

An Invitation to Disability Justice

June 27, 2023

ALL BODIES ARE UNIQUE AND ESSENTIAL.

ALL BODIES ARE WHOLE. ALL BODIES HAVE
STRENGTHS AND NEEDS THAT MUST BE MET.

WE ARE POWERFUL NOT DESPITE THE COMPLEXITIES
OF OUR BODIES, BUT BECAUSE OF THEM.

WE MOVE TOGETHER, WITH NO BODY LEFT BEHIND.

THIS IS DISABILITY JUSTICE.



TODOS LOS CUERPOS SON ÚNICOS Y ESENCIALES.

TODOS LOS CUERPOS SON COMPLETOS. TODOS LOS CUERPOS
TIENEN FORTALEZAS Y NECESIDADES QUE SE DEBEN SUPLIR.

SOMOS PODEROSOS NO A PESAR DE LAS COMPLEJIDADES DE
NUESTROS CUERPOS, SINO DEBIDO A ELLAS.

NOS MOVEMOS JUNTOS, SIN DEJAR NINGÚN CUERPO ATRÁS.

ESTO ES JUSTICIA DE DISCAPACIDAD.

<https://www.sinsinvalid.org/>

**THERE IS NO
JUSTICE
WITHOUT
DISABILITY**



There is no justice without disability [#DisabilityDemandsJustice](https://youtu.be/3L1dUJlhexg)

<https://youtu.be/3L1dUJlhexg>

57 seconds

Access Check-In

**WE WORK TOGETHER FOR
GREATER ACCESS.**

**THE WORK OF ACCESS
IS NEVER DONE.**

Be in this space however you need to—video on or off, laying down, moving around, using other tools, etc.

Live captions available; let's pace ourselves.

Descriptions of images and other visuals

Pause at each slide; allow time to read

Breaks to read the chat

Style of slides and size of text is intentional

Please provide accessibility feedback in the chat.

Cintya Molina

Boricua; African Diaspora identity and experiences

She/Her Pronouns

Mother of African American and Boricua Autistic youth

Not Identified as Disabled myself

African American Studies, UC Berkeley, Ethnic Studies

Disability Justice in Education advocate since 2009 (Tilden . . .)

Have worked in OUSD, at schools & centrally, since 2005

Introductions

Role

Gender Pronouns

Race, Ethnicity, Nationality

Disability Identity

Program, Department, Field

A Hope that Relates to this Conversation

A Few Acknowledgements

T.L. Lewis Autism Self Advocacy Network

Dustin Gibson Sins Invalid

Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha

Harriet Tubman Collective Center for Independent Living

Subini Annamma Lydia X. Z. Brown

Aurora Levins Morales Lennard J. Davis

Community Agreements

Use 'I' Statements - Practice Self Focus

Call in with Love - Versus Calling out with Shame

Embrace Vulnerability, Discomfort, Growth Mindset

Maintain Confidentiality When Requested

Practice Mindful Listening & Compassion

Understand the Difference between Intent & Impact

Practice Both and And Speaking

Try it On

Link to the Full Text of the Agreements:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1xWLK2sNGbUPakvon4q1H1vG1aHbo_xbqjAUDNKvqKio/edit?usp=sharing

What We Must Oppose

Ableism

A system that places value on people's bodies and minds based on societally constructed ideas of normalcy, intelligence, excellence, and productivity. These constructed ideas are deeply rooted in anti-Blackness, eugenics, colonialism, and capitalism.

This form of systemic oppression leads to people and society determining who is valuable and worthy based on a person's appearance and/or their ability to satisfactorily [re]produce, excel, and "behave." *Talila (T.L.) Lewis*

<https://www.talilalewis.com/blog/ableism-2020-an-updated-definition>

... societally constructed ideas of normalcy, intelligence, excellence and productivity.

GOOD/BAD
BEAUTIFUL/UGLY
SMART/DUMB
STRONG/WEAK

... who is valuable and worthy based on a person's appearance and/or their ability to satisfactorily [re]produce, excel, and "behave." *Talila (T.L.) Lewis*

"Normal"
It does not exist.



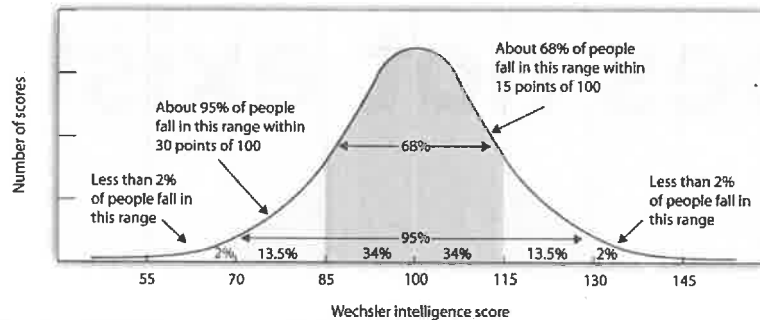
Normal Sucks Full Film from 2:22 to 9:35

Jonathan Mooney

<https://youtu.be/Brix27Vm5x8>

The statistical act of measuring humans led to the **creation of the normal distribution curve**, where the center of the curve defines what is acceptable for people to be.

This new science of measuring, grading—and therefore judging—humans... did not just create a hierarchy but also *pathologized* the people in these ranked categories. To pathologize is to label a trait a sickness or a disease...



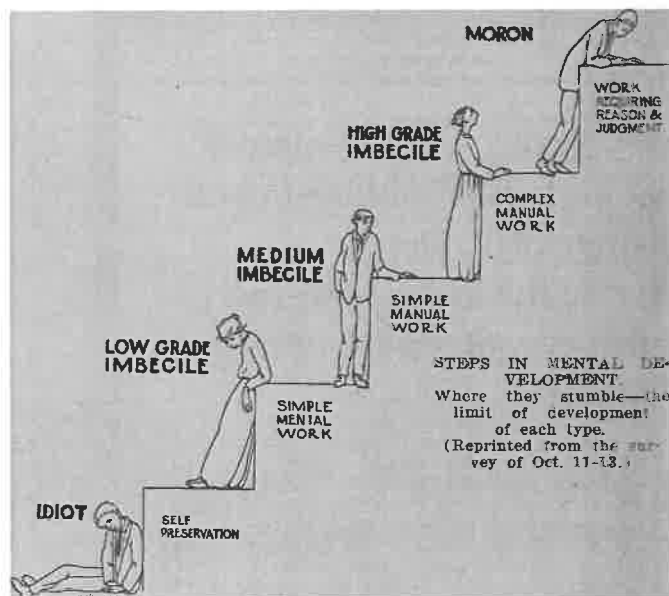
"A symbiotic relationship exists between statistical science and eugenic concerns. Both bring into society the concept of a norm, and thus in effect create the concept of the "disabled body."

p.4 of *The Disability Studies Reader*, Lennard J. Davis. Ed.

The "disabled" body becomes the "defective" body to be fixed, contained, or eliminated.

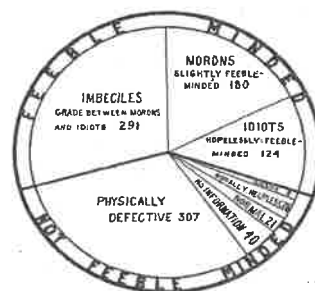
Normal was used to create dehumanizing categories of social disqualification, based on a **narrow continuum of acceptable human variation**.

... From here on, this medical [pathologizing] model will become the foundation for how society makes sense of, addresses, and treats cognitive and physical differences.



1915 medical text showing steps in mental development

Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale	
Genius	Over 140
Very Superior	120 - 139
Superior	110 - 119
Average	90 - 109
Dull	80 - 89
Borderline Deficiency	70 - 79
Moron	50 - 69
Imbecile	20 - 49
Idiot	Below 20



https://img-machine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1913/03/28/100407651.jpg?pg=pg1_redirect=true&i=0

"Normal" harms all of us.

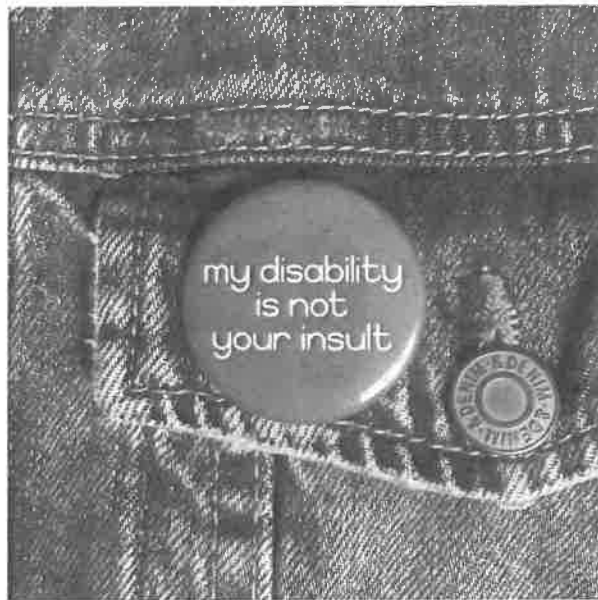
In trying to escape being judged as **abnormal**, we do violence to ourselves and to each other.

Normal does not exist, but that doesn't stop most of us from trying to be it.

"Just like some historically racist, sexist, and derogatory terms have been retired, so have a handful of ableist slurs that were used to dehumanize, stigmatize, and institutionalize people in the past. At the same time, too many people continue to casually spew ableist language to ridicule, criticize, or dismiss others."

"Why You Need to Stop Using These Words and Phrases" by Rakshitha Arni Ravishankar

<https://hbr.org/2020/12/why-you-need-to-stop-using-these-words-and-phrases>



Blue pinned button on a denim pocket. It reads in white lettering, "my disability is not your insult"

Outright Disability Slurs

Disability Slurs

WORDS	Incredibly hurtful and insulting to:
Ret*^ded, Id*#t, M#*on, Im%#cile, Du*#b	Intellectually Disabled People
Mi*#et	Little People

WORDS	Incredibly hurtful and insulting to:
Crip*#e, G*mp, S^#z, L*me, Inv*#lid	Physically Disabled People
M#d, Cr~*y, Lun%#ic, Distu*#ed, Psy#^o, In*#ne	People with Mental Illness or Psychiatric Disabilities

Disability as Metaphors of Moral Failing

	Used to Mean:
Falling on Deaf Ears	Callous, Unfeeling, Cruel
Blind to the Suffering	Callous, Unfeeling, Cruel
Blind Leading the Blind	Inept Person Leading an Inept Person

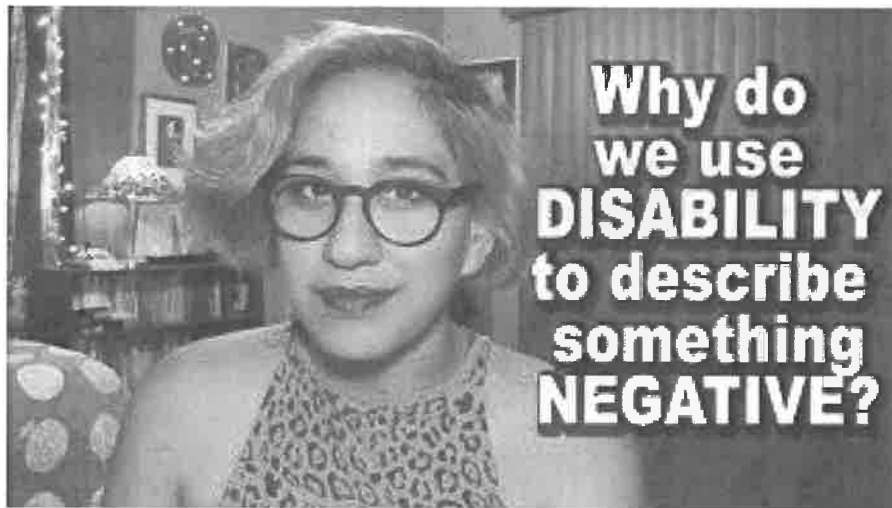
	Used to Mean:
Emotionally Crippled	Not Showing or Feeling Emotion
Dumbed Down	Simplified
	Below a Person's Skill Level

Disability as Tragedy

Disability as Tragedy

	Alternative
afflicted by	is disabled
suffers from	is _____ disabled
victim of	has a _____ disability

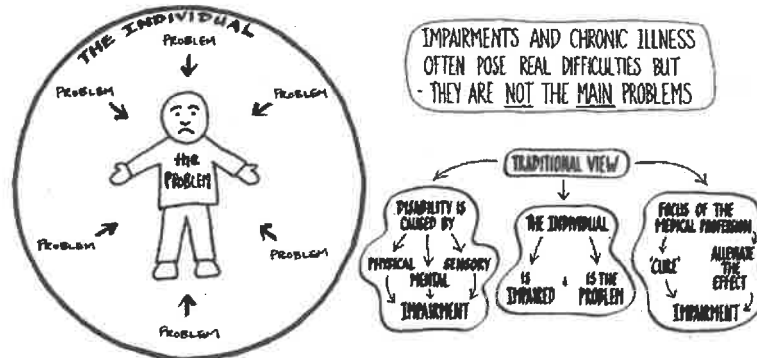
	Alternative
wheelchair-bound	uses a wheelchair
confined to a wheelchair	is a wheelchair user



<https://youtu.be/a1rrSXkFqGE>

THE MEDICAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

Link

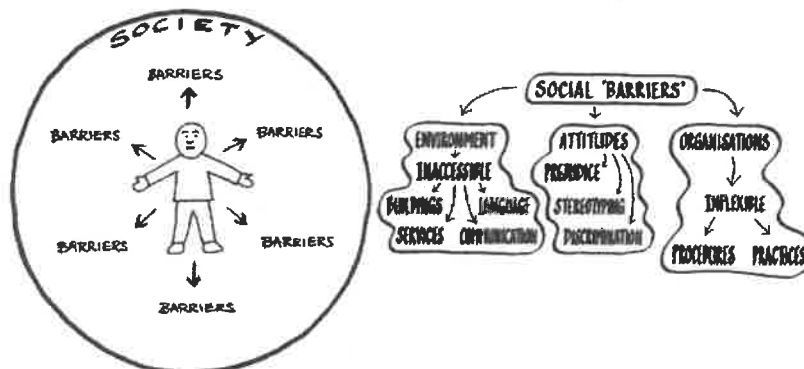


This image illustrates the Medical Model of Disability. On the left is a cartoon image of a sad-faced person with arms outstretched and a t-shirt that reads "the problem" and the word "problem" pointing at the person from 6 directions. On top of the figure are the words, "The Individual" On the right is the sentence "Impairments and chronic illnesses often pose real difficulties but they are not the main problems. Traditional view: Disability is caused by physical, mental, sensory impairment. The individual is impaired and is the problem. Focus of the medical profession: cure, and alleviate the effect of impairment."

What We Must Support

THE SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

[Link](#)



This image illustrates the Social Model of Disability. On the left is a cartoon image of a happy-faced person with arms outstretched and the word "barriers" pointing away from the person in 6 directions. On top of the figure is the word, "Society." On the right is the phrase "Social 'barriers'" with arrows that lead down to the following words, "Environment inaccessible: buildings services language communication" and "attitudes: prejudice stereotyping discrimination" and "organisations: inflexible procedures and practices."

The Medical Model vs. The Social Model



It is the attitudes and physical barriers imposed on them by society

https://youtu.be/24KE_OCKMw

2 minutes and 43 seconds

A Disability Justice Model Takes It Further

"a move 'away from an equality-based model of sameness and "we are just like you" to a model of disability that embraces difference, confronts privilege, and challenges what is considered "normal" on every front.

We don't want to simply join the ranks of the privileged; we want to dismantle those ranks and the systems that maintain them.'

<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2011/02/12/changing-the-framework-disability-justice/&sa=D&source=editors&ust=1679039682560268&usq=AQvVaw3E55D7VYeCTFacopFfOh-U>

Disability Pride

'Disabled':

Just #SayTheWord

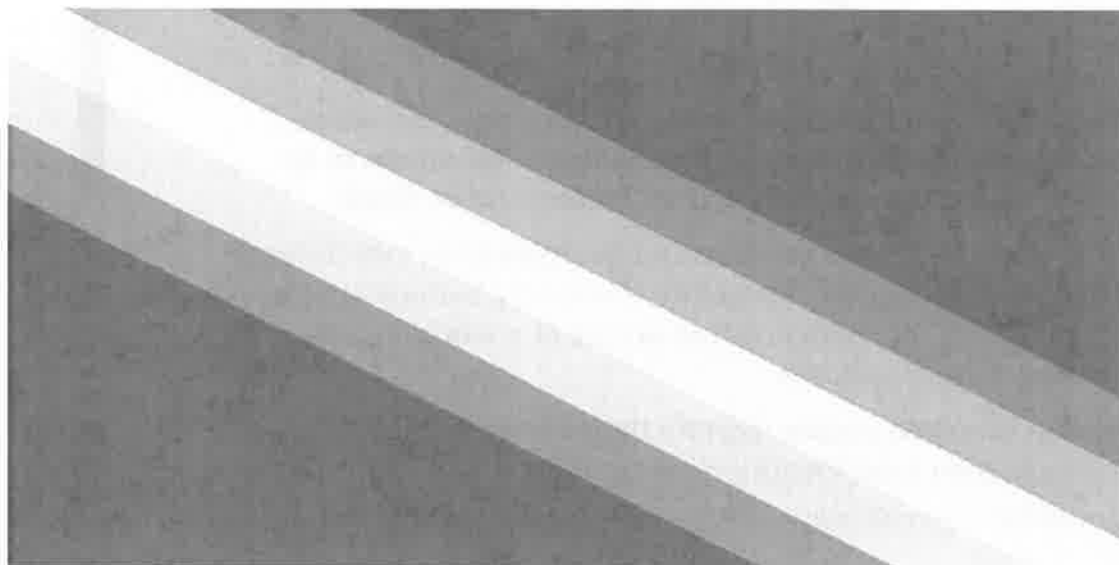
The term disabled is neither discriminatory nor pejorative . . . it denotes disabled identity/ies and culture/s as those to be sustained and affirmed, rather than eliminated or fixed.

. . . it signals that people are disabled by oppressive structures, practices, and discourses--disability is not only biological; it is a social and political experience that occurs in a world arranged by and for nondisabled people.

The extent to which people identify themselves as disabled varies according to their own identity-development.

Sustaining Disabled Youth: Centering Disability in Asset Pedagogies. Federico Waitoller & Kathleen King Thorius, xvi.

PERSON WITH GAYNESS	GAY PERSON
PERSON WITH BLACKNESS	BLACK PERSON
WOMAN OF PUERTO RICAN NATIONALITY OR CULTURE	PUERTO RICAN WOMAN
PERSON WITH A GENDER OTHER THAN THE ONE ASSIGNED AT BIRTH	TRANSGENDER PERSON
MAN WITH LEFT-HANDEDNESS	LEFT-HANDED MAN
PERSON WITH A DISABILITY	DISABLED PERSON
One's disability experience does not diminish one's personhood. Saying that one is 'disabled' also speaks to disablement by society.	



THE DISABILITY PRIDE FLAG

<https://www.disabled-world.com/definitions/disability-pride.php>

Disability Pride

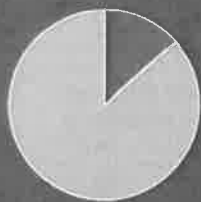
Page 153 of *Undoing Ableism: Teaching about Disability in K-12 Classrooms*
by Susan Baglieri and Priya Lalvani

Having a mind that is a 'mistake'	Neurodiversity →	Having a mind that is an expected part of diversity
Hiding disability	Disability Pride →	Showing disability to others
Trying to be 'normal'	Disability Pride →	Accepting being different from others
Hearing loss	Deaf Culture/Deaf Pride →	Deaf gain

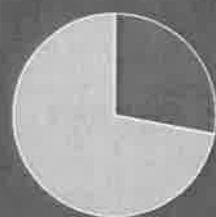
Examples of What's At Stake

Disproportionate **severity** of discipline (2021-22)

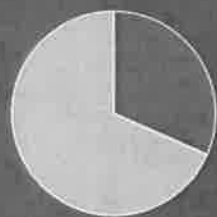
School Enrollment



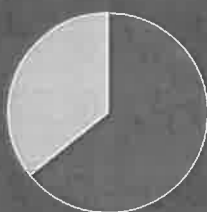
In-School Suspension



Out-of-School Suspension



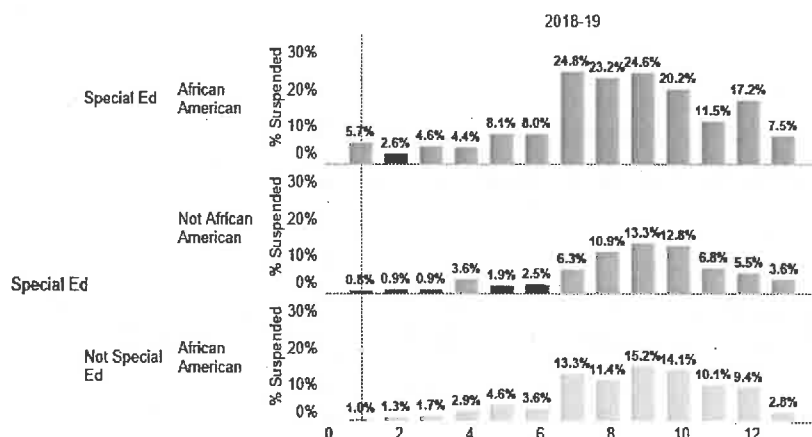
Referrals to Law Enforcement



While students with disabilities make up **13%** of OUSD school population, they make up **28%** of in-school suspension, **32%** of out-of-school suspensions, and **64%** of referrals to law enforcement.

Source: Office of Civil Rights. <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/profile/9/district/30441/discipline-report>

Suspension of Disabled Black Students in OUSD



Three rows of bar graphs show the percentage of students suspended 2018-19 by grade from grades K to 13. The 1st row shows suspensions for disabled Black students with IEPs, the 2nd row shows suspensions for disabled students with IEPs who are not Black, and the third shows suspensions for Black students without IEPs. The top row shows the extremely high rate of suspensions for Black disabled students as compared to their peers who do not share their intersectional experience as both disabled and Black.

Suspension of Disabled Black Students in OUSD 2018-19

African American Students with Disabilities-SpEd												
K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
5.7%	2.6%	4.6%	4.4%	8.1%	8.0%	24.8%	23.2%	24.6%	20.2%	11.5%	17.2%	7.5%

Students with Disabilities-SpEd-Not African American												
K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	3.6%	1.9%	2.5%	6.3%	10.9%	13.3%	12.8%	6.8%	5.5%	3.6%

African American Students-No Special Education												
K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.0%	1.3%	1.7%	2.9%	4.6%	3.6%	13.3%	11.4%	15.2%	14.1%	10.1%	9.4%	2.8%

Completing the Vision for Black Lives

The Harriet Tubman Collective

... statistics prove that at least **60-80% of the people murdered by police are, in fact, Disabled and/or Deaf people.**

People with disabilities are twice as likely to live in poverty because poverty operates as a cause and consequence of disability.

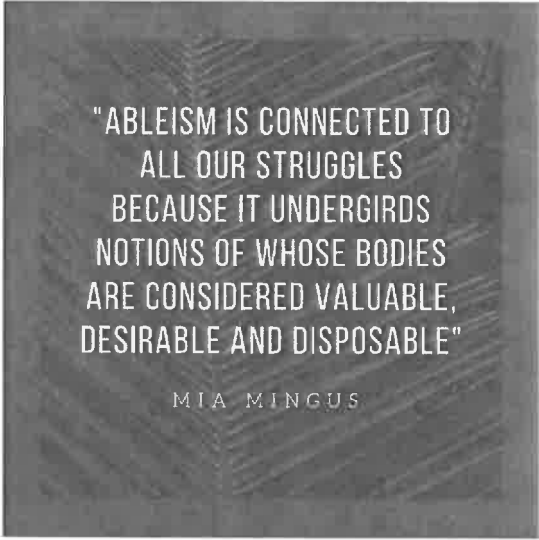
Children with disabilities enter the juvenile legal system at 5-6 times the rate of youth who do not have disabilities, with 65% of boys and 75% of girls in juvenile detention having at least one mental illness, and up to **85% of children in juvenile detention having at least one disability** ...

Completing the Vision for Black Lives

. . . within each of the above-provided statistics, Black people and other racialized individuals are grossly disproportionately represented.

Indeed, ableist social norms often criminalize the existence of disabilities such as schizophrenia, autism, oppositional-defiant disorders, and developmental and intellectual disabilities. To be sure, Black people with these and other disabilities are particularly vulnerable to unjust encounters with school officials, police officers and the criminal legal system."

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/disability-solidarity-completing-the-vision-for-black_b_57d024f7e4b0eb9a57b6dc1f



"ABLEISM IS CONNECTED TO
ALL OUR STRUGGLES
BECAUSE IT UNDERGIRDS
NOTIONS OF WHOSE BODIES
ARE CONSIDERED VALUABLE,
DESIRABLE AND DISPOSABLE"

MIA MINGUS

"Ableism is connected to all of our struggles because it undergirds notions of whose bodies are considered valuable, desirable, and disposable." Mia Mingus

For an extremely in-depth and detailed reading connected to the previous quote:

INTERVIEW | HUMAN RIGHTS

Ableism Enables All Forms of Inequity and Hampers All Liberation Efforts

Ableism has been used for generations to degrade, oppress, control and disappear disabled and nondisabled people alike.

By George Yancy , TRUTHOUT

Published

January 3, 2023

<https://truthout.org/articles/ableism-enables-all-forms-of-inequity-and-hampers-all-liberation-efforts/>



TODOS LOS CUERPOS ESTAN ATRAPADOS EN LAS ATADURAS DE LA CAPACIDAD, RAZA, CLASE, GENERO, SEXUALIDAD Y CIUDADANIA.

SOMOS PODEROSOS NO A PESAR A LAS COMPLEJIDADES DE NUESTRAS IDENTIDADES, SINO DEBIDO A ELLAS.

SÓLO EL ACCESO UNIVERSAL Y COLECTIVO NOS PUEDE LLEVAR A LA LIBERACIÓN UNIVERSAL Y COLECTIVA.

ESTO ES JUSTICIA DE DISCAPACIDAD.

<https://www.sinsinvalid.org/>

5:55.

