

NOTES

Introduction

1. Contemporary here means texts produced after 1970. This temporal choice stems from Cheryl A. Wall's designation of 1970 as a watershed moment for black women's writing (2–4). However, the period after 1970 is also important for disability studies because it marks the beginning of a very activist-oriented disability rights movement inspired by the work of feminist and civil rights activists. Post-1970 is also important for the genre of science fiction, the most widely researched subset of speculative fiction. Madhu Dubey acknowledges the importance of 1970 for black speculative fiction writers, contending that “the burden of realist racial representation began to ease off only by the 1970s, or the beginning of what is commonly termed the post–Civil Rights period” (“Speculative Fictions of Slavery” 780). Similarly, Patricia Melzer writes that the 1970s introduced feminist science fiction as part of New Wave science fiction (*Alien Constructions*, 5–9). In short, the types of representations I am interested in—nonrealist black women's texts that engage (dis)ability—did not exist in significant numbers prior to 1970.

2. There are many examples of black feminist activists, theorists, and writers engaging with disability and anti-ableist politics. To take just a few: in their 1977 statement the Combahee River Collective, a black feminist group, mentions working on issues of sterilization abuse and health care, while Alondra Nelson's *Body and Soul* provides a history of health activism by the Black Panthers, the majority of whom were women who took a critical stance toward medical research and practice similar to those in disability studies and disability rights (Combahee River Collective 217). In Evelyn C. White's 1990 edition of *The Black Women's Health Book*, black women write about their experiences with and/or activism around cancer, mental health, hypertension, sickle cell anemia,

and HIV/AIDS. In particular, Vida Labrie Jones writes about black women and lupus, calling it a “complex chronic disability” well before chronic disabilities were given much attention in disability studies (V. L. Jones 156). Additionally, Ann Folwell Stanford explores how black women writers “do not simply advocate a shift from a biomedical to a biopsychosocial model (no small matter itself) but reconceptualize the nature of illness and health,” while feminist disability theorist Alison Kafer locates disability in black feminist Bernice Johnson Reagon’s speech “Coalition Politics” in which Reagon talks about her trouble breathing at high altitude (Stanford, *Bodies in a Broken World* 2; Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip* 151–53).

3. Other scholars have discussed this lack of recognition in disability studies. See Kafer (*Feminist, Queer, Crip* 149) or Minich (“Enabling Whom?”).

4. These scholars include, for example, Susan Burch, Hannah Joyner, Eli Clare, Terry Rowden, Nirmala Erevelles, Mel Chen, Cynthia Wu, Julie Avril Minich, Ellen Samuels, and Therí A. Pickens.

5. See Dovidio and Fiske; Sawyer et al.; Shavers, Klein, and Fagan; Smedley; Harrell, Burford et al.; Sternthal, Slopen and Williams; Viruell-Fuentes; Walters et al.

6. For example, Goodley uses dis/ability and Garland-Thomson (“Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory”) uses ability/disability. I explain my choice around (dis)ability further in “Critical Disability Studies as Methodology.”

7. See Crenshaw (“Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex”; “Mapping the Margins”). Barbara Christian argues that black feminism in particular helped validate the need for intersectional scholarship and has continued to be a major theoretical branch in this area (Christian, “Diminishing Returns” 208). See also May, *Pursuing Intersectionality*.

8. Vivian May (chapter 1) provides an extensive explanation of these elements of intersectionality.

9. For critiques of intersectionality, see Jennifer Nash, “Re-Thinking Intersectionality,” “Practicing Love,” and “Home Truths on Intersectionality.” See also Jasbir K. Puar, “I Would Rather Be a Cyborg Than a Goddess.” For a robust discussion and response to a number of other critiques of intersectionality, see May.

10. Judith Butler contends that rather than comparing one or more oppressions, “what has to be thought through, is the ways in which these vectors of power require and deploy each other for the purpose of their own articulation” (18).

11. *Crip* is a term many people within disability studies and activist communities use not only in reference to people with disabilities, but also to the intellectual and art culture arising from such communities. *Crip* is shorthand for the word *cripple*, which has been (and is) used as an insult toward people with disabilities, but which has been reappropriated as an intragroup term of empowerment and solidarity.

12. For more on this argument see Schalk, “Interpreting Disability Metaphor and Race in Octavia E. Butler’s ‘The Evening and the Morning and the Night.’”

13. For example, Harriet A. Washington writes, “Blacks have dramatically higher rates of nearly every cancer, of AIDS, of heart disease, of diabetes, of liver disease, of infectious diseases, and they even suffer from higher rates of accidental death, homicide, and mental illness. . . . African Americans also suffer far more devastating but equally

preventable disease complications, such as blindness, confinement to wheelchairs, and limb loss” (20).

14. See for example Wendell 31; Fine and Asch 334; Russo and Jansen 232–33.

15. Early disability studies work to include or address race include Rosemarie Garland-Thomson’s “Speaking about the Unspeakable,” Martin S. Pernick’s “Defining the Defective,” Leonard Cassuto’s *The Inhuman Race*, Rachel Adams’s *Sideshow U.S.A.*, Lennard Davis’s *Enforcing Normalcy*, and the essays in Garland-Thomson’s edited anthology *Freakery*.

16. The film has consistently low lighting, but no other child of color is shown directly. In the final scene, in the back row of the children there appears to be one other child of color whose face is not visible.

17. We later learn that people working in the institution wear a blocker gel on their skin that hides their scent from people with the fungal disease.

18. Note this is a clearly conscious casting choice as the film is based on a novel of the same name and in the novel the protagonist is a white girl.

19. The actress who plays Melanie, Sennia Nanua, was twelve at the time of filming.

20. See Goff et al.

21. This is to say not that black women are not targets of police violence, but that the current discourse is primarily focused on black men and boys’ experiences of police violence. Black women, especially black trans women and black women with mental disabilities, are also incredibly likely to be targeted by police and victims of violence in general.

22. Homosexuality was removed from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in 1973.

23. I acknowledge that contemporary scholarship on utopian literature recognizes that utopian literature is not simply about perfect or ideal futures, but about *better* futures; thus the common use of terms such as “critical utopias” (Curtis; Moylan). In some ways then, my reading of these texts might be considered utopian in that I believe they each provide a way of thinking differently about the world in ways that could improve it. That said, the legacies of exclusion of marginalized people within the utopian tradition makes me hesitant to claim this term any further (Chan; Kilgore; Stein). In particular, there is an astonishing dearth of bodymind diversity in terms of disability in utopian texts and utopian literary scholarship. I hope my work may help utopian literature scholars explore and interrogate that exclusion, both in terms of its origins, dating back to Sir Thomas More, and utopian literature’s contemporary manifestations (Curtis; Gomel; Olyan; Schotland).

24. For more on sexism, feminism, and women in science fiction, see Marleen S. Barr’s *Alien to Femininity*, Sarah Lefanu’s *In the Chinks of the World Machine*, and Samuel Delany’s “Letter to the Symposium on ‘Women in Science Fiction’ under the Control, for Some Deeply Suspect Reason, of One Jeff Smith” (Delany, *The Jewel-Hinged Jaw* 85–104). For more on racism, race, and people of color in relation to science fiction, see Delany’s “Racism and Science Fiction,” De Witt Kilgore’s *Astrofuturism*, Isiah Lavender’s *Race in American Science Fiction*, and Sharon DeGraw’s *The Subject of Race in American Science Fiction*.

25. Tobin Siebers, for example, writes that “if social constructionism has influenced the past of disability studies, realism may well be in a position to define its future” (72).

26. Couser uses *life writing* as an umbrella term for a range of genres including autobiography, memoir, journals, and documentary films.

27. This is also suggested by Ato Quayson when he uses nonfiction to explain the final category of “disability as normality” in his typology of disability representation, whereas he uses only fiction as an example of the other, less positive categories.

28. Virginia Bemis makes a similar argument that more realism makes for a better representation even in relation to speculative fiction. In the first paragraph alone of her discussion of Lois McMaster Bujold’s nonrealist *Vorkosigan* series, Bemis focuses on realism as a determinant of quality by using the words *realistic*, *very authentic*, *so authentic*, *genuine*, and “fully-realized” (104).

29. For more on the limits of respectability and its manifestations in African American literature, see Morris.

30. See Barbara Christian, Hazel Carby, and Ann DuCille. I use *genealogy* here rather than *tradition* or *canon* in line with DuCille, who argues against the essentialist and static tendencies of these latter terms (147).

31. See, for example, Fox, Carmody, or Knadler.

32. Jewelle Gomez discusses the history of this concern with the purpose of black literature, as do Genre Andrew Jarrett and Kenneth Warren in their respective monographs (Gomez 950–51; Jarrett; Warren). For a discussion of related concerns in contemporary African American literature, see Richard Schur.

33. Similarly, in discussing how Ato Quayson focuses on nonfiction in his example of texts which represent disability as normality, Michael Bérubé argues that “the real’ is not a self-explanatory realm where things just are what they are. In literature and visual arts, ‘realism’ is an effect of protocols of representation, devices and techniques that produce the illusion of mimesis; ‘the real’ is what appears when a master artificer has deployed those devices with an art that conceals art” (*The Secret Life of Stories* 54).

34. Derek Newman-Stille makes a similar argument, writing, “Disability studies theorists often situate realism as most appropriate for discussing social change because it portrays the real world, but science fiction and speculative fiction offer a similar opportunity because these genres depict *possible* worlds and opportunities for changes that a society could make” (44; original emphasis).

35. For more on the history of the demands of racial realism, authenticity, and social protest within African American literature see Gene Andrew Jarrett’s *Deans and Truants*.

36. Michael Bérubé, Tobin Siebers, Alison Kafer, and Ria Cheyne have all made reference to the importance of (dis)ability to science fiction narratives (Bérubé, “Disability and Narrative” 568; Siebers 7; Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip* 20; Cheyne, “She Was Born a Thing’ 148). Examples of scholars who have written on disability in speculative fiction include Kathryn Allan, JoSelle Vanderhooft, Nickianne Moody, Patricia Melzer, Katrina Arndt and Maia Van Beuren, and Bérubé (Allan; Vanderhooft; Moody; Melzer “And How Many Souls Do You Have?”; Arndt and Van Beuren; Bérubé, *The Secret Life of Stories* 85–103). There is far more work on disability in speculative film, television and comics. Examples of scholarship on nonliterary, nonrealist representations of disability

includes the work of José Alaniz, Hanley E. Kanar, Johnson Cheu, Jeffrey A. Weinstock, Patrick D. Hopkins, and Ramona Ilea (Alaniz; Kanar; Cheu; Weinstock; Hopkins; Ilea).

37. See Lavender, *Race in American Science Fiction*, or Leonard.

38. For more on conflicting stereotypes, see Schalk, “Happily Ever after for Whom?” or Wanzo.

39. See, for example, Erevelles, *Disability and Difference in Global Contexts*; Mollow; or Jarman.

40. Tobin Siebers proposes the theory of complex embodiment, which “raises awareness of the effects of disabling environments on people’s lived experience of the body” and emphasizes “that some factors affecting disability, such as chronic pain, secondary health effects, and aging, derive from the body. . . . Complex embodiment theorizes the body and its representations as mutually transformative” (25).

41. Similarly, Elisabeth Leonard argues that even in texts “in which there has been substantial racial mingling and the characters all have ancestry of multiple races . . . [many authors avoid] wrestling with the difficult questions of how a non-racist society comes into being and how members of minority cultures or ethnic groups preserve their culture” (354).

42. Scholars such as Ato Quayson and Lennard Davis similarly argue that when studying representations of disability one should not just focus on disabled characters, but instead read texts in their totality to consider how (dis)ability as a social system operates within them (Quayson 34; Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy* 41–48).

43. For more on the problem with universal categories, see Chandra Talpade Mohanty’s *Feminism without Borders* or Robert McRuer’s “Disability Nationalism in Crip Times.”

44. I have argued elsewhere that some nonrealist elements of speculative fiction can be easily interpreted as representing multiple social categories and engaging multiple discourses and oppressions (Schalk, “Resisting Erasure”; Schalk, “Interpreting Disability Metaphor and Race in Octavia E. Butler’s ‘The Evening and the Morning and the Night’”). I do my best throughout to indicate how and why I interpret something as disability.

45. For more on the relationship between institutionalization and incarceration, see the edited collection *Disability Incarcerated*, especially the editors’ introduction (Ben-Moshe and Carey).

Chapter 1. Disability and Neo-Slave Narratives

1. I write “supposedly” here because historical evidence suggests that Truth never actually spoke these words. For more on the historical evidence and myth surrounding Truth, see Nell Irvin Painter’s “Representing Truth.”

2. Linh U. Hua challenges Dana’s assumption of a linear, predetermined future which supposedly requires that she can’t alter the past in any way. Hua argues that Dana is actually complicit in a white patriarchal system by sacrificing Alice to secure her own future (395–99).

3. The term *neo-slave narrative* was originally coined by Bernard Bell in 1987 and was

later expanded on by Ashraf Rushdy. While this is a generally accepted term in literary criticism, some, such as Tim Ryan, consider the term and the previous definitions of it offered by Bell and Rushdy to be problematic and limiting (B. W. Bell 286–89; Rushdy *Neo-slave Narratives*; Ryan 187).

4. For more on traditional slave narratives, particularly their status as literature, see James Olney.

5. While one of the major contributions of contemporary neo-slave narratives is to show the impact of slavery on those who were never enslaved or those who are no longer enslaved, many early fictionalized representations of slavery prior to *Kindred* sought to use realist fiction to acknowledge slavery's horrors and resist white fictional and historical accounts that attempted to depict it as a benign or mostly benevolent institution (Dubey, "Neo-slave Narratives" 781–83). Later neo-slave narratives, however, tend to focus on the continued effect of slavery by using nonrealist narrative structures, tropes, and devices. Despite these differences, disability still appears in both realist and nonrealist neo-slave narratives as discourse and material experience.

6. For more on the role of realism in traditional slave narratives, see James Olney. For more on the role of nonrealism in neo-slave narratives, see Sherryl Vint's "'Only by Experience.'"

7. Ellen Samuels provides an additional layer to this insistence on recovery, which prevented traditional slave narratives and their subsequent scholarly commentators from engaging disability. She writes, "Discussions of literacy and illiteracy are by definition discussions of ability and disability. . . . Yet to discuss illiteracy as disability resonates with centuries of characterizations of African Americans as flawed or defective, incapable of acquiring the ability that has come to equal personhood in post-Enlightenment Western culture" (*Fantasies of Identification* 36).

8. Nirmala Erevelles argues that disability is deployed as a political and analytical category to patrol the boundaries of citizenship (*Disability and Difference in Global Contexts* 134). Andrew Dilts and Jennifer James each write about citizenship and disability in relationship to black people historically, while Julie Avril Minich (*Accessible Citizenship*) and Jess Waggoner write about citizenship, disability, and race in contemporary contexts.

9. For more on the erasure of disability in slave and other racial uplift narratives, see Knadler or chapter 1 of Samuels's *Fantasies of Identification*.

10. See Lamp and Cleigh, May and Ferri, or Schalk, "Metaphorically Speaking."

11. A very early example of oppression analogy in disability studies is Leonard Krieger's "Uncle Tom and Tiny Tim," published in 1969, which contains numerous oppression analogies in which the situation of people with disabilities in the United States is compared to that of black people or black men (neither black nor disabled women are mentioned). The article's comparisons eventually lead to a conclusion that people with disabilities are collectively worse off than black people and can learn from how black people achieved greater social recognition and rights. Comparisons such as this were common in early disability studies and disability rights, as evidenced by the many oppression analogies cited in Joseph Shapiro's history of the disability rights movement (14, 20, 24, 29, 34, 47, 128, 59).

12. Mitchell and Snyder were not the first to critique disability as metaphor; however, their concept of *narrative prosthesis* has become the signifying term for this sort of critique. Critiques of disability metaphors that preceded or emerged at the same time as Mitchell and Snyder's include Marilyn Dahl, Simi Linton, and Ellen L. Barton (Linton 125–26). Critiques of metaphor from within disability studies that build on Mitchell and Snyder's include G. Thomas Couser and Jamie McDaniel (Couser 110–25; McDaniel).

13. For examples of scholarship that argues for the potential and purpose of reading disability as metaphor, see Jarman; Mollow; Murray, "From Virginia's Sister to Friday's Silence"; Minich; or Hall.

14. See Alexander or Erevelles, "Crippin' Jim Crow."

15. For an example of the impact of slavery on the connections between blackness and disability today due to slave law, see Barclay.

16. Harriet A. Washington also provides an extended analysis of the racialized scientific claims of the antebellum period in *Medical Apartheid*, especially in chapters 1 and 6.

17. For a discussion of psychiatric institutionalization and imprisonment, see Jonathan Metzl's *Protest Psychosis*, especially chapter 14, "A Metaphor for Race." Harriet A. Washington's *Medical Apartheid* provides numerous examples of how understandings of black people as biologically inferior, especially the notion that black people cannot experience physical or emotional pain as much as white people, allowed for an extensive history of nontherapeutic medical experimentation on black people. Regarding insurance policy discrimination, see Ralph and, also, Alondra Nelson's discussion of how health statistics were used to discriminate against black people for insurance policies (44). Jennifer C. James writes that in some states during the Revolutionary and the Civil War, "the contention that the black body was an inherently disabled entity was used to prevent blacks from joining the military. . . . [For example,] New Hampshire refused to accept 'lunatics, idiots and Negroes,' implying blackness was a similar mental deficiency" (15).

18. Baynton provides several examples of this in his article. See also May and Ferri's "Fixated On Ability" or Lamp and Cleigh's "A Heritage of Ableist Rhetoric in American Feminism from the Eugenics Period."

19. See works by Barclay or Boster for historical discussions of disablement in slavery.

20. See Barclay's "'The Greatest Degree of Perfection'" for examples of the valuation of slave bodies and how some slave law called for physical punishment and disablement of slaves for their crimes.

21. Jim Downs argues that for disabled former slaves unable to leave the plantation or work elsewhere, enslavement essentially continued after slavery had officially ended.

22. Both Anne Donadey and Marc Steinberg use the phrase "the hold of the past on the present" (Donadey 71; Steinberg 474).

23. Anne Donadey, Marc Steinberg, Benjamin Robertson, Shari Evans, and Linh U. Hua also include this interpretation in their arguments.

24. Lisa A. Long and Stephanie S. Turner make similar arguments about Dana's disability symbolizing the impact of slavery on black kinship.

25. Carrie Sandahl discusses how nonlinear temporality works in similar ways in Lynn Mann's *Weights* ("Black Man, Blind Man").

26. Robert McRuer provides some insight on the concept of the inevitability of disability in the epilogue to *Crip Theory* in his discussion of “disability to come” and “global bodies” (203–8). See also Jasbir K. Puar, “Prognosis Time.”

27. A major exception to this is Linh U. Hua, who argues that Dana is actually tied to Alice. On Dana’s final return to the antebellum period Rufus’s life is not in danger, but Alice has just killed herself.

28. Lennard Davis discusses the problems with narrativizing disability (*Enforcing Normalcy* 3).

Chapter 2: Deconstructing Able-Mindedness

1. My use of *mental disability* follows Margaret Price, who uses it “as an umbrella term to encompass cognitive, intellectual, and psychiatric disabilities, mental illness, m/Madness and a/Autism, as well as brain injury or psychiatric survivorship. *Mental disability* is not intended to replace any of these more specific terms or erase differences, but rather to enable coalition” (“The Bodymind Problem and the Possibilities of Pain” 280; original emphasis; See also Price, *Mad at School* 19).

2. For more on reading the X-men as representations of disability, see Ilea or Hopkins.

3. See Butler, *Kindred* 11, 16, 17, 28, 46, 57, 62, 78, 114, 136, 162, 201, and 241.

4. *Postpsychiatry*, a term originally coined by Patrick Bracken and Philip Thomas, represents an alternative vision for psychiatry that moves away from purely biological approaches that seek scientifically identifiable causes and cures and moves toward post-modern, cultural approaches that “emphasize that mental phenomena, like everything else, are richly complex and pluridimensional” (Lewis 72).

5. Metzler writes that as a result of this new understanding of schizophrenia as a black male disease not only were “racial concerns, and at times overt racism . . . written into diagnostic language in ways that are invisible to us now,” but also these new “understandings of [schizophrenia] shaped American cultural fears about mental illness more broadly, particularly regarding cultural stereotypes of persons with schizophrenia as being unduly hostile or violent” (xix, xvi). In other words, racism of the past continues to influence and shape cultural interpretations and the actual lived experiences of people diagnosed with schizophrenia today.

6. For a full discussion of the concept of the borderlands, see Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*.

7. For arguments on how oppression can impact the mental health of marginalized people, see chapter 5 of Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth*, as well as Meri Nana-Ama Danquah’s memoir *Willow Weep for Me* and Anna Mollow’s article analyzing Danquah’s text.

8. Margaret Price discusses the need to recognize and affirm the experiences of people with mental disabilities as valid and real— even if that reality involves pain and the possibility of harm— while still being aware of the ways in which the interpretations of behaviors and treatment of individuals are determined by the identity positions of everyone involved (“The Bodymind Problem and the Possibilities of Pain” 272–79).

9. Examples of metaphorical readings of Lizzie’s disability include Corinne Duboin,

who refers to the novel's use of pain, scars, and wounding as figurative, arguing that Lizzie's embodied ancestors, Ayo and Grace, "symbolize the return of the repressed, the excavation of an ineffable past that informs the present," while "Lizzie's inherited wounds are the symbolic visible marks" of the trauma of slavery (286, 88). Similarly, Venetria K. Patton argues that Lizzie's "stigmata is symbolic of the cultural trauma that Ayo's descendants must work through in order to heal the scars of slavery" (173).

10. In her article on *Stigmata*, Ana Nunes explicitly connects the text to rememory, writing, "Lizzie's stigmata work as a physical manifestation of Morrison's concept of rememory, the never-ending resurfacing of a traumatic and partially lost history" (230).

11. The details of Grace's story are fleshed out more in the prequel novel, *A Sunday in June*.

12. Those chapters are chapter 20 (April 1981. Montgomery), chapter 22 (July 1982. Montgomery), chapter 24 (November 1986. Birmingham), and chapter 26 (March 1988. Birmingham).

13. There is a history of feminist writing about psychiatric disability as a literal effect of patriarchy on women, as a metaphorical impact of patriarchy on women, or as an act of rebellion against patriarchy by women (May and Ferri 122, 28–30; Donaldson). Vivian M. May and Beth A. Ferri contend that such moves, when left purely metaphorical or unconnected to the material impact of mutually constitutive systems of power, construct "disability in opposition to the feminist subject" because disability is primarily understood as an effect of patriarchy which feminism seeks to eradicate (121). Elizabeth J. Donaldson similarly insists that feminist use of madness as a metaphor for women's resistance to patriarchy obscures the lived experiences of people with psychiatric disabilities.

14. This critique is particularly important in the context of a neo-slave narrative. While many critics have argued that neo-slave narratives challenge the discipline of history and modes of historical knowledge, the representation of disability in *Stigmata* demonstrates how neo-slave narratives can also contribute to critiques of other major cultural institutions, like psychiatry, that have both exploited and suppressed gendered and racialized knowledges with real bodymind consequences.

15. For a history of the ex-patient's movement, see Judi Chamberlin's "The Ex-Patient's Movement" and Bradley Lewis's *Moving Beyond Prozac, DSM, and the New Psychiatry*. See also, MindFreedom International's website.

16. The exact dates of Lizzie's two-year silence are not given, but since the final chapter falls in the middle of her institutionalization and she does not speak in the scene, I believe it is reasonable to read this as part of her period of quiet.

17. For an extended reading of the significance of quilting in the novel, see the second chapter of Woolfork's *Embodying American Slavery in Contemporary Culture* (51–57).

18. Black Poets Speak Out is a creative movement to use poetry to protest violence against black people. Black poets nationwide have posted videos on social media and organized readings. Each poet prefaces their reading with the statement, "I am a black poet who will not remain silent while this nation murders black people. I have a right to be angry" (see Browne; A. Johnston).

Chapter 3: Bodyminds of the Future

1. See Cheu, Weinstock, or Lavender's "Ethnoscapes" for discussions of nonhuman creatures standing in for marginalized groups.

2. See Kafer's discussion of Piercy's novel ("Debating Feminist Futures" 219, 32–33).

3. For more on Butler's personal relationship to disability, see Schalk, "Experience, Research, and Writing."

4. See, for example, Ingrid Thaler's reading of *Parable of the Sower* (69–97).

5. Throughout interviews about the *Parable* books, Butler refers to Lauren's disability as a defect, problem, delusion, and disability (O. E. Butler, *Conversations with Octavia Butler* 42, 70–71, 114, 63). Her language runs the gamut, but she generally seems to take a similar perspective to Lauren's disability as Lauren herself does in the books. Since authorial intent is not my concern here I include some reference to Butler's interviews, but do not allow her perspective to determine how I interpret the texts.

6. It's important to note how Lauren J. Lacey insists on putting *hyperempathy* in quotation marks. This occurs both in the portion I cite and each time the term appears in the article. This gesture seems to emphasize the fictional or constructed nature of Lauren's disability—both in the fact that it's not a realist disability and that it's not "real" pain or pleasure impacting her bodymind from the outside. Placing *hyperempathy* consistently in scare quotes, however, potentially dismisses the reality of Lauren's experience and the importance of the materiality of disability to the texts. Such a move positions Lacey's reading as primarily positive, but also verging on ignoring or erasing *hyperempathy* as disability as well. Although I have kept the quotation marks around *hyperempathy* in my citation of Lacey in order to remain true to her writing, I oppose this tactic myself because it runs counter to my speculative-fictional reading strategy, which reads nonrealist texts within their own rules of reality.

7. In *Parable of the Talents*, Christian America, also called CA, is a new, highly conservative Christian group that gains national power when one of its leaders is elected president. Among other abuses, CA kidnaps children from "bad" parents, sends such children far away to live with new CA families, illegally imprisons people, and, supposedly among small radical sects, burns "witches" at the stake and cuts out "bad" women's tongues.

8. See, for example, Octavia E. Butler Papers, "OEB 1757," 1989; "OEB 1766," 1989; "OEB 1767," 1989; and "OEB 3261," 1990.

9. Universal design seeks to create spaces and environments which are accessible to as many people as possible. In *Mad at School*, Margaret Price argues that accessibility is a process not a product—thus the emphasis on adaptation and change. She provides concrete suggestions for creating a universally designed classroom (88–102).

10. Jim Miller categorizes the *Parable* series as a critical dystopia, and other scholars have similarly noted the dystopian/utopian paradoxical moves within the novels. See also Stillman; Thaler; Wegner, chapter 8.

11. A similar representation of a technology intended to cure disability actually producing new disability appears in Butler's short story "The Evening, the Morning and the Night," published in her collection *Bloodchild and Other Stories*. Harriet A. Washington

provides an interesting, related historical example of medical technology's misuse resulting in disability in her discussion of how, in the 1900s to the 1920s, attempts to use X-ray treatment to whiten the skin of black people and to remove excess hair and coloration of "ethnic" whites resulted in numerous reported cancer cases by 1970 (226–27).

12. See Octavia E. Butler Papers, "OEB 2033," 1999; "OEB 2051," 2001; "OEB 2150," 2001; "OEB 2170," 2001; and "OEB 2123," 2001.

13. Sims, one of the "fathers" of gynecology, developed and practiced new gynecological procedures on black female slaves.

14. For more on superpowered supercrips, see Schalk, "Reevaluating the Supercrip."

15. Kim Love, "'#Becauseofoctavia & the Futures She Created with Her Speculative Fiction Especially, I Dared to Dream Bigger, Aspire Higher out of Comfort Zone,'" tweet, June 4, 2016, 9:47 p.m., <https://twitter.com/kimmaytube?lang=en>; Leigh B, "'#Becauseofoctavia I Grew up Reading Science Fiction and Always Understood the Genre to Be a Forum to Produce Calls to Action,'" tweet, June 2, 2016, 9:49 p.m., accessed September 12, 2016; Starfish & Squid, "'#Becauseofoctavia I Grew up Reading Science Fiction and Always Understood the Genre to Be a Forum to Produce Calls to Action,'" tweet, June 2, 2016, 8:42 p.m., <https://twitter.com/denengethefirst?lang=en>.

Chapter 4: Defamiliarizing (Dis)ability

1. Ria Cheyne writes that "in critical work on contemporary popular genres such as science fiction, romance, and crime fiction, there is little engagement with disability" ("Introduction" 117).

2. For more on the meaning and history of *oestrание*, see Buchanan (354–55).

3. For a useful summary of and response to this concept, see Perry Nodelman's "The Cognitive Estrangement of Darko Suvin."

4. Mel Y. Chen discusses these issues using the term *transspecies* (89–126).

5. For the purposes of this chapter I do not include *Bitter Disenchantment* in my analysis since this prequel focuses on a secondary character of the series.

6. See McRuer, Davis, or Pickens (McRuer, *Crip Theory* 23–30; Davis, *Obsession*; Pickens, "It's a Jungle Out There").

7. See Rodas or Kleege.

8. For discussions of the spectacularization of conjoined twins, see Samuels, Wu, or Cleary (Samuels "Examining Millie and Christine McKoy"; Wu; Cleary). For discussions of enfreakment see Bogdan, Garland-Thomson, or Adams (Bogdan; Garland-Thomson *Freakery*; Adams). For discussions of the supercrip, see Schalk, "Reevaluating the Supercrip."

9. Natalya also mentions taking antianxiety pills in the short story "Contents May Have Shifted," which is set after the fourth book in the series (Madison, *Cursed*). Medication is not mentioned anywhere else in *Cursed*.

10. Cal Montgomery discusses more of the issues with the term *invisible disability* in his article, "A Hard Look at Invisible Disability."

11. See Darko Suvin's argument about the difference between science fiction and fan-

tasy and Joanna Russ's discussion of the science in science fiction (Suvin 3–36; Russ 112–16). It is important, however, to note how many writers of color, such as Nalo Hopkinson, have increasingly blurred the line between science fiction and fantasy.

12. Oree is described as having “smooth, near-black Maro skin” and a “storm of hair,” and Jemisin repeatedly refers to Oree as black in her blog post on the character (*The Broken Kingdoms* 24; “Why Is Oree Shoth Blind?”).

13. In *Kept*, Natalya learns that both her mother and Thorn were once victims of this kind of kidnapping and abuse by wizards, and, later in the text, in a moment of panic when he and Natalya are being attacked, Nick uses Natalya's life force to protect them both.

14. See Cheu or Lavender.

Conclusion

1. For more on Butler's personal relationship to disability, see Schalk, “Experience, Research, and Writing.”

2. Butler herself complained about this perspective in a journal entry, writing “*people sneer at my stuff because it's simple and accessible! As though accessibility were a crime*” (Octavia E. Butler Papers, “OEB 1054,” 1998; original emphasis).