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**جامعة مولود معمري تيزي وزو**
**كلية الآداب واللغات**
**قسم اللغة الإنجليزية**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Master's Degree in English**

**Option: Literature and Civilization**

**Subject:**

# Disability in Raquel.J. Palacio's *Wonder* (2012) and Lillie Lainoff's *One for all (2022)*

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Academic Year :
2023 /2024

# Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

My dear parents **Ahcène** and **Fazia**

To My lovely sister **Cirta**

And beloved brother **Juba**

Thank you for your everlasting love and warm encouragement throughout my research.

To my best friends **Melissa** and **Sabrina**, thank you for being always by my side and for giving me useful advice.

# Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank **Dr Samir Ferhi** for having provided me with the present topic. It is thanks to his invaluable assistance, guidance as well as his professional devotion that I was able to complete this dissertation.

I am also grateful for the panel of examiners, namely Mrs. Kahina TABTI and Mrs. Djedjiga BESSAD who kindly accepted to asses and examine my work during this hectic period of time. My thanks also go to all my teachers of the English department as well as the administrative staff.

# Abstract

The present research is meant to make a comparative reading of Raquel Jaramillo Palacio’s *Wonder* (2012) and Lillie Lainoff’s *One for all* (2022). The main aim is to highlight the possible connection/intersection between the theme of disability and that of social marginalization or alienation through the characters’ description. In order to reach my objective, we have made use of the theory of Disability studies as suggested by Tobin Siebers in his *Disability Theory* (2008) which is also supplemented by Peter Burke’s theory of *Brothers and Sisters of Disabled Children* (2004). As a whole, the dissertation is divided into two main chapters. The first chapter is devoted to deeply studying characterization in the light of disability concerns with a particular focus on its models; the medical and social model, while the second chapter makes a reading of the intersection of disability and impairments with social isolation or marginalization as depicted in both narratives. After analysis, we have come to the idea that the body or mind impairment is more than a medical syndrome which needs diagnosis and treatment, but also a social agent that plays a crucial role in shaping or forging the life of disabled individuals, and thus allows them to live a “normal life” and reach what Siebers qualifies as the ‘ideology of ability’.

**Keywords: Ability, disability, isolation, marginalization, children**

# I. General Introduction

My encounter with the issue of disability or what is also called the impairments of bodies and minds goes back to the academic year between 2021-2022, when I was a first-year master's student majoring in the field of literature and civilization. I remember well the day when one of my teachers in the module of British Modernism introduced to us in one of his lectures in the classroom, a course that was entitled 'disability studies or concerns' in Doris Lessing's *The fifth child* (1988). It was at that moment that I realized the fact that the issue of disability as a biological illness and a socio-cultural worldly issue is also dealt with by authors of literature; mainly in fiction by describing an imaginary world of humans and what was like living as a disabled character. To feed my curiosity as far as this issue, I have made more research in order to get much informed about the subject. It is for this reason that my choice as a Master Two student falls in comparing two recent and prominent novels that deal with the theme of disability which are *Wonder* (2012) and *One for all* (2022) written respectively by Raquel Jaramillo Palacio, an American author, and Lillie Lainoff, a British contemporary writer.

In order to better explain my choice of comparing the two aforementioned authors' works, it has to be noted that the present comparison is justified from my deep interest in the field of comparative literature and the kind of works undertaken in this field. Second, I believe that if I have chosen to put the two books or novels together it is because of the same literary works' concerns as well as their focus on nearly the same subjects. In other words, in reading *Wonder* and *One for all*, I come to notice that both narratives deal mainly with the similar themes, such as the protagonists' struggle against marginalization because of their body-mind deficits, and against the societal stereotypes of the two respective societies and how people around them consider and look for disabled children in the described imaginary world of Palacio and that of Lainoff. This is what is called in comparative literature as a literary affinities.

Furthermore, and in order to extend more the above point in reading the two novels, I come to see that both of Palacio's protagonist; Auggie and Lainoff's main girl-character; Tania De Batz have undergone and lived the life of disabled children, and thus they experienced nearly the same treatments as marginalized children. All along their respective lives, they were struggling against the social marginalization engendered either by their respective families and siblings at home or by extension, the whole society outside. Raquel J Palacio's novel *Wonder* gives to the reader a deep image of the life of a little boy called August Pullman or Auggie. In the novel, the author describes the life of this disabled Auggie who experienced a kind of social marginalization, discrimination and facial disfigurement. Despite of being a quite shy and a happy boy most of the time, a smart and self-made child, yet, he was always looked down either by his classmates at school or by his parents and siblings at home. In fact, it has to be noted that the boy's mistreatment by his friends and family is a result of the fact that Auggie was biologically born with a facial deformity, body impairment or what is called in the field of medicine as "**Treacher-Collins Syndrome" (TCS);** a type of a pathology preventing children to reach school until the fifth grade.

Likewise Raquel J Palacio's novel, Lillie Lainoff's narrative also describes the hard life and times of a little girl named Tania de Batz who, like Auggie, suffers nearly from the same biological disease called **"Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrom**e" **(POTS)**. The latter led the girl to struggle not only against her own infantile disease, but also against her own society to be accepted as a normal human being. In this context, it is of importance to consider what Lillie Lainoff declared when she was asked about the motivation that pushed her to devote a novel on disability concerns. She argues:

> I didn't identify as disabled until I was an undergraduate in college, partially because of stigma, partially because of the fact that I'd bought into the narrative that society tells us, that if you can hide your disability you should. And that it's something to be ashamed of. I was diagnosed with POTS syndrome when I was 14 year old."[…] "There were a lot of times when I struggled to get the accommodation that I needed, teachers would refuse to give me the accommodation that were granted to me by my IEP." The Disability and Philanthropy Forum (2023)

## Review of the literature

It can be said that both of R. J Palacio's *Wonder* and Lainoff's *One for all* are respectively two recent published novels. On the one hand, Palacio's debut book, *Wonder* is classified as a multi-million copies New York Times bestseller. The reason of this is that many readers have been attracted by the main character of the novel; August Pullman, as having a strong personality despite the mistreatment and marginalization he endured in his daily life and being different from other people. On the other hand, Lillie Lainoff's *One for all* is similarly a well read novel, as it received the Glimmer recognition in Literature. An exciting novel, that is full of actions, full of battles and subterfuge.

To start with, Palacio's *Wonder* had received a great deal of criticism. Among the most representative critics that focused on the theme of disability, we may mention Eka Margianti and Linda Nurarsita Damayanti (2019) who discussed the development of the subjective identity of palacio's protagonist in *Wonder* in a thesis entitled *Interpersonal relationship and personality development on the main character in R J Palacio's wonder novel*. Using the theory of Interpersonal relationship developed by Harry S. Sullivan, the study has shown that August Pullman changes according to situation and circumstances. In this regard, Eka Margianti and Linda Nurarsita Damayanti state the following:

> besides the Interpersonal Relationship that August experienced in his life, Personality Development of August in Wonder novel can be seen through the situation and event from August's experience in the story. When the environment changes and not rateable with the individual's value and belief, thus the individual must change their personality to meet the balance of the environment. (p13)

As the above statement shows, we can say that Auggie's personality changes according to the social and environmental circumstances. In other words, the life of the character is subjugated to familial and social environment as it grows or develops according to current events and situations.

Another recent study on Palacio's *Wonder* is conducted in 2019 by Heni Rina Sawitriun entitled *The Influence of kindness to people relations in Wonder by R J Palacio*: *A Humanistic Psychological Perspective*. In this dissertation, the main focus had made on August's personality as being someone different from the other characters in the book. In other words, and according to the critic, August seems to be more generous, kind and more human. Through a psychological and a humanistic point of view, the critic also argues that August's human traits distinguished him from the rest of characters all along the story of the novel. Thus, despite his disability, the reader of *Wonder* is deeply marked and attracted by August's eagerness, and generosity. However, in order to showcase August's qualities which the reader may encounter in reading the book, Heni Rina Sawitri selected a set of attributes which are relative to August's subjective identity, as for instance his courage, self-confidence, self-assurance and above all his wittiness. In this context, the critic says the following about August's personality: "August is confident child to face in new environment that refers to Poston (2009) which the higher form self-esteem requires less maintenance because through accomplishment, it becomes a permanent part of who the individual is''( p.8). The findings illustrates that the human value of kindness has an advantage or a potential to influence others around the protagonist and to alter their views on the good. Human kindness is a marker of inclusion in this case.

On the other hand, and as far as Lillie Lainoff's *One for all* is concerned, it is very important to mention the fact that no acknowledgeable sources and reliable scientific documents are available. Thus, being too recently published, the only online sources which can be found concern only those short reviews which are not classified in the world of academia. As a result, the following literature review is just a simple personal attempt to examine the book and classify it in the scientific world of academia. *One for all* then can be viewed as a short novel which belongs to a literary genre called historical fiction, adventure and literary romance as well. In general terms, the book focuses on the life and times of the heroine; Tania De Batz, whom the author describes as being suffering from a biological and chronic illness categorized in the field of medicine as Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS) which causes the little girl frequent dizziness and fainting spells. In fact, suffering from such illness prevented the heroine to live a "normal" life of ordinary people, particularly among her own family and other people outside home.

The novel also uncovers the strong eternal fighting and daily strength of the protagonist against her chronic illness, who wanted to go beyond her limited body-condition. In other words, the author presents in her work a self-made, confident and determined character who wanted to reach what is called in the field of disability studies as "the Ideology of Ability". The latter is a condition of life that could allow disabled people to overwhelm their body-mind impairments and thus realize their dream of getting a normal life among healthy people. This is what we discover in the book, since Tania De Batz is sent by her father to a training center; that is L'Académie des Mariées of Lupiac in France, in order to become a professional musketeer and thus compensate her body impairment by an appropriate physical ability.

Among other things, the novel deals also with a variety of themes and subjects such as family kinship, love, and women's struggle against the gender stereotyped society. Notwithstanding the father's protection of his own daughter, the affectionate love of a girl to her own father and mother as well as the female struggle against the societal obstacles, stigmas and barriers of a male dominated society.

## Issue and working hypotheses

From the above review of the literature, it is made clear that many studies have been devoted to Raquel Jaramillo Palacio's *Wonder*. The literature review has shown that the two books have been analyzed separately.  However, to my best knowledge, no study has been so far conducted or ventured to read the two books together, by exploring the themes of disability, social rejection and marginalization, or analyzing characterization within the literary network of body-mind impairments. In other words, within this comparative research, the main focus is to put under scrutiny the way the two authors portrayed their main characters namely "August Pullman" and "Tania de Batz" amid the theme of disability and marginalization as well as the relationship between the characters with the social milieu or immediate environment to which they respectively belong.

To say it more explicitly, all along the research, I will first examine deeply the way the two authors handled their main characters by exploring the type of the pathology the two characters suffer from. This goes without saying that in the first part of the research, the main interest is to highlight the kind of disability the two respective protagonists are diagnosed with the adequate treatment they need in order to get a healthy life.

Furthermore, the research will also outline the similarities that might exist in the two books in relation to the concept of disability as it is explained in Tobin Siebers's theory suggested in his book entitled *Disability Theory* (2008). In doing so, we are particularly interested in the way the two authors' protagonists; August Pullman and Tania De Batz readapt themselves according to the changing of cultural, social and ideological attitudes of people surrounding them either at home or outside; that is at the domestic sphere and the public sphere.

Moreover, throughout the research, we will examine the intersection of the theme disability and marginalization, by stressing the deep impacts that this intersection might have on disabled children on their relation with their parents, siblings, and above all the outside environment. In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives, we will also make use of Peter Burke's *Brothers and Sisters of Disabled Children (2004)* for fully understanding the impacts of brothers and siblings on disabled children of a single family.

## II. Methodology and Methods

### a. Methodology

In order to reach our objectives, our research paper will be divided into two main chapters. As far as, the first chapter is concerned, we will shed light on the way the two main characters of the two novels were respectively described by the two authors by focusing on their disabled personalities, by describing the type of disability they suffer from, while in the second chapter, we will intend to investigate the literary aspect of intersection between the theme of disability and marginalization as well as the struggle of the two main characters to overcome and resist the shading powers and daily pressures they endured within their social environment.

### Theoretical Framework

The field of disability studies is relatively a new field of literary investigation that focuses exclusively and interests on how authors in literature and fiction portrayed a category of people suffering from the pathology of disability, either a physical or mental one. It is also widely known that the issue of disability is the one that is well handled by authors in what is known as the post-war literature. For instance, many post-war authors had devoted many works to describe mainly the hard lives and times of those war-survivors and veterans who suffered from shell-shock and other post traumatic syndromes. This is the case for example with the British storyteller D.H Lawrence and his famous short story of the *Blind Man* (1922). However, in conducting our research work which consists of comparing Palacio's *Wonde*r and Lillie Lainoff's *One for all,* which we consider deals with child disability that is quite different from the ones discussed in post-war literature, we likely opted and adopted two literary theories that we think fit with our topic and subject, which is disability resulting from biological or chronic illnesses causing the body and mind impairments. In order to do so, we used Tobin Sieber's *Disability Theory* (2008) and Peter Burke's theory *Brothers and Sisters Disabled Children* (2004).

## 1. Tobin Siebers's Disability Theory (2008)

Tobin Siebers is a professor of English Language, Literature and a professor of art and design at the University of Michigan in USA. In his theoretical book entitled *Disability Theory* published in 2008, Tobin Siebers brings up to the fore different concepts related to the field of disability studies. Compelling arguments about disability, Siebers sees it as a subservient basic assumption related to personal identity, ideology, language, politics, social oppression governed by the body-mind constructions. In parallel, he brings the central concerns of the developing filed of disability studies into debate with most prominent researchers in the field of gender studies, critical race theory, literary theory and cultural studies. One of the basic claims of disability studies, he says: "is the presence of disabled people in any discussion changes not only the culture of discussion but also the nature of the arguments in the discussion''. (p.4)

According to this quote, the presence of disabled participants in a discussion has a significant effect on the topics being discussed as well as the tone of the conversation. The change can occur in the overall atmosphere, attitude, and behaviors during the conversations with disabled persons. It influences how people interact and express themselves.

Within the same context, it is noticeable to say that society has ever created very negative presumptions about mental or physical disabled persons. People having physical or mental problems are often perceived as sick, abnormal and alienated in need of medical treatment. However, the author consider and believe that these individuals may compensate their mental and physical handicaps, through assisting and providing them with medical treatments as sending them to specialized center for rehabilitation.

### a. Siebers's Ideology of Ability

In his documentation about disability concerns and categorizations, Siebers highlights the fact that the ideology of "ability" plays an important role in society for increasing awareness about disabled persons, because the latter is most of the time shaped by cultural and ideological attitudes that are frequently constructed and endorsed beliefs. This may have an effect on how people with disabilities are viewed and handled. In this context, Siebers (2008) says:

> A second a more important project is to bring disability out of the shadow of the ideology of ability, to increase awareness about disability, and to illuminate its kinds, values, and realities. Disability creates theories of embodiment more complex than the ideology of ability allows, and these many embodiments are each crucial to the understanding of humanity and its variations, whether physical, mental, social, or historical. (p.9)

This means that more considerable social initiatives are needed in order to raise awareness among people in order to change their behaviors towards disabled persons, by exposing for instance the realities of disability and bringing it out of the shadow of ability paradigm. Moreover, disability generates embodiment theories that are more complex than the ideology of ability permits and these numerous embodiments whether physical, mental, social or historical are essential elements for comprehending humanity in its diversity.

### b. Minority Identity as Theory

Disability studies and social theory depend significantly on the idea of disability as a "minority identity". The latter is based on the understanding that individuals with disabilities, either with physical or mental syndromes, frequently encounter marginalization, discrimination and particular difficulties that are comparable to those encountered by other minority groups and ethnic races. For Siebers (2008), "minority identity" constitutes or let's say are among the most important components of the theory of disability and that of subjective identity of disabled people who are alienated and marginalized. This is well explained in the statement that follows:

> Identity is attacked most frequently in the analysis of minority identity only people of color, Jews, Muslims, Gays, Lesbians, Bisexual and Transgendered people, women, and the people with disabilities seem to possess unhealthy identities. It is as if identity itself occupied a minority position in present critical and cultural theories, for those who reject identity appear to do so only because of its minority status, a status linked again and again to disability. (p.13)

The quote above means that when people discuss identity, they frequently discuss minority groups' experiences, and occasionally these conversations may give a negative portrait. The idea also suggests that some individuals may reject the whole idea of identity, because the concept itself is seen as being in a minority position in social, academic, and cultural discussions. It can be connected to the repeated identification of identity with marginalized groups, such as people with disabilities.

### 2. Peter Burke's Brothers and Sisters of Disabled Children (2004)

Peter Burke is Senior lecturer of social work at the University of Kingston-upon-Hull in England. He is a former social researcher and published widely in the field children disability and child care law. Burke's theory *Brothers and sisters of disabled children* (2004) examines and discusses a variety of issues related to the concept of disability and disabled persons in the domestic sphere of family and public sphere of society. Burke explores the deep effect of having a disabled child in a given family, and brings to the fore the relationship between the disabled child with his parents as well as his siblings. He also discusses the difficulties that the family may encounter in rising both able bodied (healthy) and disabled (sick) children at once, and the potential effects that might generate, either at home or outside.

Furthermore, in his book, Burke (2004, p.12) provides examples in regards to the siblings, family, school, and social life in general. He relates the term of 'disability by association' to describe the effect of disabled child on healthy siblings. Moreover, to better understand the experiences of brothers and sisters and determine whether they are the result of differences, disabilities, or discrimination, Burke contends that:

> Living with disability may make a family feel isolated and alone, especially if social encounters reinforce the view that a disabled person is somehow 'not worthy'. Another family may acknowledge difference as a welcomed challenge, confirming individuality and a sense of being special, but the obstacles to overcome maybe considerable. (ibid)

In this same chapter of the book, Burke provides a theoretical framework which aims at clearly explaining the necessity of working with siblings of children who have difficulties.

This relies on the belief that if there is a disabled person in a given family, family members have to cope all their efforts to help the disabled child. As Burke shows, the effects of exclusion may sometimes have a long term consequences, effecting on the entire family; he calls this as 'disability by association' (ibid). This means that, if a given family, there is a disabled child, all the members should develop an attitude of association and inclusion of the disabled child, and not isolating and rejecting him or her.

## Models of Disability according to Peter Burke

In order to fully grasp and understand the meaning of "disability", we contend that is very important to know also the types or models of "disability" as documented by Peter Burke in his aforementioned book. In the latter and according to Burke, "disability" can be divided into two models: the '**Medical' model** and the '**Social 'model'**. It is crucial to understand these two models as they help in clarifying and distinguishing differences in professional perspectives and the immediate social environment. Hence, Burke (2004) explains that:

> the medical model on the whole emphasizes the person's medical condition, illness or disability as being different from the norm. The social model of disability tends to be holistic, placing the individual in his or her context and focusing on the duty of others to effect change, so that the behavior of others and the opportunities offered do not promote a sense of disability as a condition to be discriminated against, ignored or avoided. (p.19.20)

This means that the 'medical model' of disability is most and foremost a personal health condition that determines the person's healthy or unhealthy physical and mental conditions. While the second type that is the 'social model' has to do with the outside considerations, behaviors and society's points of views on disabled persons. In other words, it is how society perceives and conceives this category of people in their general environment as for instance at home, family, school, etc. Burke’s categorization of the types of disability then is concerned with the two main selected models cited above. Each of these models emphasizes different aspects of disability, such as medical conditions, social barriers, or the interaction of biological, psychological, and social factors.

In fact, Burke insists on the fact that the medical model is the most important one, because of its diverse typology, pathology, diagnosis and various treatments as well. Therefore, in the following paragraphs, we will try to shed light and focus on both models as seeing for instance what medical type of disability is more fitting with August Pullman and Tania De Batz as portrayed respectively by Palacio in *Wonder* and Lainoff in *One for all*.

### 1- The Medical Model of Disability

Disabilities are diverse, and individuals with the same diagnosis can confront it differently. For instance how a person’s experience of a disability is influenced by variables like age, socio-economic status, and cultural background. Certainly, it is important to consider a variety of medical concepts when talking about disability from medical perspectives. The following are some essential terms and suggestions concerning disability in the context of medicine and medical sciences.

A. **Treacher Collins Syndrome:** According to the National Library of Medicine, the most widely known medical type of disability is Treacher Collins Syndrome, which the latter affects individuals or persons who

> have underdeveloped facial bones, particularly the cheek bones, and a very small jaw and chin (micrognathia). Some people with this condition are also born with an opening in the roof of the mouth called a cleft palate. In severe cases, underdevelopment of the facial bones may restrict an affected infant's airway, causing potentially life-threatening respiratory problems. (p.1)

This syndrome also is known as ‘Mandibulofacial dysostosis’. It is a rare genetic disorder that interferes with the development of the bones and tissues in the face. The following are some prominent features of TCS:

**1-a - Craniofacial Abnormalities:** Treacher Collins Syndrome’s patients frequently have undeveloped facial bones, especially in the cheek and jaw zones. This can result in unusual facial features like small jaw, underdeveloped cheek bones, and downward slanting eyes.

**2-a- Breathing and Airway problems:** some TCS individuals may have respiratory difficulties, when they are newborn. To ensure appropriator right breathing monitory and once necessary interventions may be needed.

### B. Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome

The Dysautonomia International which is a non-profit international health organization has looked on the various ways for improving the lives of disabled people who are particularly diagnosed with an autonomic nervous system disorders called: “Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS). The latter according to this organization, is a form of Dysautonomia or a subset of orthostatic intolerance that is associated with the presence of excessive tachycardia on standing.” (p.1) POTS are a type of Dysautonomia which is an autonomic nervous system disorders. This system regulates involuntary physical functions such as heart rate, blood pressure and digestion. Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia syndrome is defined by a set of symptoms that occur when a person stands up from a sitting or lying down position. POTS have the following characteristics and features:

**1. b- Symptoms:** people with POTS frequently suffer from dizziness, lightheadedness, or an unsteady feeling when they stand. Also, chronic fatigue is a common symptom that can be severe.

**2. b- Diagnosis:** the diagnosis of POTS relies on using a clinical evaluation and specific criteria. The key diagnostic criterion is a heart rate increase of 30 beats per minute or more, within the first 10min of standing up, in the absence of others known causes of tachycardia.

**3. b- Treatment**: POTS treatment aims to manage symptoms while also improving quality of life. Lifestyle changes such as increasing water and sodium consumption, wearing compression stocking, and progressively boosting physical activity may be included. Medications may also be prescribed to help with heart rate control and symptom management. Postural orthostatic Tachycardia syndrome is generally thought to be a chronic condition, but the severity of symptoms varies. Many people with POTS can live functional and fulfilling lives if they are properly managed.

### 2- The Social Model of Disability

In contrast to the medical model, the social one has been highly documented and discussed in the "**Fundamental Principles of Disability**" which is a constituent defining document that UPIAS – a worldly organization- published in 1976. The organization's investigations as far as disability concerns are widely outlined in the above mentioned document. The latter remains as a very important and a vital contribution in this field of study, as it had given various perspectives and viewpoints. For in their early definition, the social model of disability is perceived as a socially endorsed or held belief among people:

> in our view, it is society which disables physically impaired people. Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments; by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society. (UPIAS, 1975)

According to this organization, the main cause of the issue is society as a whole since it makes disabled people feel alone and excluded from their immediate socio-economic, cultural and political environment/conditions to which they belong, each one according to his/her own specificities. With such conditions, disabled people in general live under prejudices, stereotypes and thus receive different treatment in everyday life . As a result, and according to the organization investigation;

> The disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organization which takes little or no account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities. (ibid)

The drawbacks generated by the attitudes developed on disabled people exclude them from the mainstream social activities, and thus gives them little or no consideration at all. The majority of people do not acknowledge the disabilities of certain people, and some parents even refuse to accept their disabled child. Therefore, they would rather keep themselves apart from the wider outside society.

This provides an explanation for Burke (2004) and who suggested that people should imperatively change their conducts, attitudes and look for disabled person as other ordinary individuals, whom together constitute a whole and integrated society or community that grows far from any physical or mental prejudice and attitudes. For example, Peter Burke states that:

> the social model of disability tends to be holistic, placing the individual in his or her context and focusing on the duty of the others to effect change, so that the behavior of others and the opportunities offered do not promote a sense of disability as a condition to be discriminated against, ignored or avoided. (2004, p. 19-20)

The quote above means that instead of focusing on a person's physical or mental health, the social model considers how society can be constructed to prevent unfair treatment, disregard, or intentional avoidance of the person in concern. The intention is to establish an inclusive atmosphere in which individuals with disabilities can fully engage without encountering needless obstacles. Rather than focusing on treating the disabled person, this approach addresses the social norms and barriers that contribute to the experience of disability.

## b. Materials

## A. The Lives and Times of Raquel J. Palacio and Lillie Lainoff

### 1. The Life and Times of Raquel J. Palacio

Raquel J Palacio was born on July 13, 1963, in New York. She is a prominent American author and graphic designer. Growing up in the United States of America and precisely in the state of Brooklyn, from her childhood, Palacio showed an early love for reading literary books and storytelling. Hence, before becoming an author, she first started studying in the field of illustration at Parsons School of Design after attending the high school of Art and Design. Later on, Palacio changed her field of work and interest as she was more interested in graphic design by helping publishers in creating book-jackets or book-covers for their artistic creations. However, in 2012, she published her first debut novel entitled *Wonder,* which helped her to gain literary fame and high esteem among her readers.

The inspiration behind her debut novel, *Wonder* comes from a real-life experience which had completely changed her way of thinking and way of conduct in her personal life. According to several interviews and public declarations, we read that the content of the story is inspired from a turning event and a personal experience which deeply affected her life. For, one day, accompanied by her two sons, she has seen a child in an ice cream-shop who has been in a serious facial deformity. We learn that at that very moment, her two sons were a little bit scared by the facial deformity of the boy as they both responded fearfully. Consequently, she immediately took them out of the store, as she noticed the fact that their reaction was not a normal one in front of that “facial deformed boy”. This interaction or let’s say incident had deeply affected Palacio, as she started thinking and considering how the child and his family were coping with such public behaviour and social conduct in everyday life. In order to sustain more the above experience, in one of her public interviews held in 2017, she declares the following: “I hope, I could write something that can elevate everybody, raise the bar a little bit on what kind of come to expect of our middle schoolers because there was this idea that you know all kids middle school go through mean phase, that! Oh! That’s normal and I was like” (ibid). This means that Palacio’s purpose is to create and thus devote a story that would encourage readers, especially children, to get normal behaviours outside in front of disabled children. It is to compassionate and feel compassion towards those who are different from them. Because, and as it is the case in her book, the character of Auggie Pullman has come to represent everybody who feels different or faces difficulties due to his unique features as being a disabled person. Consequently then, she had initiated a movement that is labelled as “Choose *Kind*". The latter encouraged people to widespread real values of life as taking care of disabled children, people who might be different or experience difficulties feeling empathy, and accepting them as an integral part of any given society. The "Choose Kind" initiative seeks also to cultivate compassion among people, places of education, and communities. It offers a forum for conversations and actions that advance acceptance, tolerance, and understanding. Palacio thinks that people may make a difference in creating a society that is more accepting and helpful by making the decision to be kind (ibid).

## 2. A short Synopsis of *Wonder*

August Pullman, the protagonist of this story, is described as a young boy with a disfigured face (facial deformity) who resides in New York with his mother Isabel, father Nate, and sister Via. Due to his disability, August has been homeschooled for nearly his entire childhood. One day , his parents decide to enroll him in Beecher Prep, a public prep school, for the fifth grade. Auggie has been nervous and he has rejected to attend a public school because of his fear of being judged and rejected by others. However, his mother convinced him to go. As Auggie begins his fifth grade at Beecher Prep, he encountered a mix of reactions from his classmates. Some students are kind and welcoming just like Jack and Summer as they become friends with each other, while other in the case of the character of Julian, one of his peers who looked down on August and teased him along with his group.

Throughout the book, we read that Halloween is the protagonist's favorite holiday, because in such a special celebrating and festive day, he can wear a mask, so he can hide his deformed face from everyone and feel at ease for a moment in front of other children. Surprisingly however, he discovers that his former close friend, Jack, is a false one at school. As a result, he then befriends Summer instead. In a gathering party, Summer is judged by her classmates for befriending August, but she prefers to leave the party and friends in order to keep her friendship with August. Nevertheless, Jack is confused about why August is no longer a friend with him, but when he learns that Auggie overheard the bad things he uttered to Julian’s clan, he regrets his actions and words and tries to reconcile with him through a schooling science-project. He uses it as an excuse to regain Auggie’s trust. After that, Julian turns against Jack and starts a feud with him.

The best part after the fight is that August forgives Jack as they restored their friendship while Julian makes his friends turns against Jack. At the end, the boys decide to talk to

August and Jack again. Afterwards, the school organizes a campsite for all the students with other sections in order to change the conflictual mood among disciples. During this campsite, the students of the seventh section want to hit August, but there is Jack who defends him and then Julian's friends help the two against the adults. Then, they become close.

From the schooling incident, Augusts' parents were more worried and more pre-occupied of his current state. Ultimately, we learn at the end of the book that at the school's graduation ceremony, August is awarded the Henry Ward Beecher Medal in appreciation of his perception throughout the academic year and his impact on others.

## 3. The Life and Times of Lillie Lainoff

The author of *One for all,* Lillie Lainoff was born on April 27, in Washington, D.C. she is a contemporary American author who graduated from Yale University with a Bachelor of Art in English with a honors in the major. She currently resides in Washington, D.C, and completed a Master of Art in creative writing Prose Fiction from the University of East Anglia. Lillie Lainoff also participated in Yale's Varsity Fencing program while she was an undergraduate. She was among the first athletes with physical disabilities to individually qualify for an NCAA Championship event as a senior, and she assisted her team in finishing the season ranked tenth in the National Coaches Poll. She continues to coach and fence competitively. The US Fencing Association presented her with the first ever Spirit of Sport award in 2017.

In one of her interviews (2022), she explains the motivations which helped her writing her current book *One for all,* or the "Three Musketeers" as readers preferred to name it. In this context, she states that […] we talked about ideas I had for other books. One of us said the word "retelling." And The Three Musketeers popped into my head. I had to pause the call so I could jot down the idea before I forgot! My favorite childhood movies were The Princess Bride and Mulan; I've been a competitive fencer, about loving fencing-what a joy!"(ibid)

### 4. Short Synopsis of *One for all*

*One for all* is a story that revolves around the life and times of the main character Tania De Batz, a young girl who is constantly in front of daily difficulties due to her constant fatigue and dizziness engendered by her **"Postural Tachycardia Syndrome"**. All along the story, we are told that she resides in the little French city of Lupiac, France with her parents. Her father is a well skilled musketeer who always liked training his daughter the art of musketeer from an early age, despite her health conditions and pathological syndromes. In fact, we learned that her father's training aimed of the fact that his daughter will grow up as an ordinary strong woman, who could rely on herself in the future, a self-made woman, and self independent as well. In addition to this, the girl also is portrayed as a homebody, a fragile girl who spends much of her time at home and has a modest beauty. Owing to the young girl's frequent exhaustion and dizziness, she feels alone and hesitant to meet with the outside world, thinking that other people will miss-treat her, and feel sympathy.

Hence, the death of her father, who was her only idol and supporter had deeply affected and marked the rest of her life. Few days after the burial of her father, her mother discovers a letter sent by her dead husband where he wished that his only daughter succeed to pursue her studies at "L'Académie des Mariées". For, her father's desire is that this kind of training enables her to learn how to become a strong and educated woman despite her inner complex attitudes. It is then within her father's wish that she comes to terms with her belief that she will never be able to fence and achieve her desired self-image. She chooses to comply with his request by packing up her belongings and moving away from her mother to attend the academy in another big city that is in Paris.

Once more, and after a protracted journey, she finally comprehends the allure of this capital city, where everything is enormous, exquisite, and one-of-a-kind. However, as soon as she gets to the training centre, she is greeted by a servant whose name is Jeanne. De Batz confused the latter for being Madame De Treville, the Academy's founder and hostess. Then, she depicted her staycation during which she wonders and worries about what will happen tomorrow morning. The next day, Tania meets Portia, a new acquaintance who is approximately her age and who assists her in locating Madame De Treville's study. She knows as soon as she walks into the room that Madame De Treville is the woman wearing modest yet exquisite clothing and exudes a strong aura.

Following their encounter, Tania realizes at last that this is a hidden institution for talented musketeers rather than a school training young ladies to become ideal wives. They are trained to appear feminine and lovely on the surface but vicious and dangerous on the inside, ready to fight and murder anybody who stands as a threat in their way. Their purpose is to safeguard their country, honor, and, most importantly, family from intruders. Beside her, Portia, Théa, and Aria, her newfound fellow friends. Committed to exposing the truth regarding her father's demise, she meets a brilliant, attractive man named Etienne who may know the truth about what actually happened that evening. Tania finds herself forced to decide between following her feelings or fulfilling her dreams and duty of becoming a true musketeer.

# III. Results and Findings

Throughout the dissertation, we attempted to read Raquel Jaramillo Palacio's *Wonder* (2017) and Lillie Lainoff's *One for all* (2022) by shedding light on the theme of disability, that is the body or mind impairment. The research has also uncovered the way the two authors have portrayed their main characters as being disabled people as well as the intersection of disability with the theme of marginalization and that of alienation.

After having introduced the core of the research, we have made use of Tobin Siebers' concept of disability as developed in his *Disability Theory* (2004). The theoretical framework has been completed by Peter Burke's theory of *Brothers and Sisters of Disabled Children* (2008) in order to bring more clarity to the intersection of disability of the main characters either at home, the domestic sphere, with their parents, siblings, or outside -public sphere- with their pairs as in school and other social surroundings.

At the outset, we engaged in underpinning the concept of disability in regards to August Pullman in *Wonder* and Tania De Batz in *One for all*. Actually, we have come to say that both protagonists were medically diagnosed as respectively suffering from "Craniofacial Abnormality" and "Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome". It is said that because of such syndromes, both characters are bullied, underestimated and had struggled a lot in order to achieve at the end a normal "ability" of living among others.

Additionally, part of the discussion has examined the social facade of disability and its relationship with social marginalization. This brings into light the fact that both of *Wonder* and *One for All* highlight society's impacts over disabled people both at the domestic and public circles as well. Hence, human values of compassion, help and inclusion were brought into the fore, since the two characters have readapted themselves in their immediate social environments. For example, August Pullman succeeded to overwhelm his pathology by joining the Beecher-Prep-Public school, while De Batz come to surpass her inner feeling of alienation as she was accepted in L'Académie Des Mariées.

Overall, the two aforementioned works argue for and are evidences of disability concerns; of disabled individuals or characters that stand to represent all those people who were born with the body and mind impairments. Both works give also a portrait of people who grapple and attempt to lead a 'normal' life far from physical and mental difficulties. In doing so, the two selected authors succeeded to write about subjects that are meaningful to them and that make a sense for their personal lives or experiences.

# IV. Discussion

## Introduction

The following discussion is meant to make a comparative study of R J. Palacio’s *Wonder* (2012) and Lillie Lainoff’s *One for all* (2022). In fact, by highlighting the similarities and differences between these two narratives with regard to the theme of disability, I have mainly gone to the process of examining the literary representation of the theme of disability as depicted by both authors in the aforementioned works. To cover this study, I have principally relied on Tobin Siebers's theory entitled *Disability Theory* (2008) and Peter Burke’s *Brothers and Sisters of Disabled Children* (2004). My research will focus on the representation of disability in relation to the two main characters; August Pullman and Tania De Batz with a particular emphasis on the typology of disability as well as its intersection with marginalization and alienation.

In more precise terms, the research discussion is going to be divided into two chapters. As far as the first chapter is concerned, it will delve into the discussion of the two respective main characters, August Pullman and Tania De Batz of *Wonder* and *One for all* as portrayed by J. Palacio and Lainoff. The chapter also investigates the type of disability the two characters suffer from and see whether both of them have the same diagnosis, and thus needs the same treatment, as defined in the medical jargon of disability concerns. For the second chapter, the main goal is to uncover the intersection of disability with that of marginalization. Its main concern is to see the socio-cultural impacts of disability both at the domestic and outside environment as well.

# Chapter One: Characterization and Disability in Raquel J. Palacio's *Wonder* and Lillie Lainoff's *One for all*

Before fully embarking to the heart of the chapter, we think that it is very important first to examine the literary representation of the two protagonists as respectively portrayed in the two books. On the one hand, Raquel J. Palacio *Wonder* tells the story of a young boy of ten-years-old whose name is August Pullman or "Auggie" as some characters liked to call him in the novel. Throughout the whole book; we are told that Auggie is a young boy who lives in New York City with his parents and sister Olivia or "Via". This little kid is also described by the author as being a bold, intelligent, and witty despite his young age. However, we discover also the fact that this little boy is unlike the rest of children within his belonging society as he was born with a kind of facial deformity, who had gone through many surgeries in order to become a "normal" boy, and thus looking like other persons of his age. Actually, the facial deformity through which August suffers rendered his life so difficult as for instance, finding many difficulties to find friends or co-live and co-exist with the rest of the outside society. In this regards, earlier in the book, August Pullman describes himself in the following words:

> I know I'm not an ordinary ten-year-old kid. I mean, sure, I do ordinary things. I eat ice cream. I ride my bike. I play ball. I have an Xbox. Stuff like that makes me ordinary. I guess. And I feel ordinary. Inside. But I know ordinary kids don't make other ordinary kids run away screaming in playgrounds. I know ordinary kids don't get stared at wherever they go. (Palacio, 2012.p.3)

From the above quotation, we noticed the fact that even if August describes himself as an ordinary kid, but also recognizes his fate of being "abnormal" as a deformed boy in front of other kids or in the eyes of other people who surround his life either at home with his parents and sister or outside home that is in school, street or wherever he goes.

This leads us to say that this boy suffers actually from what is known in medicine as the pathology of Treacher Collins, that is a Syndrome related to patients who were born with facial deformity like undeveloped physiology of the bones either in the cheek or jaw zones. August says that “about two months before I was born, the doctors realized there was something wrong with my face, but they didn’t think it was going to be bad. They told Mom and Dad I had a cleft palate and some other stuff going on. They called it small anomalies” (p.6). This syndrome leads generally the patient to grow with downward slanting eyes, undeveloped cheek bones and other pathologies to cite but a few. In the novel, therefore, we are told that Auggie received many surgeries in order to look ordinary, so that he can re-integrate in the outside society without looking down to him as he declares,

> People think I haven’t gone to school because of the way I look, but it’s not that. It’s because of all the surgeries I’ve had. Twenty-seven since I was born. The bigger ones happened before, I was even four years old, so I don’t remember those. But I’ve had two or three surgeries every year since then (some big, some small). (p.4)

It has to be observed that Auggie is first suffering from a medical model of disability before suffering from the social model. In this context and as far as the field of disability studies is concerned, the theorist and sociologist, Michael Oliver (1983) considers that the medical model of disability appears first within disabled people before the social model. In other words, the social model of disability is a pure construction of society, while the medical model is a genetic one in some cases that needs medical interventions and assistance. In the theory of Burke’s *Brothers and Sisters of Disability Children (2004),* Oliver observes that the world is not simply divided, where considering medical intervention is not effective, major surgery may be necessary to improve mobility and posture, for example, and even though this may produce strong feelings from some. Some individuals who are physically disabled hold the opinion that those who are disabled should not attempt to function in society as usual. This response results from considering medical progress as a means of overcoming disability by treating the impaired individual who is made to feel abnormal and incapable, as opposed to considering the impairment as a difference that should be comprehended by those who have already experienced the condition. In this context, Burke in his categorization of the medical concepts of disability states that: ‘the medical model on the whole emphasizes the person's medical condition, illness or disability as being different from the norm.’(p.19) from this then, we guess that medical disability is first perceived as a health-condition of a particular person, before being a social one.  This model also focuses more on the appearance of the disabled person, his or her physical state and they are seen as abnormal and different from other people. In *Wonder* for example, the main character of the book, August Pullman is described as different from other kids because of his deformity as it is reported in the novel:

> mom always had this habit of asking me how something felt on a scale of one to ten. It started after I had my jaw surgery, when I couldn’t talk because my mouth was wired shut. They had taken a piece of bone from my hip bone to insert into my chin to make it look more normal, so I was hurting in a lot of different places. (p.54)

The above quote contends that the protagonist Auggie has gone through a jaw surgery in order to look more normal and finish with his facial deformity. However, we are told also that this same Jaw surgery caused him also more pain in various parts of his body, and the mom uses the scale to decrease the intensity of August's pain or discomfort. It gives the mom a way to gauge and help manage August's pain levels during the recovery process.

In order to sustain more the above idea, Siebers in his theory argues that “the medical model defines disability as an individual defect lodged in the person, a defect that must be cured or eliminated if the person is to achieve full capacity as a human being.”(p.3) Thus, we understand that Siebers (2008) sees the medical model as emphasizing on diagnosing and treating the impairment or condition that is considered a deviation from the norm. The ultimate goal is to cure or eliminate this defect, allowing the individual to achieve what is perceived as full capacity as a “normal” human being. This is the same defect which August wanted to eliminate through his surgery.

Disability has always been a medical concern since people have tried to overcome the stigma associated with injury, death, and disease. Disability studies as symbolic networks are quite recent. In contrast to the medical approach, the developing field of disability studies views disability as a result of social injustice rather than an individual defect, requiring major changes to the deep-seated beliefs and social surroundings instead of the cure or removal of the defective person. In other words, the medical model historically framed disability as an individual pathology, focusing on impairments and seeking solutions in medical interventions, treatments, or cures. However, the paradigm shift towards disability studies introduces a socio-cultural perspective, emphasizing that disability is not solely a medical issue but a product of social and environmental factors.

Moreover, in *Wonder* the protagonist has always felt lonely and rejected by the judgmental society. Due to his pathology, called “Craniofacial Abnormality” Auggie has been homeschooled. In fact, this kind of disability refers to an atypical development or structure of the skull (cranium) and face. These abnormalities can be congenital; in other words, they are present at birth, and they often involve malformations or irregularities in the bones and tissues of the head and face. Examples of craniofacial abnormalities include cleft lip and palate, where there is a gap or opening in the upper lip or roof of the mouth; craniosynostosis, a condition where the bones of the skull fuse prematurely, affecting the shape of the head, and other syndromes or disorders that impact the development of facial features and structures.

This syndrome is associated to August Pullman in *Wonder*, when for example, his mother decided to kiss all of his deformed components as he says in the following:

> she kissed me all over my face. She kissed my eyes that came down too far. She kissed my cheeks that looked punched in. She kissed my tortoise mouth. She said soft words that I know were meant to help me, but words can't change my face. (p.60)

In the above citation, August is describing the care, sympathy and love of his mother, who kisses him on different parts of his face, even on features that looks different, like his eyes, cheeks, and mouth. August appreciates his mother's affection, but he also realizes that her kind words, meant only to comfort him, but cannot change the way his face looks. He acknowledges that his physical appearance is something that words, behaviour, and conduct alone cannot alter.

Furthermore, August's sister, Olivia, or Via as also called in the novel, has in fact a loving attitude toward her brother. She conveys her lovely nature for her brother as when she says for instance that "I've always understood that August is special and has special needs." (p. 82). This suggests her great awareness and care regarding her brother August, who is not like other children and thus requires particular attention within his family because of his sensibility as regards his facial deformity. Therefore, he needs more compassion, support among his relatives. In essence, Via understands that August is unique and require resources that other children do not have in order to grow up and thrive. Being the older, it is evident to us that she has a kind of a protective feeling for him. In addition to this, she is also described as someone who really understands her parent's caution and behaviour with her brother never complaining about their lack of attention to her, indicating that despite her youth, she is a responsible self-made girl with a strong personality. Via expresses this attitude within the following words:

> if I wanted Mom and Dad to watch me play soccer, I knew that nine out of ten times they'd miss it because they were busy shuttling August to speech therapy or physical or a new specialist or a surgery.(p.82)

Although she feels sometimes neglected by her parents, Via did not complain or blame the occasionally absence of her parents, as when for instance practicing some kinds of games and sports. She is, in fact, aware that her parents are always busy shuttling August to make therapy, or physical surgery. Via's reaction confirms Peter Burke's (2004) words that disability is a family matter when one member is disabled (p.129)

We are also informed in by the author that August cannot describe precisely his disability, thinking that other people cannot also do it because all what they can say could not exactly make a clear-cut description of his unhealthy condition. It is then his own sister, Via, who gives us in details an effective description of his medical condition by saying:

> his eyes are about an inch below where they should be on his face, almost too halfway down his cheeks. They slant downward at an extreme angle, almost like diagonal slits that someone cut into his face, and the left one is noticeably lower than the right one.[...] his nose is disproportionately big for his face, and kind of fleshy. His head is pinched in on the sides where the ears should be, like someone used giant pliers and crushed the middle part of his face. He doesn't have cheekbones. There are deep creases running down both sides of nose to his mouth, which gives his waxy appearance. (Palacio,2012 p.88)

From the above passage, Via gives more details about August's Craniofacial Deformity by indicating the placement of his eyes, the size and form of his nose, and the lack of noticeable cheekbones.

In similar ways to Palacio's novel, *Wonder*, Lillie Lainoff's *One for all can also be read within* the literary network of disability concerns. Actually, the aforementioned new novel that is published in 2022 revolves around the life of Tania De Batz, as the main protagonist through whom the author sheds light on the theme of disability, marginalization and social alienation as well. Thus, we read in the book that this young girl was biologically born with a health problem called as the syndrome of "Postural Tachycardia Syndrome". The latter causes the little young girl permanent and perpetual fatigue and dizziness, that rendered her life somehow difficult and a challenging one. In this story, we are told that all she wanted is just being a fencer like her father despite her health troubles.

De Batz is described in the book as a frail and fragile young girl with modest beauty who spends most of her time alone at home. She is frequently encountering moral weaknesses and always feels dizzy which leads to her physical and emotional paralysis. She struggles a lot when it comes to interact and communicate with other people, because she fears that other people will mock her and mistreat her and have pity for her. Right at the very beginning of the book, and when her mother first introduced her to doctors in order to make a clear-cut diagnosis of her sickness, Tania De Batz experienced her first physical and emotional paralysis by saying that: "What do they call someone like me? Fragile. Sickly. Weak, at least that's what doctors one, two, and three told my mother when she presented me to them at age twelve"(p.13). In this context, she is reflecting on how doctors have described her in the past. She says that doctors consider her as a "fragile, sickly and weak" girl. This suggests that De Batz has faced a lot of difficulties related to her health conditions that have caused medical experts to see her as a physically delicate and sensitive or vulnerable, which brings attention on the impact of medical labels on how she sees herself, and how others perceive her.

In other words, and likewise Palacio's protagonist of *Wonder*, Tania De Batz in the paths of August suffers also from the syndrome of **"Postural Tachycardia Syndrome"**. For,

**POTS** is a medical concept used in the medical jargon of child-disability. This disease is distinguished by an unsteady increase in heart rate that follows standing or sitting up which is believed to be caused by dysfunction in the autonomic nervous system. Moreover, the author of *One for all,* Lillie Lainoff defines it in the following words by saying that:

> POTS is most often characterized by a drop in blood pressure, accompanied by an increase heart rate, upon standing to heart rate increase of at least thirty beats per minute in adults and forty beats per minute in adolescents. The jump in heart rate is the body's response to the blood pressure drop; the heart is trying to pump blood faster to get it through the body. Common symptoms of POTS include dizziness, brain fog, fatigue, headaches, nausea, heart palpitations and many others. Doctors say POTS symptoms are most similar to congestive heart failure symptoms. (Lainoff, 2022.p. 391)

The above mentioned symptoms are the ones associated to Tania De Batz biological health-sickness. This is why all along her daily life she feels dizzy, trembling, and fatigue, as she states in the novel: "my bedroom used to be Papa's library. But that was before I became sick, before stairs were no longer an option for my dizzy body, my climbing legs" (p. 15). In fact, De Batz's words epitomize the heavy impacts of her biological illness which affected her everyday activities and mobility. She is unable to go to places that she used to hear about suggesting that her illness has forced her to stay alone at home and live a life of a disabled young girl.

Unfortunately for her then, and according to global medical statistics, such as the medical center of Mayo Clinic, there is no a cure for this specific health-condition. So, she has to live with her sickness and accept her own fate. However, it may be controlled with lifestyle changes and proper medications. Also, POTS can only be soothed with a variety of medications. These treatments may not be as effective if the patients are not also making healthy nutritional options, physical activities or exercising, wearing compression garments, and getting enough sleep. This suggests again that although numerous medications are available to treat this phenomenon, their effectiveness is questionable. Instead, adopting a specific lifestyle is necessary to better control the disease. In addition, it is advised for these patients to participate in a particular sport. It is obvious that no suitable treatment exists.

As we have said in the theoretical framework of the present research, **Postural Tachycardia Syndrome** is a medical concept used in disability studies. Burke (2004) argues that the medical model of disability focuses more on the understanding of how someone's health is different from what is considered normal. The medical model, for instance, tries to comprehend and treat the difference that occurs when most people walk normally while others struggles to do so, as it is the case with Tania who struggles a lot for having a normal walk and that stairs are longer an option for her dizzy body or her climbing legs. In this regard, Tania de Batz says:

> normal girls didn’t have to grasp the sides of their chairs before standing. Normal girls didn’t see everything drowning in pools of black ink didn’t feel their hearts screaming against their rib cages, didn’t have legs that trembled before collapsing underneath them. (p.14)

In this quote, we can see that De Batz compares herself with her own pairs as who are normal. She compares her medical conditions with girls who are in good health; she states that normal girls did not need to grab the sides of their chair before getting up for example; and she is aware that she is unable to do many things that are considered normal for everyone because of her medical health condition.

As indicated by Lainoff in her notes, at the end of the book *One for all* (2022, p.389) the disorder known as **Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome** has been originally recognized in 1993. However, patients with it developed this pattern of behavior much earlier. She illustrates further this point by using the American phrase “Soldier’s Heart Syndrome” to demonstrate how Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) has been identified following the American Civil War (1861-1865), indicating that illnesses existed even then which were not fully recognized by doctors. We may understand that they have continued to disregard POTS because they do not yet completely understand the disease, given the era in which De Batz lives in this book.

Instead of describing her illness, the main character presents us with her symptoms of how this disease has begun, which are obviously POTS-like. In this quote, for example, we find that:

> the dizziness hadn't happened suddenly. I didn't wake up one morning and, instead of leaping out of bed bright-eyed and ready to start the day, fall over in a dazed stupor. No, it was slow, careful, pernicious. It crept in, only soft waves at first. A bit of blurred vision while playing in the market place, an ache that whined in my head. Then came the weakness in my legs upon standing. (p. 13-14)

Tania is explaining how her dizziness did not emerge suddenly upon waking up. Rather, it has appeared silently and quietly. She first noticed slight signs such as headaches and blurry vision while playing. Upon standing up, she began to experience weakness in her legs. This means that the beginning of dizziness has been gradual rather than sudden. Clearly, these symptoms are related to Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome which has been unknown at that time.

In regards to Siebers's (2008) theory, he emphasizes the significance of being normal by connecting disability to the medical model and human history. He states that: “Disability has been a medical matter for as long as human beings have sought to escape this stigma of death, disease, and injury” (p. 03). Actually, people have traditionally considered the field of disability as primarily a medical problem. This implies that in order to try to avoid the unpleasant emotions and certainties of life as concerns for instance human illness and death, society frequently concentrated on treating disability like diseases or injuries. Disability had been always viewed as something that needed to be fixed or cured, not as a normal aspect of life. This strategy attempted to remove the stigma associated with illness, injury, and death from people suffering from disability syndromes.

In *One for all* then, Tania De Batz wants to make the readers know how much she goes through each morning to begin a day that should have been easy for other ordinary individuals. Here, she states: “even as my legs trembled, even as my vision narrowed. He leered at me, at my unsteady legs; my pulse crashed in my throat.”( p.9). Tania's conveys a sense of vulnerability and highlights her physical and emotional distress in a tense situation; the legs shaking and eyes narrowing suggest a physical reaction to the extended standing; the description of the pulse crashing in the throat emphasizes how her illness prevents her from maintaining her on the ground (ibid).

As regards also the novel, Tania had never referred to her own illness or even given it a name; she has instead listed her symptoms which are precisely related to **Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome.** Additionally, Lillie Lainoff (2022) herself made reference to it nearly at the concluding chapter of the book. She says: “I retreated to clutch the bedposts. My head bowed, my feet purpling gray, as they always were when the waves of dizziness were at their strongest.”(p.16). First, Tania refers to pulling in to grip the bedposts which are a physical gesture for stability and support. The second is when she bends her head and looks at her purplish-gray feet, which is an obvious sign of severe nausea and dizziness.

Bringing the present chapter to its end, we may say that both of Palacio’s and Lainoff’s respective disabled protagonists have nearly come to overwhelm their medical pathologies, limitations and the negative inconsideration of people over their physical or mind impairments. In their quest for the “ideology of ability”, they have, in fact, come to embrace their new personal identity and fate with resilience and faith despite their disabled conditions. To say it more explicitly, August Pullman in *Wonder* has succeeded to gain the respect of his relatives, friends, and schoolmates with his brilliance, courage and generosity, while, Tania De Batz in *One for All* has proved her own worth and value among her new found sisters in L’Académie Des Mariées as she becomes stronger and autonomous.

# Second Chapter: The Intersection of Disability, Marginalization and Alienation in *Wonder* and *One for all*

The aim of the following chapter is to examine generally how outside society and particularly family circles treat disabled children as portrayed respectively in Palacio's *Wonder* and Lainoff's *One for all*. In order to do so, the chapter uncovers the relationship between the main characters in the two aforementioned novels, by putting emphasis on the social aspect of marginalization and alienation in relation to disability. For, we believe that by doing so, we come really to understand family impacts and by extension society's influence on disabled children who feel marginalization, isolation and alienation in their lives. Firstly, we will focus on Palacio's protagonist; August Pullman, and how the latter experienced social challenges either at home or outside such as rejection, isolation because of his facial deformity, called also "Treacher Collins Syndrome" (TCS). Secondly, we will also shed light to the way Lainoff portrayed her own protagonist, Tania De Batz, by exploring the societal impacts on this girl because of her "Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome" (POTS).

Within the first part of the present chapter, the focus will be put on the way Palacio described her main protagonist August Pullman in facing the various social challenges either at home or outside like social rejection, and isolation due to his face deformity. Hence, before fully going into the examination of the above ideas, we think that it is very important to say that disabled people like August Pullman have both intrinsic and extrinsic worth in the world to which they belong. Their physical or mental impairments are not necessary deficits. But rather they eventually turn to be sources of knowledge; a valuable knowledge that can change and forge social considerations on disabled people in general. This is what Allison P. Hobgood reminds about in her book devoted to disability studies by arguing that "disabled people have both intrinsic and extrinsic worth […] people's mental and physical differences are not necessarily deficits. They instead can function as invaluable sources that create knowledge"  (p1). In this context, and as far as August Pullman is concerned then, we are told early in the novel that he is aware of his physical/facial disability, as he knows that he is different from other children of his immediate surroundings; he instead prefers always staying alone at home, so as to avoid the social stereotypes. This feeling of solitude and voluntary isolation from the outside world is well expressed in the following quote:

> if I found a magic lamp and I could have one wish, I would wish that I had a normal face that no one ever noticed at all. I would wish that I could walk down the street without people seeing me and then doing that look away thing. Here's what I think: the only reason I'm not ordinary is that no one else sees me that way. (p.3)

From the above citation, we come to realize that even August acknowledges his facial deficiency. So, in his inner mind he wishes only to stay home far from social stereotypes; he dreams of having a "normal" face that would avoid him social gaze and attention. He seeks for a "normal" appearance so that he will be able to do his everyday activities without having to deal with people gazing at him or giving him uncomfortable looks. This also involves and uncovers the impacts of societal attitudes and prejudices on people with visible differences by reflecting his desire to be accepted and treated like everyone else. Moreover, Auggie's wish is an urging call which enhances his struggles with his own subjective self, who seeks for an ideal social world that would accept him as he is. In doing so, August is in fact looking to achieve what Tobin Siebers (2008) calls "*The ideology of Ability*". This ability is the one that can be offered for disabled people like August to live and exist in a social world far from body-mind impairments, and cultural perception of "normalcy". In this context, it is very important to repeat for a second time that Tobin Siebers (2008) says when talking about disability by stating that:

> the study of disability as a symbolic network is of more recent date. Unlike the medical approach, the emerging field of disability studies defines disability not as an individual defect but as the product of social injustice, one that requires not the cure or elimination of the defective person but significant changes in the social and built environment. (p.3)

Despite the fact that the network study of disability is of a recent date, its main aim then is not only limited to the medical approach but also to a social one. For, the latter allows people to take into account the social environment so as to change the way we consider disabled people like August Pullman whom is described as being rejected by the social order to which he belongs, this is why he is always dreaming of changing his own facial deformity. One interesting example of marginalization and alienation in Palacio's *Wonder* is the fact that August Pullman inspires more fear, repulsion, pity, or minimizing among people either at home or outside in school.

Before moving more to see how society perceives and conceives the disabled life of Auggie, we think that it is of importance first to examine Auggie’s relationship with his parents and sister at home. Throughout the novel, it comes very clear to the reader that Auggie’s sister Via is the one who is always next to her brother, as she sometimes develops a protective loving attitude for him. Via is very attentive to how other people look to Auggie outside:

> I never used to see August the way other people saw him. I knew he didn’t look exactly normal, but I really didn’t understand why strangers seemed so choked when they saw him. Horrified. Sickened. Scared. There are so many words I can use to describe the looks on people’s faces. And for a long time I didn’t get it. I’d just get mad. Mad when they stated. Mad when

> they looked away. “What the heck are you looking at?” I’d say to people even grown-ups. (p.85)

From this above quote, we can understand that Via's description conveys a sort of confusion and annoyance at the reactions people have to August's appearance. She admits the fact that her brother is quite physically different from other children, but she becomes more upset as when people made a mockery about her brother or showed him disrespect. This implies that Via was initially unaware of the effects of societal attitudes and prejudices against individuals who are visibly different. Also, it shows how much empathy and awareness she has gained toward her brother’s condition. Overall, it emphasizes the value of acceptance, compassion regarding social norms within disability and appearance. This is the idea to which also Peter Burke in *Brothers and Sisters of Disabled Children* wanted to achieve by initiating the immediate surroundings of disabled family to accept first their child at home, before being accepted by others in society.

Nevertheless, when it comes to August’s emotions or thoughts about his parents and sister, he always feels like nobody sees or considers him as a normal boy. August feels that even with their love and support, they sometimes treat him differently due to his body deformity. He wishes they would just consider him in his real value, as an ordinary kid who goes through the same emotions and experiences as everyone else. August feels invisible and alone as he considers his sister’s behavior as one of compassion and pity. This serves in one way or another to argue that despite having the best of intentions (the ones of Via) they can subconsciously lead to a feeling of alienation, dependence experienced by those who are different from them or as Tobin Siebers (2008) says “the ideology of ability is at its simplest preference for able-bodiedness. At its most radical, it defines the baseline by which humanness is determined, setting the measure of body and mind that gives or denies human status to individual persons" (p08).  Auggie in fact expresses his lack of individuality at the beginning of the novel by saying that:

> Via doesn't see me as ordinary. She says she does, but if I were ordinary, she wouldn't feel like she needs to protect me as much. And Mom and Dad don't see me as ordinary, either. They see me as extraordinary. I think the only person in the world who realizes how ordinary I am is me. (p. 3)

Again, we contend that even though Auggie's parents and sister care more about him, yet he is always struggling with his inner psyche for forging his own individual personality. He knows deep down in his mind that he is alone and isolated. For him, no one can comprehend his condition except himself. Additionally, August's psychological disputes about his identity which serves as a reminder of the importance of one's own self-perception and the influence of social norms on one's own well-being.

In order to explain more, we have already said earlier that Auggie's sister, Via is very attentive in behaving with her brother August and loves him deeply. However, there are moments when she gets the same strange feelings of horror, pity and repulsion as that of others. The following long quote resumes very well those particular moments:

> coming home after four weeks felt very strange at first. I remember very vividly stepping through the door and seeing August running over to welcome me home, and for this tiny fraction of a moment I saw him not the way I've always seen him, but the way other people see him. It was only a flash, an instant while he was hugging me, so happy that I was home, but it surprised me because I'd never seen him like that before. And I'd never felt what I was feeling before, either: a feeling I hated myself for having the moment I had it. But as he was kissing me with all his heart, all I could see was the drool coming down his chin. And suddenly there I was, like all those people who would

> stare or look away. Horrified, Sickened, Scared. Thankfully, that only lasted for a second: the moment I heard August laugh his raspy little laugh, it was over. […] ( p.86)

After staying with her grandmother for four weeks, Via's perception of her brother had completely changed, and she begins to see August the same way as others do. She feels the same experience that she has had when she briefly catches a glimpse of August’s appearance and she feels the same terror, disgust, and fear that others do when they see her brother. This indicates clearly that Olivia realizes she should not have contained negative feelings towards her only brother at first glimpse.

As said earlier, disability is not only a medical condition or body-mind impairments, also a social conduct that affects how people perceive and deal with these impairments. In other words, being disabled is not just a state of physical appearance of the individual; of his or her physical stature, but it is a set of attitudes, of behaviors and cultural constructs developed by the rest of society on disabled people. In this regard, Peter Burke in his theory *Brothers and Sisters of Disabled Children* sheds light more on the complicated connections between siblings and the significance of disability in their familial bonds. His works provides alternatives for more effective siblings support and advances our understanding of the real life experiences of brothers and sisters. Burke presents these social alternatives and cause them as “disability by association” which means that:

> siblings within the family may also be involved in caring responsibilities, looking after their disabled brother or sister, and consequently the role of the siblings as carers is also discussed but separately from that parent as the primary or main carers. (p.41)

The quote above explains how family members, particularly brothers and sisters, may associate and assist in caring for a disabled sibling. Siblings are able to take on a significant amount of responsibility for caring for their disabled sibling. This could be achieved by giving them emotional support, affective considerations, assisting them with everyday tasks, or simply spending time with them and above all things associating them. Even if the parents have an important role in assisting and protecting their disabled child; siblings also have the responsibility of taking care and understand the fact that their brother or sister suffers and struggles a lot from disability.

Peter Burke's theory *Brothers and Sisters of Disabled Children* explores the relationships between non-disabled siblings and those living with disabilities within families. According to this theory, disability becomes an integral part of the entire family system rather than solely affecting the individual with the impairment. Burke emphasizes that understanding the experience of siblings requires examining the broader context of family dynamics and the impact of disability on these interactions. Therefore, the arrival of a new born baby, especially if the baby has a disability, can significantly affect the dynamics of the family and the relationships between siblings, as Busfield (1987) comments about Burke's theory *Brothers and sisters of disabled children*:

> the birth of any baby will have an impact on the lives of all he family which includes siblings […] at the very least, a new baby is an extra focus on interest for all family members, but a new baby in the family is also a source of potential stress, because the family is experiencing the effects of a major change to its constitutions. (p.42)

This means that when a new baby arrives, the whole family changes; whether the baby looks normal or disabled. On the one hand, this may have a positive impact on the whole family, because there is a new member to look out for; it brings happiness and joy to them, and on the other it may have a negative impact on the older siblings when they feel like isolated and neglected since the new born baby is going to have all the attention and care. In fact all children should be treated equally and cared for just like every other member of the family. In other words, siblings of a disabled child may become troubled by the parents for neglecting their needs in favor of their other children. Such a situation draws sometimes parents to differentiate between their children. This feeling of carelessness and lack of consideration is the one that is experienced by Via in *Wonder*, who declares later in the book that:

> August is the Sun. Me and Mom and Dad are planets orbiting the Sun. The rest of our family and friends are asteroids and comets floating around the planets orbiting the Sun. The only celestial body that does not orbit August the Sun is Daisy the dog and that's only because to her little doggy eyes August face doesn't look very different from any other human's face. To Daisy all our faces look alike, as flat and pale as the moon. (p.82)

It becomes clear then that August becomes the sun around which all the stars turn. As a disabled child, he is the focal interest of all the family members, while the healthy ones (the case of Via) are of a second rate.

Moreover, children with disabilities are viewed by society as unique individuals, potentially having different needs and abilities. It is crucial to embrace diversity and offer assistance for their personal development. People might have negative attitudes or stereotypes, seeing disabled children as different or less capable. This can lead to exclusion, discrimination, or pity. As shown in the novel, it is only in the fest of Halloween, for example, that August feels and looks as a "normal" child. For, in such sacred festive days everyone looks like the other without body-mind impairments and differences as all people wear masks and disguised uniforms:

> for me, Halloween is the best holiday in the world. It even beats Christmas. I get to dress up in a costume. I get

> to wear a mask. I get to go around like every other kid with a mask and nobody thinks I look weird. Nobody takes a second look. Nobody notices me. Nobody knows me. I wish everyday could be Halloween. We could all wear masks all the time. Then we could around and get to know each other before we got to see what we looked like under the mask. (p. 73)

Halloween, a sacred holiday associated with disguises and costumes is particularly a very important and meaningful day to August, since it gives him the opportunity to keep out his true identity; a secret from his peers. He believes that he can fit in with other kids without anyone noticing or rejecting him. This sense of mystery provided by the mask helps Auggie to feel accepted and normal around his classmates. Unfortunately, the bad side of this day is that Auggie has discovered the true face of his classmate who pretends to be a close friend. Everyone has disguised differently, this is what allowed August to hear what Jack Will has been talking about behind his back with the other kids, while treating him with hurtful words:

> - “Actually,” said the mummy, “what he really looks like is one of those shrunken heads. Have you ever seen those? He looks exactly like that.”
>
> - “I think he looks like an orc.”
>
> -“Oh yeah!”
>
> - “If I looked like that,” said the Julian voice, kind of laughing, -
> -“I swear to God, I’d put a hood over my face every day.”
>
> -“I’ve thought about this a lot,” said the second mummy, sounding serious, “and i really think... if I looked like him, seriously, I think that I’d kill myself.”
>
> - [...] “I can’t imagine looking in the mirror every day and seeing myself like that. It would be too awful. And getting stared at all the time.” (p. 77)

The above conversation and dialogue reveals a certain truth about society’s conception of disabled people. It shows how people pay more attention to outside and physical appearances. The first mummy emphasizes how strange or unsettling Auggie's face looks by comparing it to a shrunken head. In addition, another character compares Auggie to an orc, a mythical creature known for its horrible appearance. This indicates a lack of awareness and empathy for Auggie's emotions. The second mummy’s words are more injuring; as he says that if he has Auggie's appearance, he would think about ending his life because he cannot even think about looking like that every day and attracting constant attention to himself. Such kind of attitudes and behaviors had deep impacts on Auggie’s relation with his classmates and life as well. For Allison P. Hobgood (2021), society should conceive disability as an acknowledging gain, which must be respected as powerful and productive, because it allows the disabled individual to build “ an important identity […] that incites important, alternative ways of knowing and being” (p03)

According to Siebers (2008) people with disabilities are often perceived as minorities in society especially constructionists because of the challenges they face. In many areas of their lives, including social inclusion, the workplace, and schools, they encounter many prejudices, discrimination, and restrictions. In addition, prejudices and attitudes held by society about individuals with disabilities contribute to their marginalization by limiting opportunities and promoting inequality. People with disabilities are perceived as a minority group because they have been subjected to marginalization and discrimination in society. Siebers explains how identity of disabled people is constructed by society by stating that:

> identity is socially produced means in theory that minority groups like the disabled may challenge their own identities, allowing greater freedom and mobility in the social world. In practice; however, the social model does not seem to be as viable an option for the identity politics of people with

> disabilities as one might think because social constructionists remain in the end highly skeptical about form of identity. (p. 73)

This quotation indicates that identities including those of marginalized groups like the disabled are shaped by society. This implies also that impaired people may be able to question and reinterpret their own subjective self, which may allow them greater freedom and social opportunities. However, disabled people do not seem to benefit as much from the social model of disability, which places more emphasis on societal barriers than on personal disabilities. This is due to the skepticism of social constructionists which uphold and shape identity mainly that category of rigid identity (ibid).

In parallel ways to the above discussion, this second part of the present chapter will be devoted to Lillie Lainoff's description of her main character Tania De Batz by exploring the intersection of social marginalization, and isolation engendered by the syndrome of Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia from which the protagonist suffers. Prioritizing then our investigation over the social portrayal of Tania De Batz will require us to look into her entire family, which consists primarily of her parents. All along the book, we read that Tania's father dreamed that his daughter will become a fencer in the future in order to honor his position, while her mother thinks her daughter is weak and that her dream is impossible and pointless. She thinks that it is better for her daughter to learn the skills of life destined for women, rather than physical fencing which would not serve her in the future:

> I don't want you training her anymore. No more fencing promises me. I know you want to impart your talent, but you can't expect to live vicariously through her without consequences. I can't have her wasting every waking moment, all her energy, on something that will never aid her in the future. She doesn't need to know how to protect herself she needs to learn skills. Women's skills. For when she is…"she stopped, by I knew what she was going to say: when she is *married*. (p.15)

It seems from the above that Tania’s mother was more in favor of teaching her daughter women’s skills, because society had already established the basic rules that govern the world of men and women as having distinct social roles.

In order to develop more the idea of social marginalization and explain how Tania De Batz is alienated at some extent by her own parents is in fact by developing Peter Burke’s concept of “carers”. Thus, considering Tania’s complex life and complicated health conditions, as suffering from POTS, her parents had always assisted, helped and had always taken “**care”** of her in order to be a strong and a happy girl. Yet, sometimes their parents feel upset and wanted someone else to give them help to carry their daughter who becomes a heavy burden for them. In fact, they were looking for an ideal husband who will take care of their daughter. It is in this sense that Peter Burke (2004) argues that the term ‘carer’ in disability studies comes to mean not only the parents’ or siblings’ care. As such, ‘carer’ is generally used “to mean parents, although it could mean carers who are not the child’s parents; but parents are used synonymously” (p.41). So far, we come now to know that Tania’s parents believe that their daughter is physically weak and she will always need support and encouragement. Basically, understanding Tania’s character and her social interactions in the novel requires an understanding of how her disability might affect her. Burke (2004) states that:

> understanding the world of the child helps to identify family situations from a child’s view and in so doing aids our determination of reasonable and realistic goals. Children with disabilities are often very dependent on others (but not necessarily so) and thus have an external locus of control. (p. 31)

The above quote sheds light to the fact that disabled children like Tania De Batz are always in need of social support, help and assistance. Their dependency on others is something which is even recognized by them as it is the case with Lainoff's character, who admits her frailty and her own incapacity of leading an independent life like the one of the other girls of her age:

> maybe I didn't know, truly, what normal girls did and did not do. But what I did know? The way how, under my mother's gaze, I shrank to something so small, so insignificant, I wasn't sure I could recognize myself in the mirror. And oh, how I wanted her to see me as someone strong and worthy of her arm always supporting mine. How I wanted to be a reflection of her carefully controlled blaze. (p. 14-15)

However, unlike his wife, Tania's father, the fencer; is described as being a lovely and confident father who always encouraged his daughter to go beyond the societal challenges. With a positive tone, he always viewed her as rather a blessing girl and not a cursing one despite her physical impairment. In doing so, he always tended to assist her with various games and hobbies, as sending her for instance to "L'Académie des Mariées"; a training center to form perfect housewives and a secret location used to train female Musketeers.

Actually, sending his daughter to a training center is eventually an interesting opportunity to get rid of her dizziness and fatigue. For him, the training center will enable her to have self control over herself and her life. Again, Peter Burke (2004) reminds us how it is very important for a disabled child to have such control on themselves as it helps them to "take responsibility for their own actions" (p. 30). Unfortunately, we read in the book that her father had died, as she started to accept her illness with the aid of Madame De Treville and her newfound friends.

Moreover, once being admitted in this training center, Tania's life had completely changed. She is now no longer under the protection of her father. She instead has to rely only on herself, in the small city of Lupiac, where everyone knows each other. But things did not pass as expected. She now becomes the target of societal gaze and misunderstanding because of her disability. In Lupiac, she is rather called “Pauvre Tania”, which brought her more pity, fear and social rejection and above all things, disabled ‘Albeisim’. Such range of negative reactions had given birth to a sort of social stigma in the mind of Tania. This case is the one that is affirmed by Allison P. Hobgood (2021) in her assessment of disability studies devoted to Renaissance literature, by arguing that “albeism incites disability stigma and prescribes a very limited range of reactions to body-mind difference_ most often fear, contempt, and pity.” (p.1) Hobgood is saying that because of albeism, society tends to treat people with disabilities with fear, as if they are something to be afraid of, with contempt, as if they are dangerous creatures, or with pity, as if they are something of sympathy. This limited range of reactions is harmful because it does not allow disabled people like Tania to be accepted as an integral part of society.

Notwithstanding, the social norms and expectations surrounding what constitutes a "healthy bride" pose a challenge for Tania in her quest for an ideal man who would eventually take care of her. However, since she does not have or meet with the requirements of "healthy bride," her disability then becomes a weakness and an obstacle for getting married in a social community where outside appearances and healthy conditions are highly valued. Tania's disability essentially makes her a target of discrimination and exclusion in her community, which hinders her chances of finding a husband. Thus, in the novel, we find that the only person who initially proposed to De Batz marriage is Jacque; a young man, who rejected her later because of her illness, as she collided with him in the following brief conversation:

> “A mixture of amusement and confusion marred his face. “I did nothing of the sort. You have these, what do you called them… dizzy spells? That is what your mother called them, yes? They make you feel sick and make it difficult for you to walk? It’s unfortunate. I am sorry that you suffer.

> "I don't understand".
>
> He laughed. Not mocking, not harsh, but the words themselves, the way they sounded like a prelude to something awful, felt like a slap. "Au contraire, I'm the one who doesn't understand. Obviously I could never make you an offer of marriage."
>
> "but you_ your mother said you were kind.[…]"
>
> "Dancing with a homely, partner less girl at a party is not the same as marring a girl like you. Even in your condition, you must be able to understand that." (p. 35)

Because of her nausea and dizziness, her possible marriage is concealed. This goes without saying that Tania De Batz's disability prevents her not only from the integration of the social environment, but also she does not have a place even in the romantic world of lovers. The above conversation is indicative of the societal views which attribute something being "wrong" or undesirable to health problems or disabilities. Tania De Batz then experiences rejection and disappointment, as a result, highlighting the difficulties and discrimination that individuals with disabilities may run into in their daily lives, especially when it comes to marriage and romance.

Another good example of social marginalization and isolation has to do with the character of Marguerite, or 'Geri', a former best and close friend of Tania, who now has completely changed and as she now prefers to be with other girls who are similar to her because she developed an attitude of Albeism. For, the latter refers to those people who were typically acculturated to reject disabled people, tokenize it and even sometimes fetichize it as it is the case of Marguerite. In this sense, Allison P. Hobgood (2021) considers that in many cases the social marginalization or alienation of disabled people is a result of individual albeism; which "functions like the air we breathe without knowing we are taking it in; it is an insidious status quo systematically fomenting prejudice against disabled people. As a mechanism of power, it structures and maintains the strict disciplining of atypical bodyminds”. (p10)

As a result, Lainoff (2022) describes Tania De Batz on her way home and run into Marguerite with a group of friends in the street, and at that moment her supposedly best friend; Geri adds: “Mon Dieu!”, “See her, resting against the wall? *Comme une invalide*, non?” (p.17). Marguerite refers to Tania as "invalide", which is an impolite term that implies she has no ability to move like the others. She disregards her, as demonstrated by the way she says it in order to mock her in front of the other girls. Also, it demonstrates how society draws conclusions from observations and uses terms like "invalide", which are criticizing, and describe people with disabilities. It also indicates how society does not have empathy or understanding for Tania's circumstances.

In a nutshell, it can be said that both of Palacio’s *Wonder* and Lainoff’s *One for all* have succeeded to bring the reader into the heart of the subject, by describing respectively two social settings and geographical locations inhabited by people suffering from health problems and conditions. In the process of doing it, the two authors had shown the societal considerations and the deep seated beliefs that marginalized and isolated disabled people like August Pullman and Tania De Batz. However, and despite the deep impacts of these social stereotypes, both authors brought to the fore the social values of compassion, help, and inclusion within people.

# V. General Conclusion

This dissertation has been an attempt to compare and examine the way Raquel Jaramillo Palacio’s *Wonder* (2017) and Lillie Lainoff’s *One for all* (2022) portrayed their main characters in relation to the theme of disability, marginalization and social exclusion. Through the lens of disability theories and principles, proposed either by Peter Burke in his *Brothers and Sisters of Disabled Children* (2004) and Tobin Siebers's *Disability Theory* (2008), the present comparative study is divided into two main chapters. The first chapter has uncovered the author’s description and handling of the main characters; August Pullman and Tania De Batz, who suffer from health impairments (body-mind impairments), while the second chapter has investigated the way these two disabled characters evolved or grew out in their immediate social environment, both at home or outside.

In other words, within the first chapter we have shown that August Pullman and Tania De Batz suffer respectively from two types of disability known in the field of medicine as Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS) and Treacher Collins Syndrome (TCS). In fact, and as it is shown through the chapter, Palacio’s August in *Wonder* suffers from a kind of facial deformity, that is a kind of an innate and biological deformity born with. This facial deformity had caused to the protagonist a very considerable personal pain which even prevented him to go out and meet other children and people outside home. However, in *One for all*, Lainoff presents to us nearly another character; Tania De Batz, who, like August lives a very difficult life because of her illness and a personal defect which made her life the one of dizziness and laziness.

Hence, we have also come to the conclusion that even though the medical model of disability, as explained by Tobin Siebers, plays a vital importance first in the diagnosis and then the treatment of the disabled person suffering from the moral or physical defect. This goes without saying that the second type or model of disability is also another essential factor in enhancing and helping disabled people to have a “normal’ social life as the rest of normal people. This means that medical model focuses on the body-mind impairments of disabled people and also highlights the reality that social factors such as attitudes, norms, and physical barriers have a major effect on disability which brought to deal with the social model. Within this consideration, the emphasis of the chapter has shifted from considering disability as a personal defect to acknowledging it as a part of society in creating obstacles for people with disabilities. Thus, the social model of disability is an essential framework for comprehending and addressing disability issues since it emphasizes the need for societal reforms to support inclusivity and accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

As far as the second chapter is concerned, the focus has been put on the societal impacts of disability by shedding light on the marginalisation and social exclusion of disabled people like August Pullman and Tania De Batz in *Wonder* and *One for all* respectively. Thus, despite the two quite different settings where the two characters evolved, they have nearly witnessed and experienced the same social inconsideration and mistreatment either at home by their relatives and siblings or by other people outside. It is worth reminding that in *Wonder,* for instance, August Pullman moves from homeschooling to attending a regular school in the hope of integrating the outside social world. However, many of his peers reacted fearfully and awkwardly to him as he looks quite different from them including his best friend, whom he trusted, bullied him. Terrified, and horrified, Auggie is not then welcomed by his peers at school. This story matches Siebers' claim of how society views and considers disabled people. It confirms also the fact that society plays a vital role in helping this category of people to live a life of normalcy and achieve what Tobin Siebers calls “the ideology of ability”.

Regarding the second novel, that is *One for all*, the chapter has also uncovered the way Lainoff portrayed her protagonist, Tania de Batz and her different interactions either at home with her parents or outside mainly in training school, L'Académie Des Mariées. Thus, it is with such experiences that the reader discovers Tania's social isolation and alienation, as for instance, when she feels dizziness and fatigue; she receives negative and unfavorable responses from her community and family. Tania's social challenges throughout the whole novel reveal a general truth about the social gaze and the old seated beliefs which marginalized people with body-mind impairments. The narrative illustrates also the social discrimination women have faced because of their gender and health status by showing Tania's loneliness and difficulties in living up to social standards. This means that Tania's story highlights how crucial it is to struggle against social oppression based on gender and sometimes by health conditions for pursuing self-empowerment. In general terms, the novel makes an account of the social hardships and oppression women endured, as they were denied equal rights and forced into conventional roles as playing the role of good mothers and wives.

Overall, it has to be noted that our research paper cannot cover all the literacy aspects related to Raquel J. Palacio's *Wonder* and Lillie Lainoff's *One for all,* as for instance, the author's conception of their respective settings as prison-like, reinforcing the idea of alienation and marginalization, or reading the two respective works from a psychoanalytical perspective in order to fully examine the psychological impacts of disability on individuals as epitomized by August Pullman and Tania De Batz. Therefore, for future researches and projects, we invite other students to explore the aforementioned issues.

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