. Leonard Davis, while concluding his article "Constructing Normalcy", includes the phrase "Reverse the hegemony of the normal and to institute new ways of thinking" (Davis 15). Davis feels that the dominance of society's definition of normal needs to be changed. The meaning that #Disabledandcute develops in relation to the word disability is that it redefines the social definition of "normal", and it challenges the social normality that disabled people look and act differently than ablebodies, but still contributes another social normality that is inspiration porn.

In order to understand the true meaning that #disabledandcute creates in regard to the word "disability," there are two main factors to consider: The definitional meaning, and the

usage of the hashtag. To understand the meaning, take the Twitter post of the user "@noshaidah."

"#Disabledandcute" Cutest shawty with RA you'll see (hands don't always work but I keep em

up)." The post shows that even though she has Rheumatoid Arthritis, she still can look her best.

The condition does not keep her from acting and being just normal. The use of the hashtag

empowers other people with disabilities in the world to look their best. It tells them to overcome

their disabilities or conditions and to feel good about their looks, and themselves in general.

However, this usage and empowerment does have negative effects too.

     Aside from the meaning of the hashtag, its usage also is a major factor in creating

meaning. One use of the hashtag is that it plays a part into the social norm of inspiration porn. In

a Twitter post by Corinne Duyvis, she posts "#Disabledandcute hell yea I am." Aside from the

actual words in the post, one of the pictures on it depicts her giving a speech and a conference,

which kind of shows how she can beat the odds and do what a lot of abled people cannot do.

Such a picture and caption almost objectifies herself as an inspiration to non-disabled people.

When posting a picture of oneself on a big stage talking in front of an audience, it almost always

serves as a brag, or an influence to others to do better. Another post created by user

@rebirthgarments reads, "They are also the newest member to the rebirth team, making tons of

awesome image descriptions and soon we will be selling their super cute knitted bucket hats on

the etsy!...#disabledandcute…". The post washes a happy belated birthday and congratulates the

newest member of a clothing team to one, Garnet Williams, who is depicted showing off new

clothing. Both posts show a person with a disability overcoming social odds and doing what

some able-bodied people cannot accomplish. The main focus of these posts being the

accomplishments of the disabled people in the pictures, makes them inspirations for others,

including people without disabilities. Even with the negative connotations that #disabledandcute

brings regard to the word "disability," especially concerning inspiration porn, are there still positives, if any positive uses for the hashtag?

One positive usage for #disabledandcute is what it does NOT do is alienate disabled people in a way to say they are "different" than abled people; it does not make people with disabilities feel atypical. Such a principle can be seen in a Twitter post by a woman named Keah Brown. The post reads, "Still disabled. Still cute. #disabledandcute" This post by Ms. Brown reinforces the fact that disabled people do not look or act abnormally. In fact, the post makes her pretty normal. Her normality is seen in the pictures on the post, more specifically the poses and the way the pictures were taken. These poses are very similar to what normal instagram and twitter posts look like. The first photo is a selfie and her smiling. From a social media standpoint, what about that is unusual? The second photo is just her standing and posing with her hands. These photos of course, are and seem basic, but they are not abnormal. A lot of posts on instagram, twitter, facebook, or any other social media have plenty of able-bodied people making similar, if not the same poses. Such a post with these types of photos, selfies and pictures with generic poses, shows that people with disabilities can look cute, just as cute as any non-disabled person. This, again, demonstrates normality.

#Disabledandcute, with regard to the word "disability", means that people with disabilities can look, act, and feel the same way as anybody else. It means looking and feeling like any other "normal" person in the world. Furthermore, the hashtag does not make disabled beings feel different, weird, or even disgusted by their disabilities. Still, it does add to the concept that is inspiration porn. Nevertheless, all of these truths forward the meaning that #disabledandcute creates in regard to disability.

Bibliography

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@rebirthgarments "Happy belated birthday @itstransfat , please send them presents at @itstransfat on venmoo or Kashapp so that can have a wonderful week! They are also the newest member to the rebirth team, making tons of awesome image descriptions and soon we will be selling their super cute knitted bucket hats on the etsy!" *Instagram*, 29 Jan. 2022

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1. Does this meet the assignment's requirements? Is it developing an original argument about the meaning of the author's chosen hashtag? Consider technical requirements i.e. maximum 3 example posts, minimum 1 course reading, MLA formatting, works cited page, word count. **Essay meets assignment requirements, and develops an original argument about the chosen hashtag.**

2. Does the paper have a thesis? Highlight/underline the thesis on the draft. **Is it arguable?** This is critical. Re-phrase the argument here in your own words—it may help the author in editing their thesis.

Thesis: The hashtag challenges the social normality of inspiration porn, that disabled people

look different, if not weird. However, the hashtag still does contribute to the concept of

inspiration porn.

Re-phrase:

3. Is the argument clearly organized? Does each paragraph contain ONE idea? Note what you believe to be the main idea/topic of each paragraph on the paper as a margin comment. Then, suggest 1-2 ways to strengthen organization **or** 1-2 questions you have about organization.

Each paragraph contains one idea, and the transition between the paragraphs is relatively smooth.

4. Is the argument supported with the analysis of hashtag examples (specific posts)? Are the examples detailed/relevant enough to aid in advancing the argument? Do the chosen examples clearly engage with the hashtag, allowing proper evidence to support the argument? Point out where the author might include more details or provide better examples.

Examples provided clearly engage with the hashtag, aiding Daniel's argument.

5. Is the hashtag analysis and overall line of argumentation supported with specific examples and/or concepts from course readings? Do the cited sources make sense for the argument (are they relevant)? Do they provide necessary information and/or conceptual framework for understanding the argument? Are there any additional spaces where the author might benefit from additional research?

6. Does the paper's argument demonstrate an in-depth understanding of course concepts (academic discourse)? Are there areas which lack clarity or can be improved to better demonstrate this understanding?