

Depathologization As Healing Justice

Liat Ben-Moshe, University of Illinois at Chicago

Kennedy Healy, Writer and Activist

H Rakes, Oregon State University

SM Rodriguez, London School of Economics and Political Science

Abstract: Healing justice, as with disability justice, reproductive justice, and environmental justice, has largely been a women, queer and trans of color- led intervention into the rights-based, reform-based, and neo/liberal agendas of whitestream movements. We see each of these movements for justice as deeply intertwined with the others, where interdependence and leaving no one behind are key commitments that are not compatible with the individualism of rights and reforms. Transformative justice also must be embedded with these justice movements, intervening in criminal “justice” and restorative “justice,” insisting on abolition and resisting the idea that there is any justice to be restored within white supremacist, ableist, cisheteropatriarchal settler colonialism. We see depathologization as a potential coalitional site connecting these formations and critical frameworks.

To examine these topics, we met in May and June 2021 in a roundtable conversation format. The participants (in alphabetical order) were:

Liat Ben-Moshe (she/her) is a queer crip non-American femme, residing in Chicago, where she met and built with H and Kennedy. She is a scholar-activist working at the intersection of disability/madness, incarceration/decarceration and abolition. She is the author of *Decarcerating Disability: Deinstitutionalization and Prison Abolition* (2020) and co-editor of *Disability Incarcerated* (2014).

Kennedy Healy (she/her) is a Fat, Queer, Crip Chicago-based writer, community worker, and consultant. She has done work around disability, accessibility, care, sexuality, media representation, and abolition. She is a Libra who loves plants, chicken wings, and feminist country music.

H Rakes (they/them) is a queer trans fatty with chronic pain and sleep apnea who has been teaching abolition for over a decade in college classrooms and workshops. They live in Portland, OR on Multnomah, Chinook, Cowlitz, and Clackamas land and teach in Corvallis, OR on Kalapuya land. They are active in United Academics of Oregon State University and they consider teaching ←→ learning from, and mentoring trans, crip, and BIPOC students to be a sacred calling.

SM Rodriguez (they/them) is a Black queer and trans anti-violence scholar-activist with chronic illness and “invisible” disabilities. Their research and organizing focuses on solutions to criminalization, social exclusion and interpersonal harms that reflect the state. While originally from Brooklyn, NY, SM currently lives in London, U.K. They are the author of *The Economies of Queer Inclusion: Transnational Organizing for LGBTI Rights in Uganda* (2019).