

English 7  
Fall 2018  
Instructor Karin Spirn

Essay 2: Applying Theory  
1500-2000 Words

|                                   |            |                                                                  |               |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Rough Draft and Activities</b> | 30 points  | Paper copy in class                                              | Monday, 10/8  |
| <b>Final Draft</b>                | 200 points | Electronic copy<br>in Word or PDF Format<br>on Canvas by 11:59pm | Monday, 10/15 |

For this essay, you should use the terms and ideas from *Disability Theory* by Tobin Siebers to analyze Mark O'Brien's book *How I Became a Human Being*. Please choose one of the following prompts to respond to:

1. In the film *Breathing Lessons*, O'Brien says that for disabled people, being independent doesn't mean doing everything for themselves, but being able to make their own choices about their lives. How does O'Brien develop his independence throughout his memoir? What factors contribute to his dependence and independence?
2. Trace the development of O'Brien's sexual and romantic life throughout the memoir. What are his feelings about love and sex? What challenges does he face as a disabled man exploring his sexuality?
3. Explore O'Brien's development as a thinker and writer. How does he first get interested in writing? How does his interest in writing grow and change over time? What aspects of his identity as a writer are connected to his disability, and which are not?

If you would like to use another topic that analyzes O'Brien's memoir using ideas from *Disability Theory*, please contact me to have it approved.

Whichever topic you choose, you should discuss concepts from Siebers's book along with quotes and ideas from O'Brien's book to demonstrate your points. Your essay should have a unified main point in response to your chosen prompt.

This assignment should be typed according to the formatting guidelines for papers in your syllabus.

Essay grading criteria are on the reverse of this page.

Your essay will be graded based on the following criteria:

Interesting and well-supported ideas (100 points—50%)

- \_\_\_\_\_ A unified main point (thesis) about O'Brien's book
- \_\_\_\_\_ Strong analysis of O'Brien's book using concepts from *Disability Theory*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Strong summaries and paraphrases of events from O'Brien's memoir.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Strong discussions in the body paragraphs of **at least five quotations from O'Brien's memoir**
- \_\_\_\_\_ Strong discussions in the body paragraphs of **at least one quotation from Siebers's book.**

Clear structure and formatting (70 points—35%)

- \_\_\_\_\_ An introduction and conclusion that summarize the main ideas in your essay
- \_\_\_\_\_ A thesis statement at the end of the introduction summing up your main point in response to the prompt
- \_\_\_\_\_ At least three body paragraphs that stay on one topic and open and close on the main point (PIE structure)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Correct formatting, introduction, and citation for each quote and for titles of texts
- \_\_\_\_\_ MLA Works Cited page listing all quoted or paraphrased sources
- \_\_\_\_\_ Title reflecting the essay's main point (not a generic title)

Strong writing style and grammar (30 points—15%)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Sentences are worded strongly to communicate your ideas
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sentences reflect proofreading (no typos)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sentences are grammatically correct