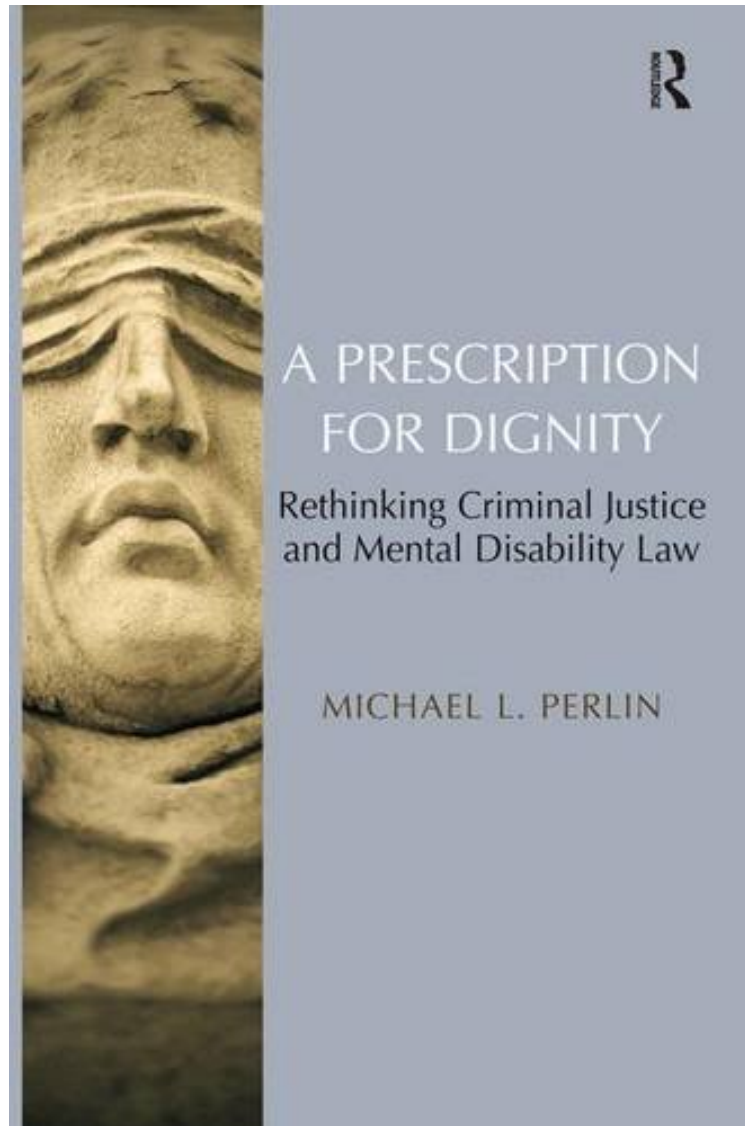


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# A Prescription for Dignity: Rethinking Criminal Justice and Mental Disability Law

*Michael L. Perlin*

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**Michael L. Perlin : A Prescription for Dignity: Rethinking Criminal Justice and Mental Disability Law** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Prescription for Dignity: Rethinking Criminal Justice and Mental Disability Law:

Examining the treatment of persons with mental disabilities in the criminal justice system, this book offers new perspectives that are crucial to an understanding of the ways in which society projects onto criminal defendants prejudices and attitudes about responsibility, free will, autonomy, choice, public safety, and the meaning and purpose of punishment, all with a focus on ways to enhance dignity in the criminal trial process. It is a detailed exploration of issues of adequacy of counsel; the impact of international human rights law, following the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); the role of mental health courts; and the influence of therapeutic jurisprudence, procedural justice, and restorative justice on the legal process. It considers all of these perspectives in the context of criminal justice system issues such as competency findings, the insanity defense, and sentencing. Demonstrating how the question of treatment of persons with mental disabilities in the criminal justice system is not only a vital one for both scholars and practitioners, but also a central facet of international human rights law, this book suggests policy development, further scholarly inquiries, and newly invigorated thinking and action to place dignity at the core of the criminal justice system.

'Michael Perlin is the consummate advocate for people with mental disability. His long experience as a public lawyer, his encyclopedic knowledge of both the academic literature and the law, and his willingness to take politically incorrect stances make him the ideal person to author a book about how criminal justice treats this long-misunderstood group of people. Both wisdom and solicitude ooze from these pages, in a way that should open the eyes even of those who think they know the system.'

Christopher Slobogin, Vanderbilt University, USA

Perlin's warmth, compassion, and humanity are constantly revealed as he recasts legal issues through the lens of dignity. This book is elegant, but always clear and coherent and weaves together the concepts of sanism, pretextuality, heuristics, and "ordinary common sense" in a masterful and compelling manner. It should be required reading for anyone seriously interested in the interface of mental health and the law.'

David Shapiro, Nova Southeastern University, USA

About the Author

Michael L. Perlin is Professor of Law, Director of the International Mental Disability Law Reform Project, and Director of the Online Mental Disability Law Program at New York Law School. He is the author or co-author of over twenty books and 250 articles on mental disability law, international human rights law, and criminal justice. Before becoming a professor, he was Deputy Public Defender for the Mercer County Trial Region in the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender, and Director of the Division of Mental Health Advocacy in the New Jersey Department of the Public Advocate.