

# THE DISABILITY OF POLICE



Christian Orse  
Katherine Schiller  
Jadon Means-Simonsen

# Thesis

“actual or perceived disability, including mental illness, has thus served as a primary driver of surveillance, policing and punishment for women and gender-nonconforming people of colour throughout US history” (Ritchie 91)

Ritchie's thesis states that the label of having a disability or mental illness has led to high rates of over-policing on women of colour and gender-nonconforming people of colour



-Women of colour and gender-nonconforming people receiving the label of mentally ill or disabled has led to the over-policing of these respected communities

-These terms and labels make these groups perceived as a threat, unpredictable, dangerous, and superhuman.

-this plays into stereotypes and tropes that have been around since slavery

-These labels and stereotypes justify the means for the police to use excessive force as they perceive these women of colour and gender-nonconforming people as a threat.



Kayla Moore

“People should not be afraid to call for mental health assistance” – Maria Moore



-Kayla Moore was a trans black woman, who was a diagnosed schizophrenic

-Police officers had been called by her roommate, who stated that she had been drinking, using drugs, and acting irrationally

-According to her sister, Kayla was calm when the officers arrived at the scene, but the officers claimed that Kayla was “speaking incoherently”

-Instead of asking her caregiver, or Kayla what she needed, the officers misgendered Kayla, telling her that she had a warrant out for her arrest, which was false

-The officers perceived Kayla as a threat, not only because of her mental illness, but because of her gender identity, giving the officer more of a reason to assault and deny



Lisa Hayes

“I feel not only degraded, humiliated; I feel like they didn’t treat me as a human being” – Lisa Hayes (Ritchie, 100)

-Lisa Hayes, a quadriplegic with cerebral palsy was getting a bath from her husband, when police officers executed a search warrant on her home

-Police officers raided her house and beat and abused her husband

-They demanded that she get up from the bath, and when she could not move, they carried her out of her house. Naked.

-Hayes’s disability caused her to receive unmerited punishment from the police.

- her inability to move, because of her disability, gave the police officers cause to harass, assault and degrade Hayes.





Ritchie, Andrea J. *Invisible No More: Police Violence against Black Women and Women of Color*. Beacon Press,