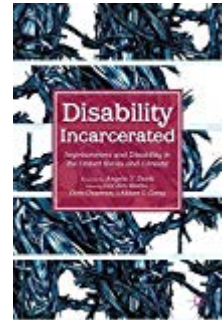


Liat Ben-Moshe, Chris Chapman, Allison C. Carey, eds. *Disability Incarcerated: Imprisonment and Disability in the United States and Canada*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. xvi + 297 pp. \$30.00, paper, ISBN 978-1-137-40405-3.



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Commissioned by Iain C. Hutchison (University of Glasgow)

In *Disability Incarcerated: Imprisonment and Disability in the United States and Canada*, Liat Ben-Moshe, Chris Chapman, and Allison C. Carey provide a powerful and compelling collection of essays. Rooted primarily in Foucauldian methodologies, the various contributions offer historically focused accounts of incarceration and disability, which set out to speak to present-day concerns in American and Canadian societies. The sociological methodologies are pronounced but not overwhelming. All of the essays are well written and insightful and force us to reconsider key themes in the history of disability and medicine, including the social dynamism of prisons and asylums, the racing and gendering of "imprisoned" subjects, the uses of biopower in regulating society and managing those who fail to conform, and the historical roots of present-day social elimination.

The title of the collection could be misleading for some readers. One might expect this volume to assess how people with disabilities were managed in prisons. Yet the authors use the terms "incarcerated" and "imprisonment" in their broadest sense.

Incarceration, they maintain, takes place in the community where the physically and mentally disadvantaged can be held in situations that essentially constitute imprisonment. This remains the case even despite a general move toward de-institutionalization in the late twentieth century that saw the mentally ill being cared for in community settings rather than the vast, imposing walls of the outdated asylum system. Prisons remain widely used in America and Canada, as various contributions in this volume testify, although racially disadvantaged groups tend to be disproportionately overrepresented in institutional populations.

The opening section of *Disability Incarcerated* focuses on historical contexts. In an informative chapter, Chapman traces the social separation of the physically and mentally disadvantaged to the sixteenth-century secularization of life and maps a genealogy of the treatment of the "abnormal" to the present day. Subsequent contributions explore historical themes, including nineteenth-century "idiot asylums," Canadian eugenics, the segrega-

tion of disability in education systems, twentieth-century parents' resistance to the incarceration of their disadvantaged children, and mass incarceration in the neoliberal era. Combined, the contributors comment on the historical rooting of present-day systems of social exclusion; problematize the transition from institutionalization to community care (and challenge us to reconsider how this works as a dichotomy); and introduce actors often missing from similar analyses such as parents and, intriguingly, the disadvantaged themselves. The essays in the first section are crafted in a manner that makes them potentially amenable to current problems in policymaking and social commentary on disability. The potential audience could stretch far beyond academic history and sociology.

The second section focuses on current issues and potential futures. It incorporates chapters on racism and disability in American prisons, the use of chemical constraints in psychiatric practice, constructions of the post-9/11 "terrorist" body, disability in international refugee camps, emancipation movements led by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and potential alternatives to the incarceration of disability. This section covers a broader scope of themes than the preceding section, but nonetheless offers captivating perspectives on a range of international concerns of interest both on the North American subcontinent and elsewhere. Indeed, the global relevance of many of the American and Canadian case studies contained in *Disability Incarcerated* is one of the volume's strengths.

Overall, *Disability Incarcerated* provides an intriguing selection of explorations into disability past, present, and future. The volume's main message is that carceral practices are so embedded in the history of disability that it is impossible to understand incarceration without attending to the incarceration of disabled people. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, the contributors are drawn from fields as diverse as sociology,

medicine, disability studies, philosophy, cultural studies, psychology, English, and history. *Disability Incarcerated* also features contributions from prisoner rights' activists, abolitionists, and psychiatric survivors. The volume's focus on America and Canada ensures that the collection is not over-ambitious in terms of geographical scope; the primary focus on nineteenth- and twentieth-century contexts guarantees an unusual level of cohesion for an edited collection. This is all the more important given that the various contributors refer to a far-reaching range of subjects, not least race, colonialism, and gender. In summary, *Disability Incarcerated* is a well-written, superbly edited, and thoughtfully crafted collection of essays that will be of interest to academics across a wide range of disciplines as well as to nonacademics with an interest in disability.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at <https://networks.h-net.org/h-disability>

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