

Thesis: how did the treatment of disabled citizens from the post-civil war era affect our present in ethical or unethical ways?

Intro:

Growing up I have always had a connection with children with disabilities. Whether it be a minor form of ADD or a severe case of Autism, I have always been able to get them to open up. When I was younger I had a friend who was Autistic. Now, she was Autistic, but you'd never know it when talking to her. She was one of the smartest people in our class, drew the best pictures, and had the cutest clothes. Despite being "normal" to me, she always stood out because she had a special teacher just for her and would have to leave the room sometimes to attend special sessions in the special classroom. At some point in elementary school, it hit me that she did have Autism and there was something different about her. I still loved her and hung out with her, but something was different. I think back to that time and realize why I felt that there was something off about her.

Main point of the intro: connect my story to the thesis (how they are treated differently and how that is unethical because they are treated differently)

History:

Throughout history, the United States has loved to categorize people based on their bodies. Although they cannot help what they have been given, they are still bound to what they appear as or act as. Whether it is race, sex, gender, or mental ability, people have always been separated based on their abilities. One that has been a topic in history is discrimination based on mental and physical disabilities. These can be major or minor, but nonetheless could've put someone out of work, in a separate classroom, or forced into an operation.

- People with disabilities being refused work opportunities because of them being ranked a "moron" or "imbecile"
- Women being forced into sterilization because of the risk of passing on "toxic" traits and not having any worry of violating that person
 - Mental illness (depression, anxiety), Autism, Downs Syndrome
 - Article talking about Shirley who suffered from mental illness and her husband thinking she would be cured by being sterilized
- Linking mental illness with crime because "they don't know any better"
 - Even if it is not confirmed that they have anything
- Pitying people with disabilities because of their situation
 - No efforts made to improve it though
- Putting disabled/minority students in worse learning situations (if any)
 - Trailers, less technology and resources for learning because the better materials should be for the "normal" students

Today:

The events that took place in the past have led to major improvements for the disabled community. Although there is still much to be done for these people, there have been major advancements in their education, citizenship, and social status in the United States.

- Being integrated in classrooms

- Children with Autism and other disorders are more active in the classrooms with “normal” children which can lead to them learning skills that can help them progress instead of isolating them with other children dealing with the same or worse issues (can make them regress)
- Other children are used to being around people with disabilities and are prepared to work with them in the workforce
- Jobs are more open to hiring people with disabilities
 - Help them move up in the world instead of keeping them below the normal standard
- Mental illness (anxiety, depression, OCD, ADD) aren't as stigmatized
 - Although in schools ADD and ADHD are known for making people “dumb,” especially if they take some type of medication to help
 - Schools still separate children with those diseases by putting them in the front of the room so they can focus better, make them leave the room with an IEP for testing (both helpful for the student, but a lot of times is humiliating because kids see it as something is wrong with them)
- Better programs/education to fit the needs of kids with disabilities
 - More learning strategies for the classroom to keep them engaged/interested in the real world topics being taught

Conclusion:

Society has made some big efforts to improve the lives of the disabled and mentally ill, but there is still work to be done. Society needs to keep making people with disabilities feel accepted and valued as they are still humans just like everyone else.

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