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# Disability, Human Rights and Vulnerability in Linda McLean's *Any Given Day*\*

DR. NURTEN ÇELİK\*\*

## Abstract

Linda McLean's *Any Given Day* (2010) delineates the act of violence inflicted on the characters with learning disability by touching on its physical, emotional, and psychological impacts. The violence directed at the disabled characters is motivated by social alienation, which renders them vulnerable and fragile, as well as a lack of responsibility and care. The incidence of violence reveals the complex facets of the relationship between the abled and the disabled in a particular cultural arena where preconceived notions of the body operate to determine their social interactions, their experiences of their bodily impairment, and the distribution of health care and justice. This essay, therefore, aims to analyze McLean's play in the context of debates concerning disability violence, human rights, and vulnerability, and what abuses of disability rights speak about the social and cultural margins that place disabled individuals in a vulnerable and powerless position. Furthermore, it examines the ways violations of disability rights reveal the insufficiency of care and lack of social responsibility which hugely affect how disabled characters experience an embodied life.

**Keywords:** disability, violence, human rights, vulnerability, Linda McLean, *Any Given Day*

LİNDİ MCLEAN'İN ANY GIVEN DAY OYUNUNDA  
ENGELLİLİK, İNSAN HAKLARI VE KIRILGANLIK

## Öz

Linda McLean'in *Any Given Day* oyunu, fiziksel, duygusal ve psikolojik etkilerine değinerek, öğrenme güçlüğü olan karakterlere uygulanan şiddeti ele almaktadır. Engelli karakterlere yöneltilen şiddet, karakterleri kırılgan ve savunmasız hâle getiren sosyal yabancılaşma ve aynı zamanda sorumluluk ve bakım eksikliğinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Şiddet olayı, bedene atfedilen önyargıların sosyal etkileşimi, engelliliğin tecrübesini ve sağlık bakımı ve adaletin dağılımını etkilediği kültürel alanda, engelli ve engelli olmayanlar arasındaki kompleks ilişkiyi açığa çıkarır. Bu nedenle, bu makale engelli haklarının ihlalinin, engelli bireyleri güçsüz ve kırılgan duruma iten sosyal ve kültürel yapılar hakkında ne açıkladığını ortaya koyarken, McLean'in oyununu şiddet, insan hakları ve kırılganlık tartışmaları çerçevesinde incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bununla birlikte, engelli insan haklarının ihlalinin, engelli karakterlerin yaşamını büyük ölçüde etkileyen sosyal sorumluluk ve bakım eksikliğini nasıl ortaya çıkardığı irdelenmektedir.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** engellilik, şiddet, insan hakları, kırılganlık, Linda McLean, *Any Given Day*

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## INTRODUCTION

Recently, the intersection of human rights with theatre has received much attention from scholars. It has generally been stated that the theatrical imagining and artistic creation of human rights involve the critical evaluation of ideas relating to existing human rights, institutions and political and social practices. The theatrical treatment of human rights includes the thematic concerns for human rights in plays, activist performances with a human rights agenda, performances that question human rights abuses, and theatrical aesthetics employed to mirror the political and cultural context in which human rights violations are enacted (Rae, 2009, p. 1-2). Explaining the interrelation between documentary theatre and human rights, Brenda Werth highlights the aesthetic, performative, narrative, and cathartic potentialities of theatre in addressing human rights issues: “theatre is a singularly compelling form, capable of bringing together audiences in a live public forum to witness the embodied actions of performers, while producing a complex and compelling set of identificatory processes and empathetic responses to the presentation of human rights abuses” (2019, p. 142). Furthermore, in the introductory part of “Imagining Human Rights in Twenty-First Century Theater”, Florian Becker, Paola Hernandez, and Brenda Werth underline that theatre provides the means of knowing about human rights through “its capacity to generate a human connection through sensorial intensity, social intimacy, and the joint physical presence of bodies on and offstage” (2013, p. 3). The practical, aesthetic, and discursive features of theatre are stressed for upholding human rights; however, in his book *Theatre and Human Rights*, Paul Rae finds the relationship between theatre and human rights “impassioned” and “vague” and more complicated than what is thought (2009, p. 1). There have been contentions concerning its potentiality and feasibility in changing human rights policy and its enforcement. Florian Becker, Paola Hernandez, and Brenda Werth state that despite the otherwise presuppositions, they “have no naive trust in the power of theatre - or art more generally - to prevent human rights abuses” since theatre and performance do not reach a large number of audiences and there has not been an anticipated way to lead from the artistic creation to political commitment and activism and widespread social mobilization as well (2013, p. 2). However, they do not deny the capability of theatrical performances to reinforce and solidify or criticize human rights legacy: “theatre and performance can be and have been wielded strategically to achieve important effects in the case of human rights abuses” (2013, p. 2). In the same manner, Paul Rae acknowledges the limitations of theatre in the politicization of human rights; yet he emphasizes that the public character of theatre plays a major role in raising awareness and stimulating discussion regarding human rights in the theatrical space: “As an inherently social activity, the theatre provides a distinctive platform for addressing human rights issues, and theatre-makers have demonstrated a tradition of active participation in related debates both within and beyond the confines of the stage” (2009, p. 22).

The twenty-first century, which is marked by global inequalities that cause serious ethical and political problems, witnessed an upsurge of interest in human rights issues (Luckhurst and Morin, 2015, p. 1). Accordingly, theatre with its potential power provides a platform to speak for and about human rights. As Florian Nikolas Becker, Paola S. Hernandez and Brenda Werth state, the phenomenon of human rights is “a core concern”, “both pervasive and truly global” in twenty-first-

century theatre and performance (2013, p. 1). Following the United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, issues relating to the vulnerabilities of communities have become a central theme for many theatre practitioners and playwrights. Some of the renowned artists who advocate human rights are Augusto Boal, Ariel Dorfman, Athol Fugard, Yael Farber, Harold Pinter, Marcie Rendon, Cherrie Moraga, Wole Soyinka, and Shadid Nadeem. Furthermore, there have been many dramatic works that particularly focalize on human rights violations. In fact, the canonical dramatic works substantially contributed to the growth of the intercourse between theatre and human rights. The confinement of the characters' bodies and the limitation of verbal expression in Samuel Beckett's plays became effective vehicles for revealing abuses against the body and subject. Brecht's artistic innovation of distancing the spectator and performers from the events and characters functions to create awareness into social and political exploitations. Peter Weiss's *The Investigation* (1965) is a dramatic reworking of the actual facts concerning the acts of savagery in Auschwitz. Richard Norton-Taylor's *The Colour of Justice* (1999) is engaged with the death of Stephen Lawrence due to the racially biased violence and the institutional racism that pervades the criminal system. Harold Pinter's *One for the Road* (1984), set in an unnamed totalitarian state, presents the political brutality in which one investigator tortures a prisoner, his wife, and his child. Pinter's *Mountain Language* (1988) delineates an authoritative state where language is censored and prohibited for political oppression. In Martin Crimp's *Attempts on Her Life* (1997), the fragmented yet interrelated scenes delineate that the female character, who has been given other names such as Anne, Annie, Anny, Annuskha, becomes both the victim and the perpetrator of various forms of violence and subjugation such as ethnocide, racism, sexual abuse, and terrorism. Debbie Tucker Green's *Born Bad* (2003) depicts the sexual abuse of a daughter by her father. Additionally, Green's *Truth and Reconciliation* (2011) is set in five different countries, South Africa, Rwanda, Bosnia, Zimbabwe, and Northern Ireland and portrays the real conflicts and wars in these places, Sharpeville Massacre in South Africa in 1960, the Rwandan genocide in 1994, ethnic cleansing, genocide, and rape of women in Bosnia from 1992 to 1995, and the Northern Ireland Troubles from the late 1960s to the 1990s. Caryl Churchill's *Seven Jewish Children* (2009) is based on the real events and the social injustices that took place in Gaza from 2008 to 2009.

Violence, mistreatment, and abuse against disabled people remain the most overlooked issue, though inconsiderate and biased attitudes towards disabled persons continue to be a problem on a global scale. This issue gains more significance because the number of the disabled is to no less a degree. According to 2011 World Report on Disability by the World Health Organization, "[m]ore than one billion people in the world live with some form of disability, of whom nearly 200 million experience considerable difficulties in functioning" (Chan and Zoellick, p. xi). Despite the legislation to promote the human rights of disabled individuals, there have been claims that the degree of violence towards the disabled has substantially increased lately. On Monday 15 October 2018, it was reported that "[d]isability hate crimes rose by one-third in a year across England and Wales" (Giordano, 2018, n.p.). The police figures demonstrated that there was a 33 percent increase in disability hate crime in 2017-8, with a recorded total number of 5,342 hate crimes as opposed to 4,000 incidents in the previous year (Giordano, 2018, n.p.).

Disability violence pervasive in contemporary society becomes a matter of interest for some playwrights who intend to explore various kinds of verbal, physical, and psychological violence. Martin McDonagh's *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (1996) is concerned with the traumatic experience of Billy, who is subjected to verbal assault and physical mistreatment in the island of Inishmaan. Joe Penhall's *Blue/Orange* (2000) delineates the psychological trauma of a young black patient who is exposed to limitations of freedom and movement, psychiatric questioning, surveillance, mistreatment, and confinement in the restricted borders of the mental house. He suffers from social discrimination which manifests itself in the form of attacks, verbal abuse, and psychological coercion. In Brian Clark's *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* (1978), Ken Harrison, the young sculptor, completely paralysed after having a terrible accident, believes that his condition does not constitute life in the real sense and wants to end his intractable suffering and decide what will happen to his body while the doctors, believing that his life is valuable, insist on keeping him alive. The play raises controversial questions about the human free will to life, the value of human life, respect for personal autonomy, the ethics of euthanasia, and the authority of law over human life. John Belluso's *A Nervous Smile* (2005) exposes that the family members, Brian, Eileen, and Nick, are overwhelmed by the arduous process of caring for their children, Dominic and Emily, who have cerebral palsy, and decide to leave them to enjoy their money. The play underlines the disablement of human feelings, the exiguous capacity for compassion, and the state of unscrupulousness. His renowned play *Pyretown* (2005) criticizes America's inadequate healthcare system and shows how Louise, a divorced mother, and Harry, a young, wheelchair-using man, are trapped in a world dominated by dehumanizing bureaucracy, poverty and marginalization.

Linda McLean's *Any Given Day* stands out as an outstanding play which explores the politics of care and the intricate nature of disability violence. The play exposes the incidence of violence caused partly by social alienation that renders disabled characters vulnerable and fragile and partly by an essential shortage of responsibility and care. The play's graphic portrayal of violence exerted on the female character who has a learning disability unmask the complex facets of the relationship between the disabled and nondisabled characters by situating the characters in a particular cultural context where the established standards of the body operate to determine their social interactions, their experiences of their bodily impairment, and the distribution of health care and justice. In fact, human rights issues are inextricably merged with power, care, responsibility, and justice in the play. In *Theatre and Human Rights*, Paul Rae states that the model of "who did what to whom" provides the catalyst for the events that reveal the contexts and patterns of abuse (2009, p. 14). Rae's formulation situates human rights violations within the power relations that foreground the binary oppositions of oppressor versus oppressed, and victim versus abuser. McLean's exploration of human rights abuse in her play depends upon the dichotomies and polarities between the nondisabled and the disabled to raise ethical questions concerning disability violence and stimulate contentious debates regarding responsibility and care. This essay, therefore, aims to explore McLean's play in the context of debates concerning disability violence, human rights, and vulnerability and what abuses of disability rights speak about the social and cultural margins that place disabled individuals in a vulnerable and powerless position. Furthermore, it examines the

ways violations of disability rights reveal the insufficiency of care and lack of social responsibility which hugely affect how disabled characters experience an embodied life. Before providing an extensive analysis of the play, the theoretical framework relating to disability violence and vulnerability will be provided.

## 1. THE CAUSES AND MANIFESTATIONS OF DISABILITY VIOLENCE

The relationship between disability and violence has not received much attention from academics and policymakers. Disability violence has recently attained wider currency in the field of hate crime and it was in the 1990s that this term was solidified since the racist killing of Stephen Lawrence in 1993 served as the catalyst for the British Government to enact legislative regulations to combat against racial hostility. Since then, religion, sexual preferences, and disability have been added to legislative acts. In 2001, the racially-motivated crimes were included in the hate crime legislation, and in 2003, the sexually-oriented and disability-motivated crimes were added to the Criminal Justice Act (Mason-Bish, 2013, p. 14). Katharine Quarmby points out that even though this act led to an increase in penalties and a lengthening of sentences, these violent acts were not seen as separate offenses (2011, p. 111). The legislation utilized the word 'hostility' rather than the term 'hate crime' (2011, p. 111). All of these applications have demonstrated that despite the criminal justice system's increased interest in racist and homophobic violence, it trivializes and ignores the targeted attacks that disabled people have experienced. Disability hate crime, in Quarmby's opinion, is "an invisible crime" to some extent nowadays (2011, p. 109).

Abuse levelled at disabled people can take divergent forms; it can be physical (hitting, threatening behaviour, restraining, imprisonment, and abandonment); psychological (verbal assault, intimidation, humiliation, and derogatory jokes); financial (money, theft, and deception); sexual and neglect (depriving disabled individuals of food, clothing, and necessary services). Violence and mistreatment may have temporary or permanent deleterious impacts on the physical, psychological, emotional, and behavioural well-being of disabled individuals. They can cause serious physical injury to the victim (Iganski and Lagou, 2015, p. 38), the victim's death (Sin et. al., 2009, p. vi), enhance the severity of disability, or lead to various new impairments. A survey has demonstrated that the victims of abuse and violence show various and intense emotional responses such as anger, annoyance, anxiety, panic attacks, crying, depression, fear, difficulty sleeping, insecurity, shock, and vulnerability (Iganski and Lagou, 2015, p. 41). Any acts of violence, harassment, and discrimination may evoke some behavioural responses, and the victims can tend to take "avoidance measures" such as moving house, becoming more alert, having mistrust against people, and avoiding walking in certain areas (Iganski and Lagou, 2015, p. 43-4). As Barbara Perry states in her study "Exploring the community impacts of hate crime," any kind of violence may lead disabled individuals to experience "voluntary segregation" and "self-segregating" (2015, p. 53). In this process, disabled individuals choose to retreat into the seemingly safe and peaceful environment of their community or their home (2015, p. 53).

Violence is generally perpetrated by people close to the victims, such as family members, neighbours, employees, paid caregivers and friends more than by strangers (Sin, 2015, p. 196).



Violent events commonly occur in domestic and public settings such as streets, schools, workplaces, neighbourhood, institutions, hospitals, houses, and public transport (Sin. et. al., 2009, p. v-vi; Sin, 2015, p. 197). The incidences of violence are not reported accurately for a variety of reasons; on the one hand, disabled individuals shun reporting because of their fear of further punishment, imprisonment, and abandonment and their isolation makes it difficult for them to report the problem. On the other hand, the criminal system ignores and trivializes disability-motivated violence and does not regard disability violence as a crime or have any information concerning what disability hate crime is, and the victims are considered untrustworthy witnesses.

Despite the dearth of official data and insufficient media attention, there has been a great deal of research that reveals the essential attributes and pervasiveness of disability hostility. It has been evident that adults with disabilities are at higher risk of violence than non-disabled adults, and the prevalence and rate of violence are highest for adults with mental illnesses or learning difficulties (Hughes et. al., 2012, p. 1626; Sin et. al., 2009, p. v). It has been suggested that disabled women are more likely to be victimized by rape or sexual abuse than non-disabled women (Sin, et. al., 2009, p. 15; Hague et. al., 2011, p. 120). Domestic violence against disabled women includes financial and physical abuse, sexual exploitation, verbal assault, emotional deprivation, neglect, and lack of care by their partners, their family members or their paid carers (Thiara et. al., 2011, p. 762). When it comes to disabled children, they are “twice as likely to be abused as non-disabled children” and they more frequently experience physical and sexual harassment in comparison to non-disabled children (Quarmby, 2011, p. 146-7). Furthermore, the research evidence discloses that children at high schools are subjected to abuse and violence (sexual assault and theft) more than other children who do not have any impairments (Petersilia, 2001, p. 671-2).

The reasons of disability violence have not been thoroughly explored due to inaccurate reports and under-reporting as well as the profoundly complex relationship between the likelihood of violence and victimization. As regards the causes and perceptions of violence and hostility, disability scholars raise debates as to how vulnerability is related to disability and what vulnerability reveals about the position of disabled individuals who are exposed to violence and abuse. The main issue under discussion is whether vulnerability is a trait that comes naturally to disabled people or whether it is a state occasioned by the interactions between nondisabled and disabled individuals that lead to situations and events to leave disabled individuals unprotected and unguarded. It is known that severe impairments may generate vulnerability in particular cases (Shakespeare, 2014, p. 232). However, this situation cannot be generalized, and it would create situations where disabled individuals are held responsible for any incidences of attacks or discrimination (Roulstone and Sadique, 2013, p. 31). Furthermore, blaming disabled individuals for hate crime by labelling them as weak and vulnerable would be to overlook or ignore the crime since it could allow perpetrators to get away with it. Nevertheless, regardless of the motivations behind violence, the inequality in power dynamics should be taken into consideration in order to thoroughly examine the nature and causes of violence. In a broader sense, overemphasis on individual vulnerability leads to disregard the cultural and social factors that produce vulnerability. As Tom Shakespeare aptly observes, vulnerability generally arises from “the interaction of individual and contextual factors - the

characteristics of the individual, and the context in which they find themselves" (2014, p. 233). Judith Butler in her work *Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance* states that the body is "less an entity than a relation" and the body cannot be completely dissociated from the social and infrastructural situations in which it exists (2016, p. 19). If the body is the medley of biological characteristics, environmental and cultural factors, bodily vulnerability cannot be defined without knowing what the relationship between the body and the infrastructural conditions is. According to Butler, embodiment is "performative" and "relational" and relationality involves "dependency on infrastructural conditions and legacies of discourse and institutional power that precede and condition our existence" (2016, p. 21). The dependency of the body on supportive means for its agency generates vulnerability when we are unsupported, or when infrastructural conditions shaping our social, political, and economic lives start to disintegrate, or when we remain unprotected and unsupported under precarious and threatening conditions (Butler, 2016, p. 19). Expanding upon these views, it is noteworthy to claim that vulnerability of the disabled body emerges from the body's intricate relationships with cultural structures and institutional legacies, and vulnerability emerges when disabled people remain unsupported, when their access to security, shelter, care, state subsidy, and health care service is denied, and when they are left defenseless and unguarded in risky situations of threat, intimidation, and violence. For instance, those with mental illness or learning difficulties who are released into the community without protection and care may experience some problems in the residential area they live in. They may experience social alienation and loneliness, making them vulnerable to "bored youth" who exert pressure and violence for fun, or thrill, and financial benefit (Shakespeare, 2014, p. 233). In her investigation into the abuse and murder of a middle-aged man Raymond Atherton, who had learning difficulties and mental illness, Katharine Quarmby speaks with Detective Inspector Christine Hemingway concerning the murderers and their motives. Hemingway believes that Atherton was attacked by a gang of teenagers because of his social isolation and vulnerability:

They [killers] were rogues, feral youths, they didn't go to school, they didn't go home at night, they slept in, woke up at tea-time and moved around the town.' Their motivation? 'It was long-running, it seemed to be a sort of domination thing. And I think there's a whole generation of dysfunctional youths, they don't want to go to school, they don't want to be at home, and they have to find something to do, some purpose, and they need shelter. So it's quite easy to target vulnerable people, to drink in their houses, take drugs and take their money. (Quarmby, 2011, p. 102)

To further elaborate how violence and vulnerability are related, the story of Fiona Pilkington and her daughter is significant since their situation reveals how the criminal justice system and social care sectors view vulnerability. Due to the harassment and abuse they endured for more than a decade at the hands of local teenagers, Fiona Pilkington, thirty-eight-year-old woman, killed herself and her eighteen-year-old daughter, Francesca Hardwick who had a severe learning disability. Despite the fact that Fiona reported thirty-two incidents of anti-social behaviour, the police repeatedly failed to recognize the victims' vulnerability and to classify the assaults as hate crimes (Roulstone and Sadique, 2013, p. 33). This situation exemplifies how concepts of hostility, disability, and vulnerability interact to fundamentally alter the position of disabled individuals. Fiona



Pilkington's case has also shown that the criminal justice system and society are accountable for providing vulnerable and defenseless disabled individuals with access to justice and protection.

The fact that vulnerability is the result of the interplay of biological and social factors requires a culturally-based interpretation of disability violence in terms of the politics of difference between disabled and nondisabled people that determine power dynamics, status, social position, and identity. Concerning the relationship between violence, disability, and vulnerability, it is worth noting that the fundamental causes of the dichotomies of vulnerable/invulnerable, abled/disabled, and powerful/weak can be closely linked to the cultural and social frameworks that establish the body's hierarchical position in a particular culture. In her book *Understanding Hate Crimes*, Barbara Perry propounds that racial violence does not take place in a social or cultural vacuum, yet it is "a socially situated, dynamic process, involving context and actors, structure, and agency" (2001, p. 1). To put it another way, violence arises as a result of the tangled networks of pre-existing assumptions, beliefs, social organizations, and institutional arrangements that determine the racial and gendered hierarchies (2001, p. 1-2). Expanding upon this view, it is noteworthy to argue that disability hostility and violence emerge from the complex interaction of the social and cultural systems that exclude disabled bodies from the accepted standards of the body to deem them 'different', 'powerless' and 'vulnerable' in their interactions with other groups. The notion that disability-related violence lacks motivation dismisses the role that culture plays in forming social cohesion and establishing an individual's position in society. The marginalization and powerlessness that disabled individuals face as a result of institutional structures and cultural norms prevent them from fully participating in social life, making them more vulnerable to violence and hate crime. As Barbara Perry concisely states, similar to how racial violence operates, disability violence can arguably be read "as an instrument of intimidation and control exercised against those who seem to have stepped outside the boxes that society has carefully constructed for them" (2001, p. 2). In this regard, it can be stated that acts of violence directed at marginalised people strengthen and maintain the hierarchy between the dominant and subordinate classes. That is to say, just like violence based on race, gender, ethnicity, and religion, violence against disabled individuals functions as a mechanism of oppression that reinforces the established power dynamics between the nondisabled and the disabled.

Viewed in this context, it is crucial to state that although violence is levelled against only one person, it may be seen as a reaction against the cultural group that includes individuals with impairments. Barbara Perry states that the violent acts are "less about any one victim than about the cultural group they [victims] represent. Hate crime is, in fact, an assault against all members of stigmatized and marginalized communities" (2001, p. 1). Barbara Perry, in her book chapter "Exploring the community impacts of hate crime", also states that hate crimes are "'message crimes" that emit a distinct warning to all men's of the victim's community: step out of line, cross invisible boundaries, and you too could be lying on the ground, beaten and bloodied" (2015, p. 48). In this respect, it is tempting to argue that violence directed at disabled people reveals hierarchies and structures that determine the margins, confines, and limitations of the given society as well as the degree to which disabled individuals find a place within the rigid boundaries of the society. Thus,

antagonism towards people with disabilities reveals to what extent the community is tolerant and inclusive and how much the socially constructed views of the body shape social interactions among groups.

The intricacies and complexities in relation to disability violence and vulnerability provide a dramatic backdrop for McLean's *Any Given Day* in which human rights abuse practiced through violence against disabled individuals displays society's attitude towards disability. This paper aims to examine how Linda McLean's play reconsiders vulnerability and violence by focusing on the disabled characters' positioning within the established dynamics of power and discrimination. In the light of what has been outlined regarding the relationship between disability and violence, this essay also provides a thorough examination of how violence is utilized as an instrument of marginalization by the society that demands bodily conformity.

## 2. DISABILITY VIOLENCE, VULNERABILITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN LINDA McLEAN'S *ANY GIVEN DAY*

Though Linda Mclean is not involved with activism for disability human rights, her thematic concern with abuse and violence towards disabled characters exposes the dimension and nature of disability human rights violations. Linda McLean's *Any Given Day* questions what it means to be human by foregrounding the complex sites of power relations and how these determine and shape the phases of human life. What lies behind the violent action is the vulnerability of the disabled characters, mainly caused by the cultural renderings of the disabled body as well as a lack of care and responsibility. Insufficiency of care and intolerant attitudes are evidenced in the interactions between the disabled characters and the community which shows intolerant behaviour and does not view the disabled characters as human beings with rights. The play's emphasis on vulnerability and discrimination pushes the readers and audience to elicit an ethical response.

McLean's *Any Given Day* revolves around the characters with learning difficulties and mental illness who continue to live in a council-owned flat after being discharged from long-term care and institutionalization. Bill and Sadie are the lovers who share the same flat and their daily routines are dominated by the repetitive and disconnected cycles of dialogue, the vivid past memories, and the process of preparation for Jackie's visit. However, their safe world is spoiled when Sadie and Bill are exposed to the threat and act of violence committed by the stranger boy who stoned their house earlier. In the second scene, the ongoing intimate relationship between Jackie and her boss Dave puts Jackie in a dilemma of making a decision between her strong wish to spend time with Dave and her responsibility to care for her uncle. In this part, the conversation between Jackie and Dave reveals the extent to which Jackie suffers from emotional trauma since she is unable to overcome the difficulties that caring for her son presents. Due to her inability to handle the psychological strain of caring for those who are ill and disabled, Jackie quits her job as a nurse. At the end of the play, Jackie has decided to go out a night with Dave rather than visit her mentally disabled uncle; she calls her uncle to inform him yet nobody returns her call.

McLean's *Any Given Day* was first staged at the Traverse on 29 May 2010 and directed by Dominic Hill. The play is loosely based upon Bill Viola's *Nantes Triptych* which features three panels

showing the video footage of three different events, a birth, a body floating in the water and his mother in coma, dying respectively (McKean, 2016, p. 100). As with the triptych, which unites the different stages of human existence - birth, life, and death - in a panel using various real-world situations, the play presents a cohesive and unified form by bringing together the characters' particular and separate experiences of the same day. While the combination of the fragmented stories foregrounds the alienation of the characters from each other, it also reveals the incompatible states and relationships between the care-taker and care-giver. The connections that the readers establish between the distinct stories enable the readers to see beyond the individual narratives to consider debatable issues such as responsibility, care, guilt, and loss (McKean, 2016, p. 100).

McLean's idiosyncratic narrative style creates a textual space where the audience can develop a critical perspective against social injustices and human rights abuses. In the first part of the play, McLean vividly portrays the violent incident with the physical manifestations of the emotional and psychological impacts this action has on the characters. McLean's depiction of the act of violence positions the audience and readers as witnesses to the physical and psychological impacts of intimidation, threat, and physical abuse. Through becoming witnesses to the nondisabled individual's act of violence against the disabled individual, the audience moves beyond the conventional understanding of power dynamics and thereby, their straightforward response to power relations is undermined. By situating the audience as witnesses, the playwright allows the audience and readers to gain insight into the nature and causes of disability violence. Furthermore, McLean reverses the structure of the play in the way that the violent action is already clear to the audience and readers while they are reading/watching Jackie's debate whether she delays her visit to her uncle. Although the performance of the violent action creates the sense that this event took place first, these two events occur simultaneously. The confluence of these events prompts the audience to think thoroughly and critically about individual and social responsibility, and individual and social care. In this way, the playwright aims to make the audience aware of the dehumanizing impacts of an inadequacy of care for other people, personally and socially.

Play One presents a humorous yet depressing portrayal of a couple who have experienced utter isolation. It becomes clear that Sadie and Bill were deinstitutionalized after being confined and treated for long years since the mental houses and other institutions were closed in the early 1990s. Their dehospitalization without any protective measures and sources of care violates their rights to live under humane conditions. Their release from the mental institution into community care provides a subtext through which their segregation and social isolation are interpreted within the cultural meanings attached to the disabled body which place it outside the idealized standards of the body. Bill and Sadie, who are forced to live in the community, are incarcerated in a council-owned flat which is cut off from the outside world. They lead an isolated life in which they are overwhelmed with a strong sense of menace and threat which forces them to close the door, turn off the phone, and not to look at the outside from the window. Except for the time they spend with Jackie, the only person who helps them continue their lives, they experience self-segregation. As it becomes clear later, the underlying reason behind their voluntary segregation is the threat and

intimidation by the exclusive and intolerant community, which will be explored in detail over the course of the analysis of the play.

The first part of *Any Given Day* exposes the multiplied and intricate experiences of embodiment where the signifiers of 'mental abnormality' deem the disabled body vulnerable to oppression, abuse, and violence. The perceived vulnerability of the disabled characters, which is exacerbated by their marginalization from society, causes them to become the targets of violence and sexual assault. The fact that Bill constantly warns Sadie not to approach too close to the window and not to wave her hands at Boy indicates that they experience fear of threat and menace. Just in Harold Pinter's comedy of menace, the comedy arising out of their dialogue and weird behaviour is accompanied by their anxious attitude, and thus, comedy overlaps with an increasing sense of menace and threat. The threatening atmosphere keeps the audience psychologically engaged by leaving them in a state of excited uncertainty as to what will happen. In the midst of their conversation, it becomes clear that the couple was previously attacked when they, unaware of the danger, opened the door in the dark, and this event generates their feeling of anxiety and mistrust as evidenced by their repetitive and tense words "No phone no door" (2010, p. 8). On the one hand, their prior experience of attacks enhances their sense of vulnerability and insecurity, on the other hand, it leads to an increased fear of being attacked and abused. To such an extent that they are deeply influenced by the earlier attack that they are reluctant to go outside their house and foster any relationship with other people, and they experience self-segregation. Oppressive attitudes and behaviour, which limit their behaviour and movement and lower the quality of their life, strip them of freedom and dignity, that is to say, they strip them of their human rights.

Bill and Sadie find shelter in the relatively safe world of the house, yet their sense of security is disrupted by the presence of the threat posed by the Boy who lurks outside the house. In the midst of their conversation, the Boy throws a stone at the house: "*Lovely lovely hot tea-slurping heaven. CRRRRRRRRRAACK/ Tea in air*" (2010, p. 16-7). In an atmosphere of confusion and tension, Sadie, too scared of the stone, screams while Bill struggles to appease her outcry and prevent her from hurting herself:

SADIE: Oh no oh no oh no oh no oh no oh no oh no oh no oh no oh no oh no oh no

BILL: Shh shh shh shh shh

SADIE: Oh no oh no oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh

BILL: Shoosh shoosh shoosh shoosh shoosh

SADIE: Ooo

BILL: Sadie.

Sadie.

Sadie.

SADIE: AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

BILL: He'll hear you.

He'll hear you.

SADIE: AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

BILL: Shutup.

SADIE: Shutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutupshutup



When the doorbell rings, thinking that Bill has come to get his keys, Sadie opens the door, yet who is standing in front of the door is BOY, not Bill. The BOY drags her by the hair into the living room, unzips his trousers and waves his penis above her face while saying, "You are/One/Ugly/Minge" (2010, p. 45). Later, he pees on her face and lifts his foot and stamps her head, a scene that creates varied audience responses such as fear, shame, anger, empathy, and shocking. The underlying reasons behind the violent acts of the perpetrator remain enigmatic and obscure; what leads the unnamed perpetrator to perform violence may be fun and thrill or material benefit. Although the play does not overtly provide comments concerning the personal motivation of the perpetrator, it does not offer a diabolical perception and treatment of the perpetrator. This situation problematizes responses to human rights abuses and raises serious questions as to who will be held responsible for the act of violence. The fact that McLean does not clearly portray the hidden intentions of the perpetrator in the play takes the attention of the readers and audience to the social structures in which the individual act of atrocity has taken place. While the perpetrator is not absolved from his guilt, responsibility for the violent crime necessitates a critical assessment of the hegemonic discourse of the body operating at social level. How the subjectivity of the perpetrator is constructed and positioned in relation to power forces and exclusionary practices attains importance in clarifying human rights violations as a socially charged issue. The perpetrator's hateful rhetoric, which stigmatizes Sadie's disabled body, may arguably be read as an indication that the evil act is motivated by the internalization and appropriation by the members of society of the prejudicial and stereotypical perception of the disabled body which otherizes and marginalizes disabled individuals and thereby renders them powerless, defenseless and vulnerable in face of physical and psychological abuse. As the outcome of social stigmatization, the act of violence raises arguments about the inclusivity of society since any tolerance and respect are not shown to the members of society whose bodily shape challenges the idealized views of the body. Despite the fact that violence is exerted only on one disabled individual, it sends the general message that any bodily nonconformity is not accepted in society. Furthermore, the prevalence of violence disempowers and weakens disabled individuals, thus, reinforcing the dynamics of existing power relations between disabled and nondisabled individuals. In this way, Linda McLean's play focalizes the perpetrator's position in relation to structures of power and discrimination, and shows how the perpetrator's acceptance of power forces and discriminatory ideas leads to their guilt and the emergence of violent crime. The text offers a dramatic space where the readers attain insight into their status within the tangled webs of power systems and their contribution to those power systems through their alignment with the ideological narratives surrounding bodily properties.

In the second part of the play, the domestic setting of Bill and Sadie's house transforms into a social space - a bar scene - where Dave and Jackie's conversation brings up concerns regarding care and responsibility. The vulnerability of the disabled characters is highlighted through the depiction of ineffective care and a lack of responsibility which lead to the displacement and disempowerment of the disabled body. At the beginning of the scene, Jackie appears jocund and vivacious because of the message left by her son, which reveals that her son's illness has ameliorated and he has had a painless day. Upon hearing the good news from Jackie's son, Dave attempts to convince Jackie to



celebrate it and proposes to drive to the west coast, yet Jackie turns his offer down because of her responsibility for her uncle with a learning disability. The mutually intimate relationship between Jackie and Dave, which incites sincerity, uncensored sex talk, and lust, leaves Jackie torn between her aspiration to pass time with Dave and the urge to fulfil her duty towards her uncle and his lover.

The private exchange between Jackie and Dave discloses the hidden truths of Jackie's past life. Unable to heal Nicholas's unappeased pain with long-term treatment, Jackie experiences emotional disturbances which lead to her dissatisfaction and displeasure with her life and her job. Jackie appropriates and internalizes the medicalized view of disability, which places disability in the individual body, which leads to a complete change in her perception of and attitude towards her patients. Jackie was able to sympathize and empathize with her patients and showed great effort to identify the matter with the patients and to soothe, sedate, and heal her patients during the time she worked as a nurse. Yet, her enthusiasm fades away over time, and she decides to liberate herself from the strenuous act of caring for others. She abandons her son by abusing him physically and later quits her profession as a nurse in search of a life devoid of responsibility, obligations, stress, and exhaustion since she is unable to establish an emotional bond with the disabled individuals and the patients. As expected, Jackie accepts Dave's offer. Considering her priorities in her past life, it is hardly surprising that Jackie neglects her uncle entrusted to her care. As is evident from the dialogue that reveals her private thoughts and feelings, Jackie does not take pleasure from the activities she does with Bill and Sadie: "I'll eat cold toast and cheese/ They make the same things every time/ I don't even like toast and cheese/ I think I did when I was little/ I haven't the heart to tell them" (2010, p. 71). When Jackie calls Bill to let him know that she will not be coming on account of the work which comes out of the blue, nobody responds. Knowing that they are afraid to pick up the phone, she promises that she will make up for the time and their effort to make preparations for her, yet she is not aware that it is too late. Considering that the act of violence and Jackie's phone call take place simultaneously, it is important to state that Jackie's neglect of her uncle enhances the disabled character's exposure to the likelihood of being attacked and abused and their vulnerability to physical and psychological abuse and assault. While the ending of the play provides no solution and makes no comments as to the emotional and psychological conditions of the characters, it raises serious questions concerning responsibility, guilt, and care.

The effectiveness of informal and formal care is criticized in Linda McLean's play, with a particular emphasis on the discriminatory and inequitable practices of care service systems which constitute an impediment to the full participation of the disabled characters in the community. Since the state does not provide them with protection and care, Bill and Sadie are forced into voluntary segregation and are subjected to mistreatment and violence. They do not express themselves freely, live as independent citizens, assert their entitlement to resources and security measures, and exercise any degree of personal control over their life. Their predicament reveals how society treats people who have certain physical features in a discriminatory and unequal manner and underlines that social justice is not effectively implemented and human rights are violated. In this regard, the play questions and criticizes the public authorities' inability to act when disabled individuals are stripped of equal access to adequate care and support and the right to participation in society and underlines

the necessity of reconsidering and rethinking equality and justice to achieve social justice and human rights.

Jackie's emotional sterility and her stress arising from the arduous and severe process of caring expose the difficulties and hardships associated with compulsory care where the carer has to implement the duty of care without giving priority to his/her preferences, aspirations, and demands. Jackie's emotional exhaustion and psychological distress compel her to escape her responsibilities towards her son, her patients, and her uncle. The troubled condition Jackie experiences shows that informal care provided by family members can be exploitative and dehumanizing for both disabled people and the persons who provide care. During the difficult process of caring, the situation of family members who provide care and support should be taken into consideration. In order to eradicate the negative impacts of informal care, it is crucial to reconsider and reorganize the mutual relationship between the disabled and the abled and their needs, and to support both groups with state policy. For instance, state authorities can offer financial support so that disabled individuals can organize their care (Kröger, 2009, p. 408). Thus, disabled individuals can have control over the sources and means of their care.

## CONCLUSION

The disabled characters' exposure to the acts of violence in McLean's delicately textured play revives the contentious issues of disability violence, individual and community care, and human rights and uncloses the intricate relationships between society and individuals. The play's engagement with the dichotomy between perpetrators and victims demonstrates the subject's complex position within the intricate fields of power and discrimination. In the play, the culturally fabricated notions of the disabled body generate alienation that splits disabled individuals away from society, thus, rendering them vulnerable to oppression, violence, and sexual assault. The embodied experience of disabled individuals offers a framework through which tensions stem from the emergent power hierarchies structured upon fixed binaries such as dependency/independency, inclusivity/exclusivity, tolerance/intolerance, care/neglect, self/other, vulnerability/ invulnerability, and abled /disabled. Highlighting the positioning of the disabled characters in relation to the established cultural paradigms of the body and power, McLean prompts the audience and readers to step out of the traditional understanding of power practices and to break their usual identification with the socially embedded notions of the body. Complex matters are raised regarding the effectiveness of community care, responsibility, and guilt by means of the violence directed at the disabled characters. The failure of family members, neighbours, and the state to provide adequate community care is underlined by the intensity of the psychological experience of violence and abuse. With a strong emphasis on the subjective experience of the victims, McLean leads the audience and readers to develop self-awareness about the significance of care and responsibility, and thus, foster empathy and attain an acute understanding of human rights issues.

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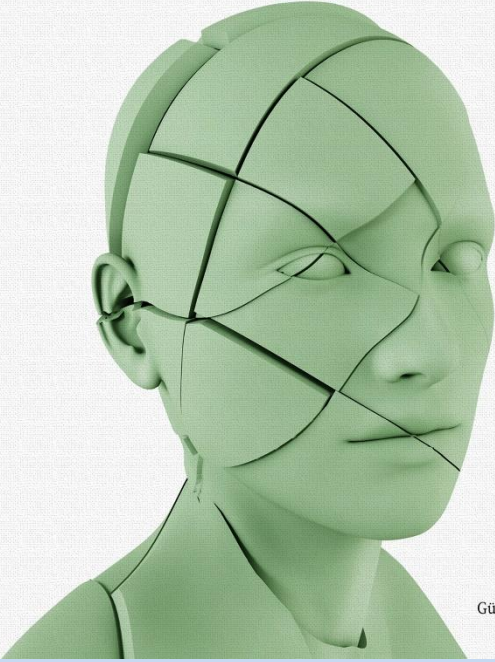
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# TÜRK BİLİMKURGU EDEBİYATI VE ARKETİPLER

DR. VELİ UĞUR



Günce Yayınları

Oktag Yivli

## Öykü Nasıl Okunur

modern öykü ve yöntem



Günce Yayınları

MAKSUT YİĞİTBAŞ

Edebiyatın Ebemkuşağı

Halit Ziya Hikâyeciliğinde  
Renklerin Dili

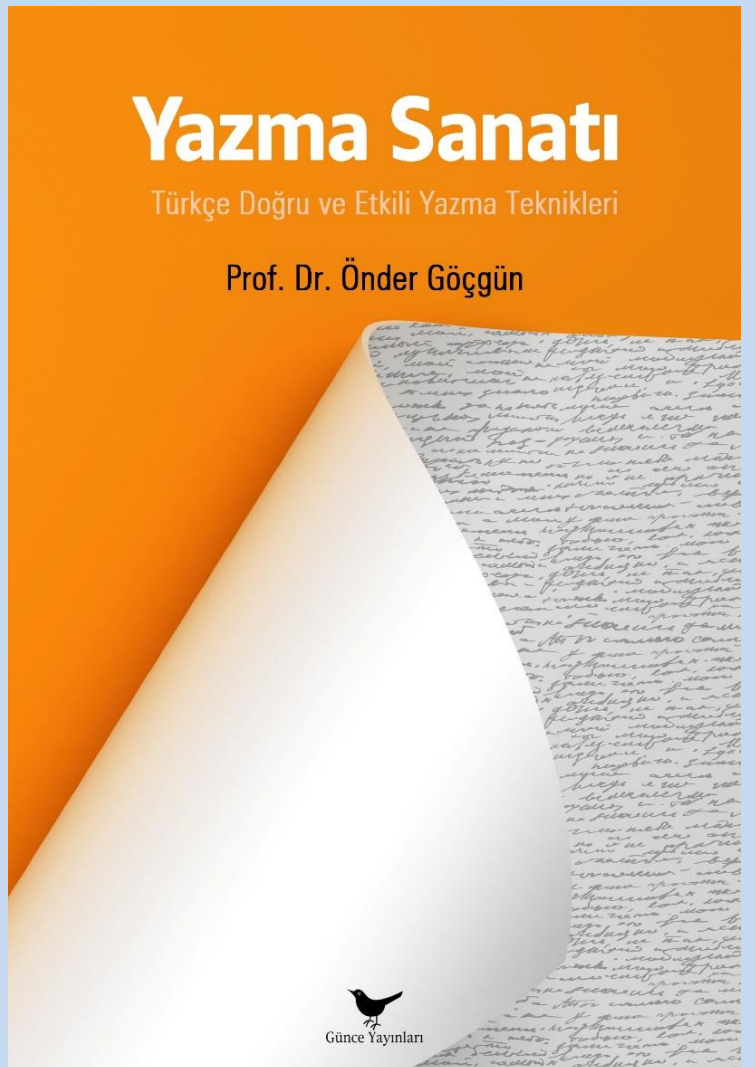


Günce Yayınları

## Yazma Sanatı

Türkçe Doğru ve Etkili Yazma Teknikleri

Prof. Dr. Önder Göğün



Günce Yayınları