

Caroline Donado

Final Project

I took inspiration from Sins Invalid's "10 Principles of Disability Justice" to create two multimedia art pieces. Both works are a combination of graphite pencil drawings, images, and text. My first work focuses on the 8th principle, interdependence. I put images reminiscent of water beneath the two interlocked hands to represent the impact of interdependence and meeting each other's needs. The water flows down to the bottom half of the piece, where there are an abundance of flowers as well as a group of women leaning on each other. These images were chosen to show how interdependence can help build beautiful connections and a strong community. I wanted to emphasize the power of embracing interdependence and moving away from the "myth of independence," as Mia Mingus states in her lecture, "Access Intimacy, Interdependence and Disability Justice." Our society encourages us to try to be as independent as possible and do as much we can by ourselves, without support. However, one can never truly be fully independent due to the interconnected nature of our society. That is why I included a quotation from Martin Luther King Jr., where he says "all of life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one destiny, affects all indirectly." Our actions have a widespread effect on those around us and have the potential to vastly improve others lives. Choosing interdependence over independence means understanding that everyone has inherent worth and value to society. If someone has a need, they can receive support and then help others with different needs, using their own unique set of skills. The flowers in my collage vary in appearance and color, but all contribute to the overall

beauty of the garden. They all enhance each other's beauty and create something even more special together than when alone.

My second piece centers around "recognizing wholeness," the fifth principle of disability justice. Sins Invalid states that recognizing wholeness is acknowledging that "each person is full of history and life experience. Each person has an internal experience composed of our own thoughts, sensations, emotions, sexual fantasies, perceptions, and quirks. Disabled people are whole people." I wanted to represent this idea in my artwork by using images with different colors, textures, and patterns to create the petals surrounding the woman in the center, displaying the multifaceted nature of all humans. So many aspects make up who we are—our interests and passions, past experiences, relationships, even sense of style. Wholeness is a fact of our existence and isn't contingent on anything, whether that's how productive we are, our outer appearance, or how well we fit into society's standards of "normalcy." It is incredibly easy to lose sight of this, especially when society conditions us to believe that wholeness is something to be earned. I intended for my piece to communicate that one doesn't need anything outside of oneself to be complete, incorporating a bright yellow dahlia to make it appear as if the woman is radiating from within. Additionally, I chose to use a bright pink background for my piece because this color is commonly associated with self-love.

It is my hope that my two pieces together convey what it feels like to embrace these two principles of disability justice, displaying our true nature as interconnected beings, each with an intrinsic and indisputable worth.

## Works Cited

Mingus, Mia. "Access Intimacy, Interdependence and Disability Justice." *Leaving Evidence*, 12

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