

The historical event I will be studying is the American Disability Act (ADA). This act eliminated discrimination toward individuals with disabilities and has granted over 50 million disabled Americans civil rights. This act was passed in 1990 and has guaranteed fair chances of employment, transportation, schooling, public accommodations, government services and access to those who live with disabilities. I chose this event because my attention was drawn to the lack of rights people with disabilities had. In the past they have been shot down and held to lower expectations/standards due to the fact that they are “physically different” than others. In the end this forced them to overcome more difficult situations and discipline than most “normal” people would which has made them stronger individuals which I find quite inspiring. I also feel like this is an event that not many people are aware of and I feel that they should have some knowledge of it because people with disabilities have a multitude of gifts that were and are often ignored.

This event relates to the themes we are studying in class because it shows how an unjust situation was brought to justice regardless of the consequences of what might happen when giving these people equal chances as everyone else.

Some research questions I will be addressing through this project are:

- Who first brought up the act and when?
- How did the ADA get passed?
- Who was opposed to the Act?
- How has it affected our modern society?
- How does the law define disability?
- How are the lives of individuals with disabilities affected from this act?
- Does the law have any “loop” holes? In other words, is there ways to get around the law?
- Has the law negatively affected disabled people in any way?

## **Resources**

**Fiction Novel:** *Getting Life* by J.S Cole

- *Getting Life* is a story about a non-verbal nursing home resident who has been confined to a wheel chair for over 17 years. This book displays that she is not “a lump on a log” but a real, thinking and feeling human being who has never been given the chance to show her abilities and when given the chance, she is able to show everyone just how special she is.

**Articles:**

“The History of the ADA: A Movement Perspective” by Arlene Mayerson

- *The History of the ADA* is an overview of how, when and why the ADA came about. It discusses the importance, the trials and battles, doubts and concerns people had with this act.

“20 Years after the ADA, Is Life Better for Those with Disabilities” by Judy Woodruff

- This is a brief article looking at how the act has improved life for the disabled in the 20 years. This article also gives examples of how the act still needs improvements and how new technology such as the internet will help disabled people live a more “normal” life.

“Disabilities and HIV/AIDs” by United Nation Enabled

- This article discusses whether or not HIV and AIDs should be considered a disability and if it should receive the same “treatments” and other disabilities.

**Film:** Educating Peter, directed by Gerardine Wurzburg

- A 1992 Academy Award winning documentary about a third grade student named Peter who has down syndrome. This documentary takes you through his experience of fighting for his rights to learn just as any other child would. It also shows you the different sides and opinions that others have about him sharing the same classroom.

**Book Chapters:** *Make Them Go Away* by Mary Johnson.

Chapter: *Passing the Americans with Disabilities Act* (Cp. 2)

- Make Them Go Away is book that discusses the trials of the ADA being passed. This book shows the ups and downs of the act, the protests, the “loop holes” of the act and essential how the act has accomplished little.