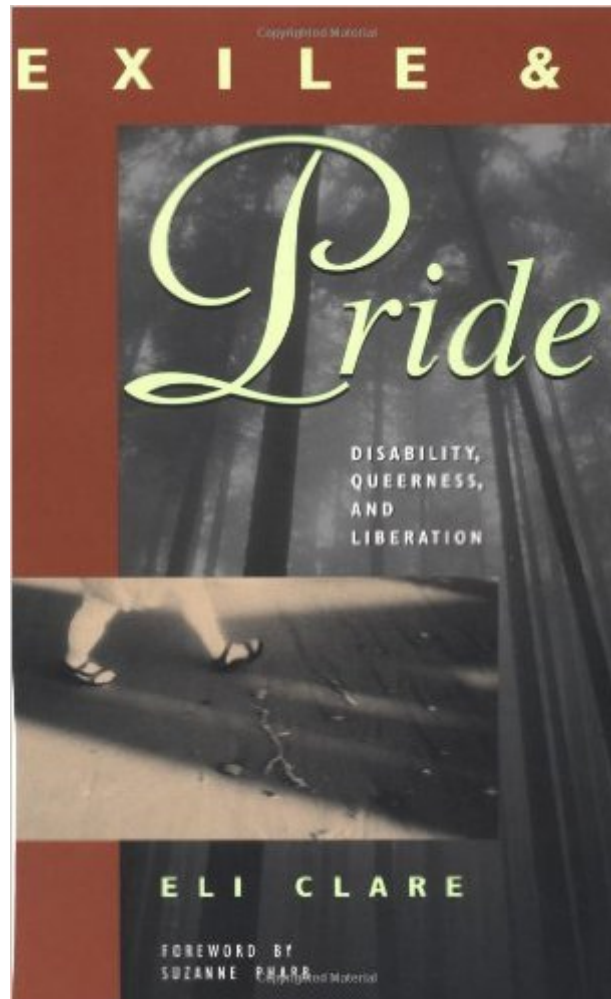


The book was found

# Exile And Pride: Disability, Queerness And Liberation



## Synopsis

Contents  
The Mountain  
1. Place  
Clearcut: Explaining the Distance  
Losing Home  
Clearcut: Brutes and  
Bumper Stickers  
Clearcut: End of the Line  
Clearcut: Casino  
2. Bodies  
Freaks and Queers  
Reading  
Across the Grain  
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Draft Version: Please do not quote  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: 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

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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.

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.

Please read this book if you have ever felt sorry for someone or if you really believe some people just don't have what it takes. Then be willing to question what you think you know for sure and reality will appear.

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.

I found this book really interesting. Her writing style is beautiful, and she has an almost poetical style in places. Eli is a disabled woman. She has cerebral palsy. She talks about the exclusion she experienced - the exile - in a rural town in Oregon. She also talks about being abused, and this deeply personal story is very powerful. Eli also feels in exile because she is an environmentalist - from a rural background. Among environmentalist, she feels an outsider, since most of them are city people. Eli is also a lesbian. She has felt excluded from that community too. Although I haven't done it justice by listing all the things she feels exile from, this is not a negative book. It is actually a very positive book - it talks about developing pride in who you are, accepting yourself, being a person with lots of layers to their personality, etc. Eli also talks about wider issues - like the social model of disability, pressure to be a "supercrip", disclosing rape and being rejected by your family when you do so, etc. When I finished the book, I decided to read it again, straight away so that I didn't forget what it said. (I have memory problems). I live in Australia, and this woman lives in Oregon. But after reading this book, I just wished I could meet her. And I think that's one of the best recommendations you can give a book!

Clare writes her autobiography in word paintings. Clare explores the multiple differences of disability, queerness, transgenderism, abuse, socioeconomic class, and gender with reflection that empowers rather than victimizes or blames. While considering how the history around her has shaped the world and affected who she is, she considers how she has shaped the world. Clare refuses to collapse the intricate complexities of life into something more manageable.

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