

# Punishing Conditions: Incarceration and Disability in a Neoliberal Age



## Institutional Violence and Disability: Punishing Conditions (Routledge Advances in Disability Studies)

by Michael Edmonds

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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**By Sarah Deer**

In the United States, the prison population has grown exponentially over the past few decades, with a disproportionate impact on people with disabilities. This is due in part to the "war on drugs," which has criminalized drug use and possession, and to the shift towards mass incarceration, which has led to longer prison sentences for nonviolent offenses. As a result, people with disabilities are now the fastest growing population in the prison system.

The conditions of confinement in prisons and jails are often harsh and degrading, and they can be particularly harmful to people with disabilities.

Many prisons and jails are not accessible to people with disabilities, and they may lack basic accommodations such as ramps, elevators, and adaptive equipment. In addition, people with disabilities are often subjected to discrimination and abuse by prison staff and other inmates.

The intersection of incarceration and disability has a devastating impact on the lives of incarcerated individuals. People with disabilities are more likely to experience violence, sexual abuse, and other forms of mistreatment in prison. They are also more likely to have their health care needs ignored or neglected. As a result, people with disabilities are more likely to die in prison than people without disabilities.

The criminalization of people with disabilities is a violation of their human rights. It is a form of structural violence that perpetuates and exacerbates disability. The mass incarceration of people with disabilities is a crisis that demands our attention and action. We must work to end the criminalization of disability and to ensure that all people with disabilities have access to the services and support they need to live full and independent lives.

## **Chapter 1: The Neoliberalization of Disability**

In this chapter, I explore the ways in which neoliberalism has shaped the understanding of disability in the United States. Neoliberalism is a political and economic ideology that emphasizes the free market and individualism. It has led to a shift away from social welfare programs and towards a focus on individual responsibility. This shift has had a negative impact on people with disabilities, who are often seen as a drain on society.

The neoliberalization of disability has led to a number of changes in the way that people with disabilities are treated. First, it has led to a decrease

in funding for social welfare programs that support people with disabilities. Second, it has led to a shift towards a more punitive approach to disability. People with disabilities are now more likely to be seen as criminals than as victims. Third, the neoliberalization of disability has led to a decrease in the availability of affordable housing and other essential services for people with disabilities.

The neoliberalization of disability is a serious threat to the rights of people with disabilities. It is a form of structural violence that perpetuates and exacerbates disability. We must work to resist the neoliberalization of disability and to create a more just and equitable society for all.

## **Chapter 2: The Criminalization of Disability**

In this chapter, I explore the ways in which the criminal justice system in the United States criminalizes disability. The criminal justice system is a complex and multifaceted system that includes police, courts, and prisons. It is designed to maintain social order and to punish those who violate the law. However, the criminal justice system also has a long history of discriminating against people with disabilities.

The criminalization of disability takes many forms. People with disabilities are more likely to be arrested and charged with crimes than people without disabilities. They are also more likely to be convicted and sentenced to prison. Once in prison, people with disabilities are more likely to be subjected to violence, sexual abuse, and other forms of mistreatment. They are also more likely to have their health care needs ignored or neglected.

The criminalization of disability is a violation of the human rights of people with disabilities. It is a form of structural violence that perpetuates and

exacerbates disability. We must work to end the criminalization of disability and to ensure that all people with disabilities have access to justice.

### **Chapter 3: Resistance and Resilience in the Face of Incarceration**

In this chapter, I explore the ways in which incarcerated individuals with disabilities resist and cope with the challenges they face. Incarceration is a traumatic experience for everyone, but it can be particularly challenging for people with disabilities. Incarcerated individuals with disabilities are often subjected to discrimination and abuse, and they may have difficulty accessing the services and support they need.

Despite the challenges they face, incarcerated individuals with disabilities often find ways to resist and cope. They may form alliances with other incarcerated individuals, they may participate in educational and recreational programs, and they may find solace in religion or spirituality. Incarcerated individuals with disabilities also develop their own strategies for coping with the physical and emotional challenges of prison life.

The resistance and resilience of incarcerated individuals with disabilities is a testament to their strength and spirit. It is also a reminder that even in the most difficult of circumstances, people with disabilities can find ways to thrive.

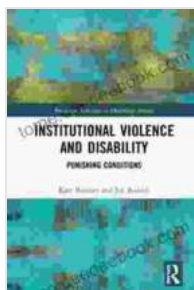
The intersection of incarceration and disability is a complex and challenging issue. The criminal justice system in the United States is a system of mass incarceration that disproportionately impacts people with disabilities. The conditions of confinement in prisons and jails are often harsh and degrading, and they can be particularly harmful to people with disabilities. As a result, incarcerated individuals with disabilities are more likely to

experience violence, sexual abuse, and other forms of mistreatment. They are also more likely to have their health care needs ignored or neglected.

The criminalization of disability is a violation of human rights. It is a form of structural violence that perpetuates and exacerbates disability. We must work to end the criminalization of disability and to ensure that all people with disabilities have access to justice, services, and support.

In the face of incarceration, people with disabilities resist and cope in a variety of ways. They form alliances with other incarcerated individuals, they participate in educational and recreational programs, and they find solace in religion or spirituality. They also develop their own strategies for coping with the physical and emotional challenges of prison life. The resistance and resilience of incarcerated individuals with disabilities is a testament to their strength and spirit. It is also a reminder that even in the most difficult of circumstances, people with disabilities can find ways to thrive.

We must continue to fight for the rights of incarcerated individuals with disabilities. We must work to end the criminalization of disability and to create a more just and equitable society for all.



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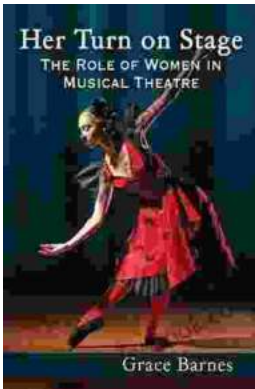
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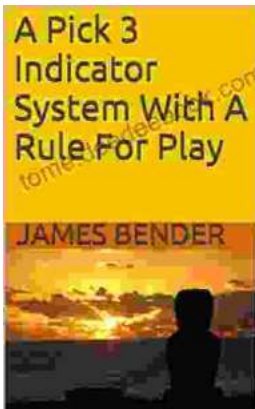
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