



# Disability, Augmentative Communication, and the American Dream: A Qualitative Inquiry

*Ronald J. Berger, Jon A. Feucht, Jennifer Flad*

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*Disability, Augmentative Communication, and the American Dream* is a collaborative effort to tell the life story of Jon A. Feucht, a man who was born with a form of cerebral palsy that left him reliant on a wheelchair for mobility, with limited use of his arms and an inability to speak without an assistive communication device. It is a story about finding one's voice, about defying low expectations, about fulfilling one's dreams, and about making a difference in the world.

Sociologist C. Wright Mills famously called for a "sociological imagination" that grapples with the intersection of biography and history in society and the ways in which personal troubles are related to public issues. *Disability, Augmentative Communication, and the American Dream* heeds this call through a qualitative "mixed-methods" study that situates Feucht's life in broader social context, understanding disability not just as an individual experience but also as a social phenomenon. In the tradition of disability studies, it also illuminates an experience of disability that avoids reading it as tragic or pitiable.

*Disability, Augmentative Communication, and the American Dream* is intended as an analytical and empirical contribution to both disability studies and qualitative sociology, to be read by social science scholars and students taking courses in disability studies and qualitative research, as well as by professionals working in the fields of special education and speech pathology. Written in an accessible style, the book will also be of interest to lay readers who want to learn more about disability issues and the disability experience.

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