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Changing the script: race and disability in Lynn Manning's *Weights*

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In its unwavering adherence to a pathology-based model of disability, special education has foreclosed other ways of constructing meaning about disability. To challenge special education's reductionist understandings of disability, scholars in disability studies in education are drawing on a range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, including humanities-based analyses of disability. In this paper, I explore the ways that counter-narratives, grounded in lived experience, can challenge oppressive ideologies of racism and ableism. In particular, I will examine Lynn Manning's autobiographical solo performance, *Weights* (2005), to illustrate how dis/ability and race are socially constructed and maintained through relations of power.

Introduction: scripting difference

Coming of age in the so-called Progressive Era, the emergence of the deficit model of disability 'reduced a broad array of complicated social and educational issues' into a single 'problem' requiring professional intervention (Danforth, 2006, p. 79). Not surprisingly, a whole set of 'helping' professions, including special education, sprung up to claim the authority to define and 'treat' disability. Unfortunately, in its unwavering adherence to a pathology-based model of disability, special education foreclosed different ways of constructing meaning about disability (Gallagher, 2004). Recently, scholars in disability studies in education are re-examining some of the central tenets of special education. At the core of this work is a rejection of the deficit model of disability, which remains a hallmark of special education and related fields.

Increasingly, critics of special education have concluded that changes need to take place at the most fundamental levels of the field (Gallagher, 2004; Heshusius, 1989; Skrtic, 1991). For instance, in highlighting the field's longstanding problem of over-identifying African-American students, particularly males, for special education,

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Patton (1998) contends that only a complete revision of the knowledge base of special education will fully and finally address this problem. Drawing on a range of critical scholarship in education, Patton contends that despite the obvious harm done to young African-American students, who are two to three times as likely to be labelled as mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed (Losen & Orfield, 2002), special education has failed to seriously interrogate the roots of the issue of overrepresentation, which he locates in the theoretical and conceptual grounding of the field.

What Patton and others have argued is that in its adherence to a deficit view of disability, special education has been particularly damaging to students of colour, who face myriad forms of 'ability profiling' in schools (Collins, 2003). Milner (2007, p. 394), for example, argues that deficit-based practices contribute to the misinterpretation of the behaviours and needs of culturally and racially diverse students, resulting in the 'reifying and solidifying [of] negative stereotypes' about students of colour and their families.

Milner (2007, p. 394) casts a critical eye on a range of educational practices and educational research for its 'silence in the face of important information about racism, injustice, and inequality' and demands that we face head-on the ingrained nature of race and racism in our practices and place lived experience at the centre of our research. Along with a need to challenge the epistemic foundations of the field, Patton (1998) too calls for a different kind of scriptwriter in the field, one that is informed by lived experience and who can fully account for both racism and ableism simultaneously.

Building on a legacy of other critical discourses in education, scholars in Disability Studies in Education (DSE) have taken aim at the conventional wisdom of special education (Bogdan & Biklen 1977; Bogdan & Taylor, 1976; Brantlinger, 1997; Danforth, 2004; Gallagher, 2004; Heshusius, 1989; Skrtic, 1991).¹ These and other scholars have proposed various ways of re-theorizing and re-imagining dis/ability and normalcy (Gallagher, 2004; Ware, 2006). An important part of this work has focused on dislodging deficit and medical models of disability, replacing them with alternative knowledge claims grounded in disabled people's subjective or situated experience. Interestingly, these are the very same aims of critical race research, as outlined by Milner (2007, p. 389), where he also calls for a 'disrupting and extending notions of normality' and dislodging deficit discourses and beliefs. Thus, our shared agendas should signal to scholars in both critical race theory and disability studies the need to focus more intently on the entanglement of racism and ableism, which many would argue gave rise to the field of special education in the first place.²

Yet, special education has not readily embraced alternative epistemologies called for by scholars in critical race studies or disability studies in education. In asserting its authority to classify, label, and name disabled peoples' experience, special education seeks to maintain its 'expert' status over the meaning of disability. Positioned as docile objects of study, disabled people are framed by the medical model of disability as embodying deviance, deficiency, and otherness. In embracing positivism, fields like special education reinforce the 'conclusion that knowledge worthy of the name must transcend the particularities of experience to achieve objective purity and value

neutrality. Within this model the issue of taking subjectivity into account simply does not arise', according to Code (1995, p. 27).

Thus, by maintaining an unwavering allegiance to empiricism, special education adopted an ideology that posits disability as an individual problem and, in so doing, foreclosed different ways of knowing about dis/ability (Gallagher, 2004). An essential point that Code (1995) makes is that there are always hidden subjectivities behind the production of any knowledge. The real danger of a disinterested positivist epistemology, Code contends, is that it cares more about the facts or the evidence than the community it supposedly is serving or studying. As such, we might ask why special education, which likes to posit itself as a 'service' in the best interests of students with disabilities, is more accountable to its own science than to students it purports to serve? Why, even in the face of criticism from within the disability community and from critical race scholars, has special education refused to acknowledge alternative knowledge claims? In response to this refusal, Code (1995, pp. 78–79) calls for a different kind of script — one that has the potential to 'unsettle and disrupt story lines that are apparently seamless' and that can serve as an 'irritant to the dominant paradigm of knowledge' about disability.

Drawing on other disciplinary traditions

One of the ways that scholars in DSE have begun to challenge the epistemic entrenchment of special education's reductionist understandings of disability is to infuse humanities-based approaches to disability (Linton, 1998; Paul, 2002; Ware, 2006), including disability performance art (Allan, 2005) in their scholarship and teaching. According to these scholars, shifting from a clinical to more transgressive or alternative sites of knowledge production, helps to destabilize the traditional deficit model of disability. Allan, for example, suggests that in their strategic deployment and playful flaunting of difference, disabled artists subvert and undermine norms, refuse assimilation, and rewrite the discourse of disability.

Moreover, as counter-narratives these alternative sites of knowledge production help students see the 'structures that underwrite the cultural interpretations assigned to disabled people' (Ware, 2006, p. 278). As Carry (2007) contends, stories are vitally important because they provide access to the interiority of oppressed groups — groups that are often denied their own subjectivity and voice by the objectifying gaze of the dominant group. Counter-stories, thus, encourage students to question their own and society's taken-for-granted assumptions about dis/ability and embrace the person with a disability as an important source of knowledge about their own lived experience. They also help to bridge 'cultural gaps' and foster a more 'self-reflexive engagement with difference' among students and teachers (Asher, 2007, p. 65).

And, yet, although students might expect to see these kinds of conversations and texts in multicultural education classes, I find that teacher education students, who are often immersed in deficit model understandings of disability and who harbour desires for mastery, do not always welcome these kinds of conversations and texts in

their special education classes. They may understand racism, sexism, and homophobia as forms of social inequity infused with power, but nonetheless continue to see disability as a personal problem or tragedy. This tells me that scholars in both critical race studies and disability studies have more work to do to integrate analyses of ableism with critical assessments of other forms of oppression.

The remaining sections of this paper will analyse one example of what scholars in critical race studies refer to as a counter-narrative. A counter-narrative, like any first-person narrative centralizes lived experience (Milner, 2007). What makes a narrative a counter-narrative, however, is that it also challenges oppressive ideologies, in this case ableist and racist assumptions. Thus, rather than framing disability as an individual misfortune, counter-narratives reflexively account for how dis/ability is socially constructed and maintained through relations of power. A counter-narrative can be a powerful tool for liberation and an important site of oppositional knowledge claims (Collins, 2003). Moreover, counter-narratives can also help us to consider how various sources of oppression interdepend.

‘Like the last raisin in a bowl of rice pudding’

In *Weights* (2005), an autobiographical solo performance of poetry and spoken word, Lynn Manning recounts his experience of acquiring a disability after being shot in a bar at 23 years of age.³ Clearly claiming the margin as a ‘space of radical openness’ (hooks, 1990, p. 145), through his performance in *Weights*, Manning both challenges racist and ableist assumptions and explores the political and epistemic insights gained from marginality. Positioned at the intersections of race, gender, and disability, *Weights* is neither a solely a disability narrative nor a racial story, per se: rather, it is a story about the tangle that we call identity. Using poetry and performance as a site of protest, Manning asserts his own subjectivity as a ‘quick change artist extraordinaire’, moving back and forth between the various communities that might seek to lay claim to his identity. In the process, he demands that we confront the ‘matrix of oppressions’ (Collins, 2003, p. 23) that, in a myriad of ways, define him as other.

It is important to acknowledge how *Weights*⁴ departs from the traditional script of disability we typically see represented in popular culture. First, and perhaps foremost, *Weights* is not your typical overcoming script. Thus, while it is very common to see disability represented in popular fiction, film and memoir, such portrayals typically follow what Darke (1998) refers to as the normality genre. These narratives rely on highly predictable script, where the ‘person in the prime of life suffers a traumatic accident or illness’ (Sandahl, 2004, p. 584) and the remainder of the narrative focuses on the individual overcoming their ‘misfortune’ or succeeding against the odds through the sheer force of their own will, determination, or effort. Although these narratives appear to be about disability, Darke refers to them as normality dramas because they function to valorize normalcy rather than to explore disabled subjectivity in any nuanced way. In *Weights*, however, Manning insists on learning to live as a blind man rather than mourning the loss of his sight, seeking out a cure, or trying to overcome his blindness.

For example, in a hospital scene after he is shot and again in his interactions with a vocational rehabilitation counsellor, Manning comes face-to-face with the dominant perception that disability is supposed to mean tragedy. While the doctor, his counsellor, and even his own mother expect him to be devastated by the news that he is blind, he responds instead with relief and even joy. Manning, instead of being crushed by the diagnosis, is happy to be alive, relieved to know that the frightening 'visions' of white light that he's been having since the shooting can be explained.

Yet, his response is seen as anything but normal. Contrasting his own subjective experience against the dominant assumptions of disability (and race) informed by the medical model, he casts an image of himself as the last black raisin in the stark white rice pudding of a hospital room. Manning cannot find a way to have his experiences understood or validated by the doctor, whom he calls Dr White, or by anyone else for that matter. Completely perplexed, the doctor, looking at Manning out of his 'pale blue pools', remarks that his family might want to watch over him for a while. The hospital psychiatric social worker concurs, telling his family not to leave him alone. The social worker and doctor leave his family so worried, Manning spends the rest of their visit trying to 'cheer them up'. Ironically, his acceptance of his disability is so disquieting to others expectations that he spends most of his time helping the 'normals' around him to feel better.

When he is finally allowed to leave the hospital his rehabilitation counsellor says, 'Mr. Manning, after a loss such as yours, there's a grieving process that occurs. ... The grieving process is real. You *will* go through it.' Assuming that there is some universal way that he's supposed to deal with an acquired disability, Manning is given no authority over his own experience. Justified by her authority and *clinical* experience, she knows how he is supposed to feel. His own knowing as informed by his own bodily or lived experience is inconceivable.

Manning, who is eager to reclaim his independence wants to start rehabilitation immediately. He responds, 'I don't need to grieve. ... I already accepted it. That's why I am here.' She reiterates her diagnostic expertise, and tells him that only after he grieves (in a way, of course, that she understands to be grief) will he then be able to choose a vocational program. Manning explains that he already knows what he wants to do. He tells her that he wants to go back to school and study English — that he is interested in becoming a writer. Once again discounting his perceptions and aspirations, she responds by explaining that in vocational rehabilitation, they discourage careers in the arts and would want him to focus on a more practical vocation, such as selling peanuts or other snacks. Caught in webs of low expectations informed by both race and disability, his vocational rehabilitation counsellor echoes Booker T. Washington, who championed this kind of practical and vocational education for African-Americans a century prior.

Throughout this interaction, the rehabilitation counsellor accords no value or authority to Manning's own perceptions. In addition, neither the rehabilitation counsellor nor the doctor try to understand what he is feeling or why. Instead, they seem to feel no compunction about asserting an almost total authority to define what the appropriate response to his experience should be. As Spelman (1997) explains, one

of the dilemmas inherent in ‘becoming the object of compassion’ is that you then must struggle to maintain your claim to the subjective meanings of your experience. Thus, when he diverges from the normality script, they do not pause to question their own expectations, but simply write Manning off as delusional, dysfunctional, or in denial.

Later in the narrative, Manning also recounts some of his everyday interactions with ordinary people after acquiring a disability. For instance, he talks about those who pray for him because they think blindness must signal a lack of faith. He also recollects times when people try to ‘help’ him cross streets that he had no desire to cross, throwing him off balance and making him look as helpless as they perceive him to already be (and, of course, making themselves look as virtuous as they might hope to be). In each of these encounters Manning must come to terms with peoples’ preconceived notions about disability, which have little or nothing to do with what he is experiencing. He insists, ‘Coming to terms with my blindness was a challenge. Coming to terms with other people’s perception of it was something else.’

Gaining insight

Once he is accepted at the Braille Institute, he finds things are ‘totally different.’ Rather than expecting him to be obsessed with loss and grief like the doctors, rehabilitation specialists and even his mother expect him to be, Manning begins to learn acquire skills in Braille and learn strategies for daily living. And, after a few months, he starts Orientation and Mobility (O&M) training. Upon being accepted into the program he recalls that he ‘couldn’t wait to get started!’

Through his experiences at the Braille Institute, Manning begins to ‘tap’ into different ways of knowing — insights that he had been oblivious to as a sighted man. He writes, ‘A whole new way of knowing the world was opening up to me, and I couldn’t absorb it fast enough.’ He begins to take in information ‘through my nose, through my ears, through my feet, through my pores!’ He finds that light and shadow take on physical dimensions, becoming ‘solid bands of heat and coolness’ and that sound ‘swells when it is near’. However, instead of seeing these new insights as a way of over-compensating for his loss of sight, he begins to understand that his sight had simply distracted him from blind ways of knowing. It dawns on him that these were ways of knowing that blind people must have known all along, but that he, as a sighted person, had simply ignored. Thus, Manning suggests that blindness is not so much about a loss of sight, but a different way of knowing the world — an epistemology grounded in particular lived experiences. Moreover, he implies that sightedness, rather than all-seeing, has its own aporia and wilful ignorance built into its knowledge practices and expectations.⁵

‘Pimp’ or ‘Gimp’

One of the most compelling aspects of *Weights* is in its exploration of dual consciousness, informed by both racism and ableism. In an interview, Manning

recounts how he came to see the connection between civil rights and disability rights. He explains:

I was forced to become a Black Civil Rights activist when confronted with discrimination and low expectations. ... Losing my sight did not change my *modus operandi*. Once it became clear to me that blind people are discriminated against, like Blacks, and victimized by the 'low expectation game'. ... I strapped on my hard hat and went to work. I speak out through my art, and advocate by example.

(Sandahl, 2004, p. 600)

Throughout *Weights*, but perhaps most explicitly in the poem, 'Magic Wand', Manning uses juxtaposition to illustrate how, as a blind and black man, he is 'caught in a network of contradictory gazes' (Sandahl, 2004, p. 595) which fail to apprehend the whole of his identity. Moving back and forth between images of the basketball star, sociopathic gang-banger, and pimp to images of the saintly soul, pitiful child, burden, and gimp, Manning underscores how he is constructed by others either as a black man or a blind man, but never as both. He writes:

Quick-change artist extraordinaire,
I whip out my folded cane
And change from black man to blind man
With a flick of my wrist.

In the remainder of the poem, Manning explores in more detail the ways in which, as a black man he is reviled, while as a blind man he is patronized and pitied. Yet, whether shaped by hatred, fear, or pity, both of these constructions fix his identity. Manning reminds us, however, that although he 'wield[s] the wand', each perception is simply a magic trick, an illusion that never fully apprehends him. Moreover, this construction is not of his own making, but of ours. The poem ends:

My final form is never of my choosing;
I only wield the wand;
You are the magician.

Manning suggests that because the oppressive images of blindness and blackness are in many ways contradictory, he can only be understood as occupying the space of either a blind man *or* a black man, but never both. Yet, when he finally gets accepted into the Braille Institute and begins to learn to walk with a cane, Manning assumes he will have no difficulty melding his old and new identities. In recalling his first Orientation and Mobility training sessions, for example, he writes, 'It feels dorky at first, but I catch on. I've got natural rhythm. I'll figure out a way to make it look cool later.' Instead of the typical story line where the person who acquires a disability transforms into a wholly different person, Manning believes that he doesn't have to become someone completely different. In other words, he can still be the cool, cocky, young man we met earlier in the performance.

In addition to delineating the multiple locations that he occupies as a blind and black man, Manning also troubles any easy or essential notion of identity. In the opening poem, which Manning stitches together by taking lines from several other

poems in the performance, he reminds us that identity itself is something that is carved out of a patchwork of experiences that we then narrate retroactively into a coherent whole. By spinning a fragmented and non-linear tale and by ending this poem with a question, Manning reminds us that we only have access to a self that is partial and provisional.

Similarly, early in the performance, Manning troubles expectations about black solidarity at the same time he refuses white expectations about 'the ghetto' or about black men. When he is confronted in a bar by a stranger who begins to harass him, Manning is unsure whether to take the stranger seriously. Warning Manning, 'You better check yourself before you wreck yourself, bother', the stranger, gets increasingly agitated. Although Manning tries to keep a sense of humour about the situation, as the intensity of the situation escalates, Manning comes to realize that many people at the bar are 'dying to see a couple of brothers throw down in here'. He writes:

Some of them yell, 'Kick his ass!'
Others yell, 'Take him outside.'

Manning decides, however, that he's not going to 'put on that kind of show'. Instead he picks the guy up by the lapels and throws him outside before coming back into the bar. Moments later the man returns to the bar and proceeds to shoot Manning in the head. In the poem that follows this scene, however, Manning recounts many of the everyday injustices he faces as a black man. Feared by 'old ladies' and racially profiled by 'police', as a black man although he does not show it, he is dying under the weight of such racist expectations. Interestingly, in the last part of the poem Manning returns to the shooter:

My 'black brother'
Of little stature and lesser mind,
Crouches in a dark alley,
Gleefully carving a notch in the butt of his .32
Because he believes he
'Bleeeeew that big niggah away!'
And I laugh,
To keep from crying.

Although Manning refers to this man as his 'black brother', he does so using quotes — highlighting a certain degree of ambivalence with the affiliation. And, yet, by delineating in the poem the various forms of discrimination they most certainly *both* face as black men, Manning implies a shared understanding or empathy. In other words, Manning, rather than simply pathologizing this one individual may be suggesting that racism is at least partially to blame.

'You have to lift weights'

The title poem, *Weights*, is repeated several times in the performance. First it appears as an extended version and later reprised in the following four-line version:

Yesterday, she said,
 'I couldn't be so strong if it happened to me.'
 'You have to lift weights,' I quipped.
 She laughed, and tapped me on the bicep.

In this short poem we are asked to consider the multiple meanings of the title, *Weights*. Audiences might wonder whether Manning, in choosing the title, refers to the weight of multiple forms of oppression that he experiences first as a black man and later as a blind man? Certainly, a large part of the performance underscores how Manning uses his experiences with racism to inform how he both understands and copes with ableism. Alternatively, Manning could be referring to the weight of people's expectations — particularly those informed by racist and ableist stereotypes which attempt to fix his identity in stereotypic ways.

Perhaps the meaning of the title can be found in Manning's childhood, where he carried both the weight of secrecy and the weight of responsibility. Manning describes his early memories of childhood with blissful moments of a happy family enjoying 'outdoor days' and barbecues in the back yard. In a poem called, '*Popeye Candy and Penny Bubble Gum*', Manning describes the innocence of these early years, which were filled with birthday cakes and 'Sour plums and Pixie Straws' in their two-bedroom bungalow 'sun drenched and laden with love'. Yet, this poem contains some coded foreshadowing. Like the candy in the poem that is both sour and sweet, Manning writes that 'you can't have light without dark'. Thus, in another radical departure from the typical overcoming script, *Weights* refuses any reading of Manning's life before he becomes disabled as idyllic (Sandahl, 2004). In fact, if there is tragedy in *Weights* we might locate it in his tumultuous childhood.

In the poem about his childhood, Manning includes a reference to daddy painting '*Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane*', which in Christian tradition is the site where Jesus goes to pray the night before he is crucified and the site where he is ultimately betrayed by Judas. In an eerie foreshadowing, we quickly learn that their beloved 'daddy' has been sexually abusing four-year-old Junior and six-year-old Dorothy. Because they know that their mother would certainly kill their father if she knew, they keep silent — and agree as siblings to bear the weight of that silence collectively.

The next years seem to spin quickly out of control as the family spirals downward into abject poverty, vicious arguments, debilitating alcoholism, and ultimately domestic violence. The earlier 'outdoor days' turn into stories of confinement, of nine children waiting, sometimes days on end with no food, for their mother, who because of addiction, is no longer recognizable even to her own kids, to return home. In the midst of this chaos, the police show up one day at their door looking for their mother. Manning, who is only nine at the time, must make a decision to tell the truth about their situation, understanding on some level that to do so would certainly mean that he and his siblings would once again be separated and 'bounced through' a parade of foster homes, never returning to their happier times as a family. Although he knows that their current situation is not tenable, the weight of this responsibility continues to haunt him as he struggles to convince himself that he's done the right thing.

A final reading of the meaning of *Weights*, I would argue is informed by the reference he makes in the titular poem to 'lifting weights'. In the poem he chides a woman who patronizes him, saying, 'I couldn't be so strong if it happened to me.' He responds, 'You have to lift weights.' He leaves us with the idea that he is neither extraordinary nor inspirational, a hallmark of the overcoming script, but that he's just been working out.

Conclusion

Special education is a field that has placed a lot of emphasis on a certain kind of knowing. It is a knowledge base that largely ignores the kind of situated and embodied knowledge claims of the individuals it claims to know and care so much about. It is also a body of knowledge that is not only limited, but one that it claims an almost absolute authority over disability experience, leaving little space for individuals with disabilities to narrate their own experience.

In bringing humanities-based analyses into the field, my aim is not to replace one grand narrative with another or to ignore contributions that scholars in applied fields bring to the table. Rather, I would argue that there is much synergistic potential in interdisciplinary collaborations between applied fields, social sciences and the humanities (Danforth & Gabel, 2006, p. 5). When, for example, we embrace the playful, disruptive, and ironic potential of the arts within an applied field, we decentre the 'normalizing conventions' of traditional ways of knowing about disability (Allan, 2005, p. 44). In this decentring, we lose the surety of empiricism, but gain access to alternative ways of knowing about disability — ways of knowing that are informed by and accountable to the individuals that we purport to serve.

We must be careful, however, not to reinforce ableism inadvertently by acritically including disability memoirs that simply reiterate hegemonic notions of disability and ability. In other words, although first-person narratives have the potential to loosen the hold of medical or clinical understandings of disability, they do not always dislodge essentialist notions of difference or stray very far from the overcoming script. More often than not, these kinds of narratives leave students with problematic notions of disability as an individual tragedy or something that one needs to overcome at all costs. Such narratives provoke pity in non-disabled students, rather than challenge their stereotypes about disability and normalcy. Moreover, students can come away from a disability memoir thinking that rather than having examined one person's subjective experience that they instead have some universal understanding of disability.

Finally, if we are serious about addressing the tangled histories of racism and ableism in our field, I believe that we must seek out narratives that account for multiple subject positions. Lynn Manning's *Weights* is one such example of a counter-narrative. It skilfully critiques ableism and racism, as well as the medical model of disability. Caught within multiple webs of oppression, Manning's performance turns the mirror back upon those who would define him as other. Refusing to be contained

by any of the 'prescribed identity categories' (Sandahl, 2004, p. 593) or subject positions, Manning rejects reductionist or deficit views of difference and demands a more complicated view of what it means to be a blind and black man within an ableist and racist society.

Notes

1. This list is certainly not exhaustive (also Danforth and Taff, 2003; and Gallagher, 2004).
2. See the work of Franklin (1994) and others (Baker 2003; Kliever & Drake, 1998; and Selden, 1999) who connect the origin of special education in early 20th-century eugenics.
3. Manning is an award-winning playwright, poet, actor, and performance artist. He is also a retired World Judo champion. He has won three NAACP Theatre Awards, including Best Actor. *Weights* was first performed in 2000 and it has been performed in New York, Chicago, and at the Kennedy Center, Washington, DC. *Weights* also had a two-week run in London as a part of an international tour that included the UK, Canada, and Croatia. A CD-ROM of the performance can be purchased from Bridge Multimedia at: <http://www.bridgemultimedia.com>. A shorter version of the performance can also been seen at: http://www.kennedy-center.org/programs/millennium/artists_detail.cfm?artist_id=lynnmanning/.
4. I wish to thank Lynn Manning for sending me a copy of the production script, '*Weights: One Blind Man's Journey*'.
5. I want to thank Vivian May for pointing this out as well as the many colleagues who responded to early drafts of this paper presented at the Disability Studies in Education conference in Chicago and the Inclusion Imperative conference held at Syracuse University.

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