

Overarching Connections

When conducting my research on the American Disability Act (ADA) one thing became very evident to me; throughout history, one of people's biggest abilities is to come together in a time of need to make a change. In the American Revolution, when America was fighting against Great Britain for independence, people came together in rallies, parades and riots to fight for their rights and independence. When America obtained its independence through the war and began to govern itself, the lower class, which was treated unequally compared to those of the higher class, came together to change the standards and insist on equal economic rights. In the movie Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, we saw the same actions occur. In the 1860's-90's Indians all over America were being threatened and thereby ultimately forced out of their homes and land. Though the American army was very strong and there was an unlikely chance for them to win against the American people, tribes joined as one to stand up and fight for their homes and the promised lands. They lost countless lives and lived many years in starvation and darkness. However, together they changed the way America managed and negotiated with them and attained some of the land promised to them. This act of people coming together in unison and putting their strengths together was very prevalent, and still is today, when fighting for basic rights. This is seen as disabled people fight for their rights through the ADA. Though disabled, they have shown the ability to come together to support one another, educate others and to fight for their beliefs and equal constitutional rights as American citizens.

Another insight gained from the research completed is the inability America has to accept those who are different. In 1861, during the period of the Civil War, people did not want African Americans fighting in the war or to have freedom from slavery because they were different and people believed that God created them unequally. Even though African Americans are free now, it took much time and a considerable amount of convincing for Abraham Lincoln to have slavery abolished. Lincoln worked hard despite all the doubts and hassles to accomplish his dream of ending slavery.

This is much different from our modern world where if a difficult situation confronts us, we tend to take the route/option with less hassle. One instance of this is abortion. In my abortion project it was clear to me that, for the most part, some women did not want to keep their child because they were unprepared and it felt like it was too much of a disturbance in their life. As a result of not wanting to take the responsibility and deal with the hassle of caring for a child, they end up aborting their child, never even giving him/her a chance. In relation to disabled people being held back and unable to get jobs it seems very similar. Many businesses don't want to hire disabled employees because they feel that the extra time, resources and money is too much of a hassle for them and will not promote their business. Or, in other instances, it has been seen that some businesses do not want to hire disabled workers due to the fact that they are "different" and can scare other employees and/or clients. Because of businesses' possible fear of spending more money and time on this employee and potential fear of the person, disabled people are never even given the chance to show their capabilities.

Disabled people are looked at as those who 'cannot do'. They are consistently underestimated, pushed down, told they can't and are seen as unequals. But if history truly does repeat itself, we will

surely see that disabilities are no obstacle and the prejudice against them is no fear and that they will get the rights they deserve.