

Handbook of Disability: Critical Thought and Social Change in a Globalizing World

Editors: Marcia H. Rioux, Alexis Buettgen, Ezra Zubrow, José Viera

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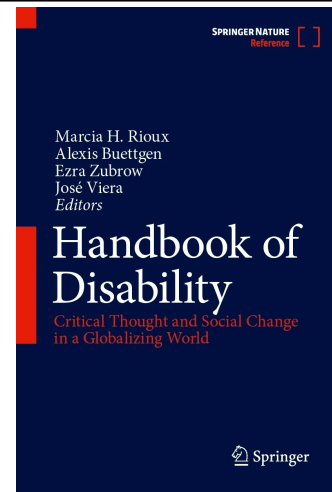
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A comprehensive volume on disability is essential to deepen our understanding of the complex, intersectional nature of disability in today's globalised world. It provides a critical platform for diverse voices—especially those of persons with disabilities—to challenge dominant narratives, advocate for rights-based approaches, and influence inclusive policy and practice. Such works bridge theory and lived experience, offering scholars, practitioners, and policymakers a unified yet multifaceted resource to drive systemic change, foster equity, and promote social justice across all sectors of society.

The *Handbook of Disability: Critical Thought and Social Change in a Globalizing World*, edited by Marcia H. Rioux, Alexis Buettgen, Ezra Zubrow, and José Viera, is an expansive and authoritative resource comprising 14 thematic sections and more than 92 chapters. It offers a comprehensive and ambitious exploration of disability studies on a global scale. Drawing from a wide range of disciplines, it brings together the insights of academics, activists, clinicians, development professionals, policymakers, and individuals with lived experience from both the Global North and South. Rather than treating inclusion as a token gesture, the editors emphasise it as a transformative reimagining of societal structures—guided by the principles of disability justice and grounded in the powerful ethos of “Nothing Without Us.”

The volume stands out for its remarkable scope, encompassing sociocultural, legal, economic, medical, educational, and technological perspectives. A key strength is its emphasis on collaborative knowledge-building with disabled individuals, ensuring that theoretical insights are rooted in lived experiences and aligned with the principles of disability justice.

Moving beyond dominant Euro-American viewpoints, the *Handbook* intentionally amplifies voices from the Global South, addressing the complex interplay of disability with factors such as caste, race, gender, colonial legacies, and neoliberal reforms—thereby addressing significant omissions in existing scholarship. Its foundational sections chart the paradigm shift from medical and exclusionary models to rights-based and justice-oriented approaches, positioning the text as both an academic reference and a guiding manifesto for change.

Importantly, the *Handbook* bridges theory and practice. Core concepts like supported decision-making, inclusive education, and reasonable accommodation are contextualised within real-world policy initiatives and grassroots advocacy efforts, making the volume not just intellectually robust, but practically impactful.

Spanning over 1800 pages and priced at a premium, the *Handbook* is more realistically accessible to institutional libraries than to individual readers. This raises valid concerns around equity and inclusivity, particularly for grassroots activists, students, and scholars from low- and middle-income regions. Encouraging access through academic and public libraries becomes not just a practical solution but a necessary strategy to ensure the volume's rich content reaches a wider audience—a move especially relevant in today's knowledge-sharing ecosystem.

Additionally, the diversity in chapter styles and conceptual and theoretical discussions may pose challenges for readers seeking a seamless, cohesive narrative. While this variation reflects the interdisciplinary strength of the volume, it may require readers to navigate across different

analytical depths and frameworks, depending on their specific interests and expertise.

The *Handbook of Disability: Critical Thought and Social Change in a Globalising World* stands as a seminal contribution at the crossroads of disability studies, human rights, and social justice. It powerfully responds to the imperative to decolonise knowledge production by centring the voices and perspectives of disabled persons within both academic inquiry and practical engagement. Its interdisciplinary scope and commitment to inclusivity position it as a flagship reference in the evolving discourse on global disability.

This volume is particularly well-suited for graduate-level instruction in disability studies, social work, public policy, and inclusive education. It also serves as a valuable resource for policymakers seeking models of rights-based legislation, as well as for activists and community organisers working toward structural change. The inclusion of context-specific case studies from Indian state initiatives to African regional policy efforts further enhances its utility for localised understanding and application. As a comprehensive and authoritative work, the *Handbook* combines rigorous theoretical exploration with tangible policy and community

frameworks. Its deliberate focus on intersectionality, lived experience, and systemic transformation makes it an indispensable resource for scholars, practitioners, and advocates alike. While its considerable length and cost may limit individual access, its value to institutional libraries is unquestionable. For broader reach, selective chapter access through academic databases or open-access platforms is strongly encouraged.

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