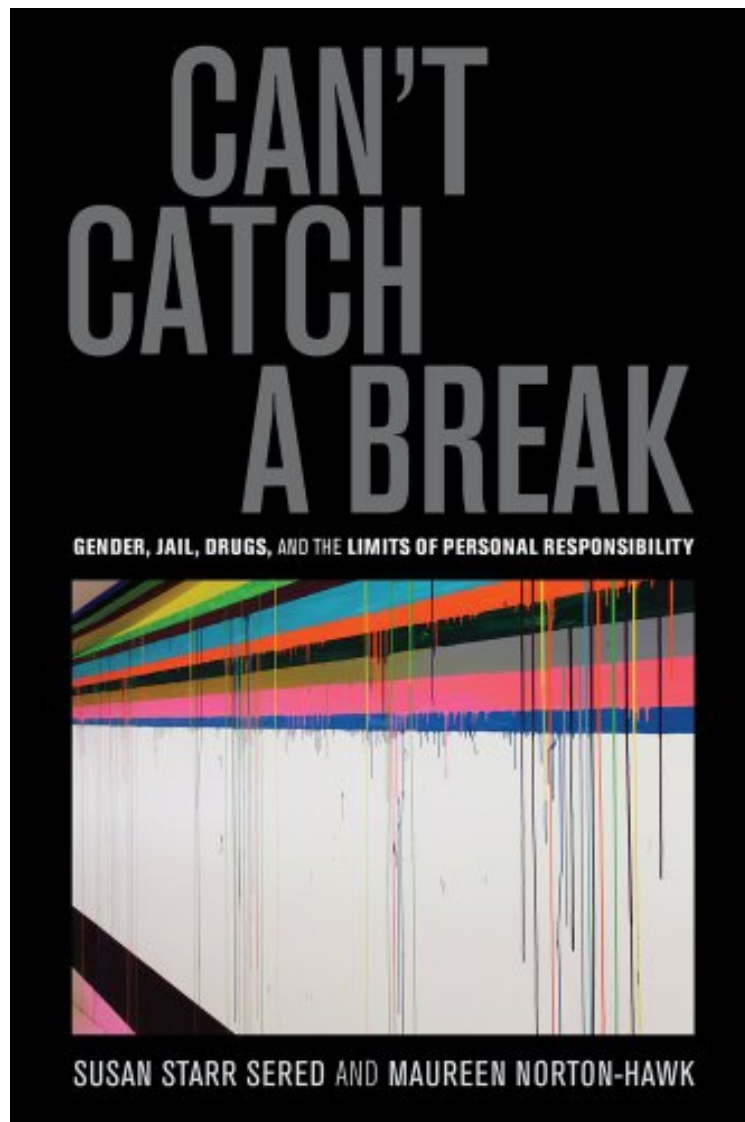


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# Can't Catch a Break: Gender, Jail, Drugs, and the Limits of Personal Responsibility

*Susan Starr Sered, Maureen Norton-Hawk*  
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Based on five years of fieldwork in Boston, *Can't Catch a Break* documents the day-to-day lives of forty women as they struggle to survive sexual abuse, violent communities, ineffective social and therapeutic programs, discriminatory local and federal policies, criminalization, incarceration, and a broad cultural consensus that views suffering as a consequence of personal flaws and bad choices. Combining hard-hitting policy analysis with an intimate account of how marginalized women navigate an unforgiving world, Susan Sered and Maureen Norton-Hawk shine new light on the deep and complex connections between suffering and social inequality.