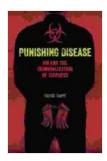
Punishing Disease: HIV and the Criminalization of Sickness

In the United States, people living with HIV face a unique form of discrimination: the criminalization of the disease. This means that people can be arrested, charged, and even imprisoned for transmitting HIV, even if they do not intend to do so. The criminalization of HIV is a violation of human rights and has had a devastating impact on the lives of people living with the virus.



Punishing Disease: HIV and the Criminalization of

Sickness by Trevor Hoppe		
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The History of the Criminalization of HIV

The criminalization of HIV has its roots in the early days of the AIDS epidemic. In the 1980s, when HIV was first identified, there was a great deal of fear and misinformation about the virus. This fear led to widespread discrimination against people living with HIV, and in some cases, to violence.

In response to this discrimination, activists began to fight for the rights of people living with HIV. They argued that people living with HIV should be treated with dignity and respect, and that they should not be punished for their illness. In 1993, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed, which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities, including people living with HIV.

Despite the passage of the ADA, the criminalization of HIV has continued. In the 1990s, a number of states passed laws that made it a crime to knowingly transmit HIV. These laws were often based on the mistaken belief that people living with HIV were intentionally trying to infect others.

The Impact of the Criminalization of HIV

The criminalization of HIV has had a devastating impact on the lives of people living with the virus. People living with HIV are more likely to be arrested, charged, and convicted of crimes than people who do not have HIV. They are also more likely to be sentenced to longer prison terms.

The criminalization of HIV also makes it difficult for people to get the care and support they need. People living with HIV who are afraid of being arrested or charged with a crime may avoid getting tested or seeking treatment. This can lead to serious health consequences, including death.

The Fight to End the Criminalization of HIV

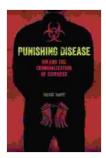
Activists are fighting to end the criminalization of HIV. They argue that the criminalization of HIV is a violation of human rights and that it has had a devastating impact on the lives of people living with the virus. Activists are working to educate the public about HIV, to challenge the stigma

associated with the virus, and to advocate for laws that protect the rights of people living with HIV.

The criminalization of HIV is a serious problem that has had a devastating impact on the lives of people living with the virus. Activists are fighting to end the criminalization of HIV, and they need our support. We must all work together to create a world where people living with HIV are treated with dignity and respect, and where they can live their lives free from fear of arrest or prosecution.

References

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- The Criminalization of HIV in the U.S.: A History, POZ
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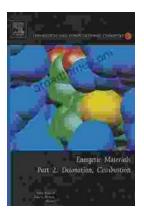
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