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Disability Studies and Trauma Studies: The Need for a Multidisciplinary Approach in Narratives of Contemporary War

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Title: Disability Studies and Trauma Studies: The Need for a Multidisciplinary Approach in Narratives of Contemporary War

Beyond the visible injuries, veterans return home with immense emotional and psychological wounds. David Finkel's *Thank You for Your Service* addresses the many challenges returning troops face with searching for health care, jobs, financial aid, treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and more. Typically, scholars who address literature about and for veterans will apply trauma theory or disability studies, but not both. When combined, trauma theory and disability theory help to explain the totality of the veteran experience. Trauma theory alone focuses on the symptomology and cultural byproducts of the trauma more so than the individual. Trauma studies, therefore, aims to interpret traumatic experiences and identify specific outcomes and signs of trauma. Conversely, disability studies focuses on the individual experience of disability, which Finkel represents with veterans who have endured traumatic brain injuries (TBI) or limb loss, which are paired with ongoing PTSD. In addition, disability studies focuses on the ethical implications of the labels, judgments, and metaphors associated with traumatic experiences, injuries, or diagnoses. This essay analyzes the combination of physical and psychological wounds in Adam Schumann and Tausolo "Solo" Aiete, demonstrating the author's critique of how the U.S. government and the average citizen treat their veterans. The combination of disability studies and trauma studies allows readers to understand both the severity of the pressing issues Finkel presents and their role in addressing those problems. This understanding goes beyond just the task of engaging with the text itself and addresses the duty civilians have when confronted with hard truths about the experiences of returning veterans.