



Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation

By Eli Clare

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First published in 1999, the groundbreaking *Exile and Pride* is essential to the history and future of disability politics. Eli Clare's revelatory writing about his experiences as a white disabled genderqueer activist/writer established him as one of the leading writers on the intersections of queerness and disability and permanently changed the landscape of disability politics and queer liberation. With a poet's devotion to truth and an activist's demand for justice, Clare deftly unspools the multiple histories from which our ever-evolving sense of self unfolds. His essays weave together memoir, history, and political thinking to explore meanings and experiences of home: home as place, community, bodies, identity, and activism. Here readers will find an intersectional framework for understanding how we actually live with the daily hydraulics of oppression, power, and resistance. At the root of Clare's exploration of environmental destruction and capitalism, sexuality and institutional violence, gender and the body politic, is a call for social justice movements that are truly accessible to everyone. With heart and hammer, *Exile and Pride* pries open a window onto a world where our whole selves, in all their complexity, can be realized, loved, and embraced.

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Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation By Eli Clare Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #2424385 in Books
- Published on: 2015-08-07
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.70" h x .70" w x 5.60" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 216 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

At long last, an essay on the politics and poetics of queer disability. Eli Clare, a poet with cerebral palsy, movingly describes her attempt to climb Mount Adams--not, she points out, as a "supercrip," like the boy without hands who bats .486 on his Little League team, but just as an impaired person who loves to hike: a story about ableism rather than disability. Avoiding easy answers and journalistic sunshine, she recounts the story of the fight for disabled access, touching on the history of the freak show. She tracks the origins of her own tenacity and self-knowledge to her rural Oregon upbringing and the conflicting personality of her father--who sexually abused her, but also taught her how to frame a house, how to use a chainsaw. "I think of the words *crip*, *queer*, *freak*, *redneck*," Clare remarks. "None of these are easy words. They mark the jagged edge between self-hatred and pride, the chasm between how the dominant culture views marginalized peoples and how we view ourselves, the razor between finding home, finding our bodies, and living in exile, living on the metaphoric mountain." --*Regina Marler*

Review

"Eli Clare writes with the spirit of a poet and the toughness of a construction worker. The passion and skill of [his] writing will draw you inside a complex life and more deeply inside yourself."
(Jewelle Gomez, author of *The Gilda Stories*)

"*Exile and Pride* is a call to awareness, an exhortation for each of us to examine our connection to and alienation from our environment, our sexuality, and each other."
(Kenny Fries, author of *Body, Remember: A Memoir*)

"The books that move us most are the ones that help us make sense of our experience, that take pieces of what we already know and put it together with new insights, new analysis, enabling us to form a fresh vision of ourselves and our lives. For me, Audre Lorde's *Sister Outsider* and Adrienne Rich's *On Lies, Secrets and Silence* were such books, and there were significant others along the way. And now there's Eli Clare's *Exile and Pride*."
(Suzanne Pharr, author of *Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism*)

"Eli Clare's *Exile and Pride* . . . challenge[s] us to think beyond identity politics. This set of nine interconnected essays defies categorization in its exploration not only of queerness and disability but also of class, race, urban-rural divides, gender identity, sexual abuse, environmental destruction, and the meaning of home. . . . Clare gives us a vision of a broad-based and intersectional politics that can move us beyond the current divisions of single-issue movements."
(Rachel Rosenbloom *The Women's Review of Books*)

About the Author

Eli Clare is a poet, essayist, activist, and the author of *The Marrow's Telling: Words in Motion*. He speaks regularly at universities and conferences throughout the United States about disability, queer identities, and social justice, and his writing has appeared in numerous periodicals and anthologies. He can be found on the web at www.eliclare.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Joan Cross:

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