



Poverty, Battered Women, and Work in U.S. Public Policy (Interpersonal Violence)

Lisa D. Brush

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Drawing on longitudinal interviews, government records, and personal narratives, feminist sociologist Lisa Brush examines the intersection of work, welfare, and battering. Brush contrasts conventional wisdom with illuminating analyses of social change and social structures, highlighting how race and class shape women's experiences with poverty and abuse and how "domestic" violence moves out of the home and follows women to work.

Brush's unique interview data on work-related control, abuse, and sabotage, together with administrative data on earnings, welfare, and restraining orders, offer new empirical insights on the impact of work requirements and other post-welfare rescission changes on the lives of low-income and battered mothers. Personal narratives provide first-hand accounts of women's perceptions of the broad forces that shape the circumstances of their everyday lives, their health, their prospects, their ambitions, and their diagnoses of their world. Deftly integrating the political and the personal, the administrative and the narrative, the economic and the emotional, Brush underscores the vital need to reexamine ideas, policies, and practices meant to keep women safe and economically productive that instead trap women in poverty and abuse.

With her fresh approach to problems people often see as intractable, Brush offers a new way of calculating the costs of battering for the policy makers and practitioners concerned with the well being of poor, battered women and their families and communities.

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