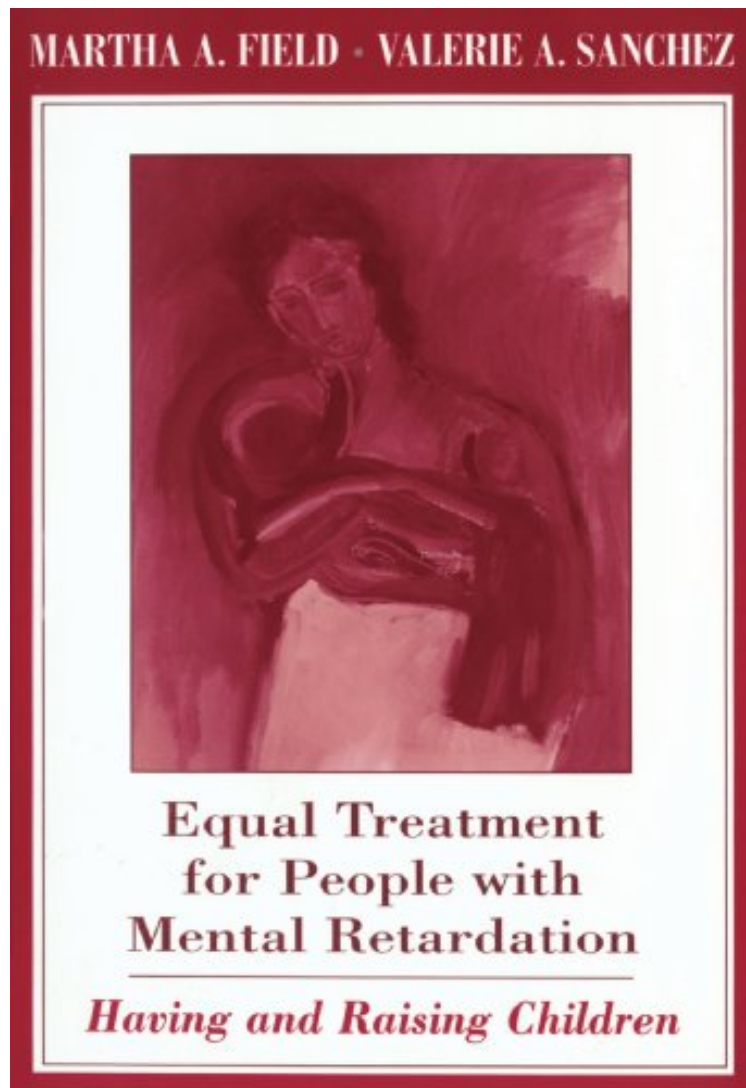


(Pdf free) Equal Treatment for People with Mental Retardation: Having and Raising Children

# Equal Treatment for People with Mental Retardation: Having and Raising Children

*Martha A. Field, Valerie A. Sanchez*  
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**Martha A. Field, Valerie A. Sanchez : Equal Treatment for People with Mental Retardation: Having and Raising Children** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Equal Treatment for People with Mental Retardation: Having and Raising Children:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Controversial and convincingBy FastwalkThis book puts forth a compelling thesis: The mentally retarded should have full rights to manage their own sexual and reproductive lives. The idea sounds good, but most people would quail at its full implications. Should a severely retarded 15-year-old be

allowed to bear a child? What about situations where parents fear a daughter might suffer from rape in an institution? Should they have the right to have their daughter sterilized? A Harvard law professor, Field does not dodge the hard questions. She addresses them and forces a re-thinking of conventional ideas about who should make decisions for others and why. Field writes with such authority and conviction that at the end you are likely to be persuaded that human rights apply to the retarded in ways you never imagined. Analytical and systematic, the book is rooted in a deep knowledge of the law and a concern for the shaping of social policy. It is a must-read for those who face decisions about the retarded, either within their families or in the public arena. Those concerned with human rights will also find their minds, and perhaps their causes, expanded when they read this book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *Romance Retardation* By Felix While this closely argued and exhaustively researched book focuses on the reproductive legal rights of our retarded adults, its real core is to ask: Why should retarded people be deprived of the same rights the rest of us enjoy simply because they are retarded. The book punctures the veil of silence around our automatic presumptions about these people that underlies our assumptions of the necessity and goodness of paternalistic regulation. It does this by honing in on the most emotionally arousing aspect of the question. Asking why our retarded fellow citizens can be prevented from having sex and from having children brings us up against our deepest prejudices. The book caused me to reconfigure my opinions in these areas in what feels to me a more useful perspective of the lives of these people, some of whom are my patients. I think it is a must read for anyone involved in any aspect of the care of our retarded population.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *Inspiring and helpful* By Dee Liggett This book is fabulous and it is one of a kind. I found it helpful as a guardian often faced with ethical dilemmas about when I should decide and when "my ward" should. But the book is also written for doctors, policymakers, lawyers and judges, and parents -- in fact anyone interested in the assimilation of "the retarded" into the rest of the population. It is actually fun reading and set up so you can skip the parts less relevant to you. It made me cry a couple of times as well as giving me many ideas -- and increasing my confidence in my judgments. READ IT. It will surely affect you profoundly in one way or another.

Engaging in sex, becoming parents, raising children: these are among the most personal decisions we make, and for people with mental retardation, these decisions are consistently challenged, regulated, and outlawed. This book is a comprehensive study of the American legal doctrines and social policies, past and present, that have governed procreation and parenting by persons with mental retardation. It argues persuasively that people with retardation should have legal authority to make their own decisions. Despite the progress of the normalization movement, which has moved so many people with mental retardation into the mainstream since the 1960s, negative myths about reproduction and child rearing among this population persist. Martha Field and Valerie Sanchez trace these prejudices to the eugenics movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They show how misperceptions have led to inconsistent and discriminatory outcomes when third parties seek to make birth control or parenting decisions for people with mental retardation. They also explore the effect of these decisions on those they purport to protect. Detailed, thorough, and just, their book is a sustained argument for reform of the legal practices and social policies it describes.

From Library Journal Field, a Harvard law professor and author of *Surrogate Motherhood* (LJ 11/15/88), and civil liberties practitioner Sanchez provide a comprehensive examination of the reproductive and parental rights of mentally retarded citizens. After presenting an overview of mental retardation and of relevant public policy and case law, the authors detail current debates about procreation and parenting among the mentally retarded and put forth proposals to reform the existing system. Opportunities for informed decision-making and access to support services, they argue, should always be made available, and legal intervention should lead to greater self-determination, inclusion, and community support for the disabled. Society needs to grant appropriate protection to the retarded without unfairly restricting their personal choices. An important resource for legal and medical professionals, care givers, educators, and social service providers, this book is highly recommended for the law and medical collections of public and academic libraries.

ADeborah Anne Broocker, Georgia Perimeter Coll. Lib., Dunwoody Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. A comprehensive examination of the reproductive and parental rights of mentally retarded citizens. After presenting an overview of mental retardation and of relevant public policy and case law, the authors detail current debates about procreation and parenting among the mentally retarded and put forth proposals to reform the existing system...An important resource for legal and medical professionals, care givers, educators, and social service providers. (Deborah Anne Broocker Library Journal) A major contribution to the scholarly literature on discrimination and on civil rights and liberties. (Kathleen M. Sullivan, Dean, Stanford Law School) This book presents an analysis of past and present legal doctrines and policies regarding the reproductive rights of individuals with intellectual disabilities and it recommends a number of reforms I certainly hope that it will be read by attorneys and judges involved in family law and child protection, and that it will be included in the curriculum of law schools. As the Custody Specialist at the National Resource Center for Parents with Disabilities, it provides me with a useful historical and conceptual framework, helps locate legal precedents relevant to particular cases, and offers analyses that can

contribute to improved public policy and practice. (Megan Kirshbaum Disability Studies Quarterly) A major contribution to the scholarly literature on discrimination and on civil rights and liberties. --Kathleen M. Sullivan, Dean, Stanford Law School