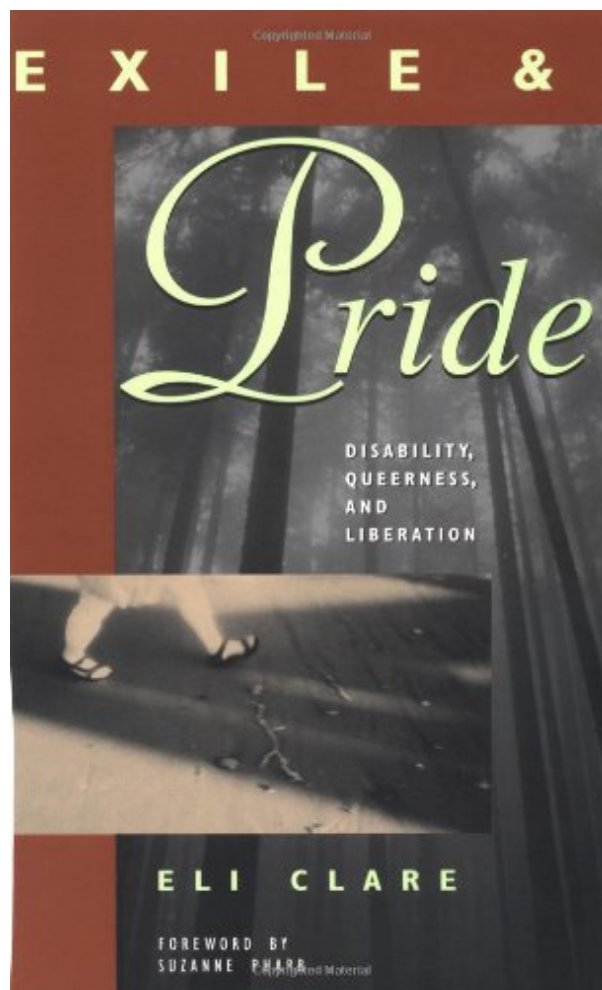
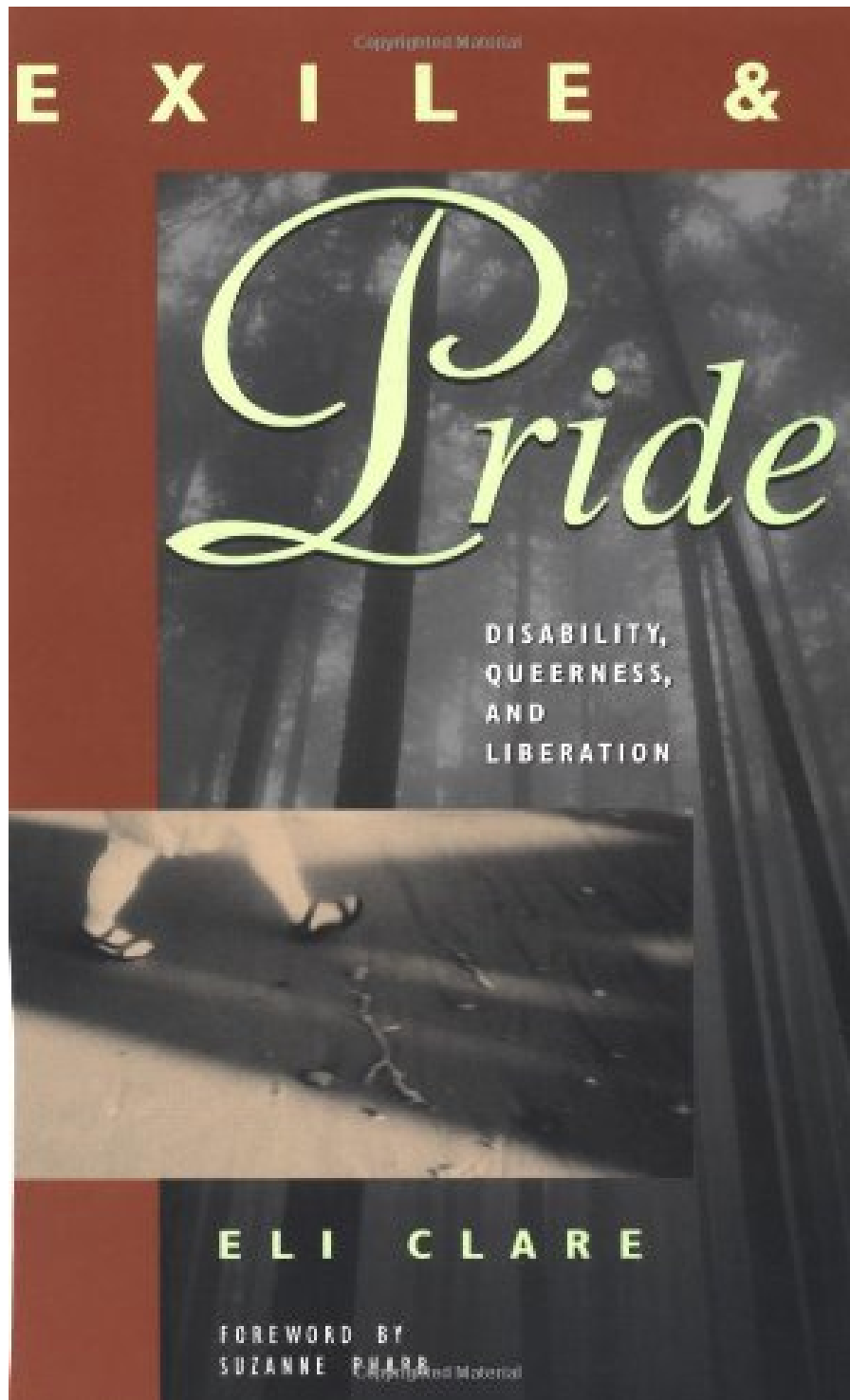


**EXILE AND PRIDE: DISABILITY,
QUEERNESS AND LIBERATION BY ELI
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Amazon.com Review

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"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*)

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Stones in My Heart, Stones in My Pockets

An Excerpt from Exile and Pride By Eli Clare

Draft Version: Please do not quote

THE MOUNTAIN

I: A Metaphor

The mountain as metaphor looms large in the lives of marginalized people, people whose bones get crushed in the grind of capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy. How many of us have struggled up the mountain, measured ourselves against the mountain, failed on the mountain, lived in the shadow of the mountain, hit our heads on glass ceilings, tried to climb the class ladder, lost the fight against assimilation, struggled our way toward that phantom called normality?

We hear from the summit that the world is the best from up there. Hear that we are lazy, stupid, weak, ugly, that we live at the bottom precisely because we are those things. We decide to climb that mountain, or make a pact that our children will climb it. The climbing turns out to be unimaginably difficult. We are afraid; every time we look ahead we can find nothing remotely familiar or comfortable. We lose the trail. Our wheelchairs get stuck. We speak the wrong languages with the wrong accents, wear the wrong clothes, carry our bodies the wrong ways, ask the wrong questions, love the wrong people. And it's goddamn lonely up there on the mountain. We decide to stop climbing and build a new house right where we are. Or we decide to climb back down to the people we love where the food, the clothes, the dirt, the sidewalk, the steaming asphalt under our feet, our crutches all feel right. Or we find the path again, decide to continue climbing only to have the very people who told us how wonderful life is at the summit booby trap the trail. They burn the bridge over the impassable canyon. They redraw our topo maps so that we end up walking in circles. They send their goons—those working-class and poor people they employ as their official brutes—to push us over the

edge. Maybe we get to the summit but p

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Most helpful customer reviews

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Explores disability, queerness, home---beautiful writing.

By A Customer

Eli Clare writes with passion, insight and a poet's sense of language. This is a difficult book to describe as it contains a series of interlinking essays which explore disability, environmentalism, being queer, being gendered, abuse and the meaning of home. As I read this description, I realize it somehow shrinks the real scope of the work and makes it sound like a dry discourse. The reality is that Eli talks about all of these issues through the lens of her own experiences as a lesbian with cerebral palsy who feels deep and abiding love for her childhood home on a river in Oregon. Reading this book, is like having the most delicious and thought provoking conversation with a good friend. It leaves one thinking for days. I've been passing it around my group of friends to rave reviews by all.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

exquisitely powerful

By Kelly Mack

Clare weaves personal experiences with political ideologies--clarifying connecting issues and pointing out the similarities and challenges that we face in working through them. This book struck me at emotional and mental levels and has left me with a great deal to think about. One excellent aspect is how she explains that solutions may never be as simple as we want them to be, but taking the time to understand multiple stories and multiple levels of truth will help us to reach new heights of achievement and equality. I would also strongly recommend *Pushing the Limits*, ed by Shelley Tremain and *Restricted Access*, ed by Victoria Brownworth--both collections of works by a diverse group of queer women with disabilities.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

This book changed my life

By rlw2867

This is an excellent book for disabled queers like myself, and the author, Eli Clare. The book is easily read--Clare uses language that is not pretentious, but establishes a voice that is eloquently compelling. "Exile" masquerades as autobiographical but contains a powerful critique of the social constructions of class, disability, sexuality, race, gender, the environment and just about everything else you could imagine (I know this might seem impossible--but Clare accomplishes it in this wonderful book). I highly recommend this book.

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