

Arienny De Jesus

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Behind the Scenes of Psychiatric Disability Through Control

Everyone has a burden brought upon them by God, however the way in which an individual decides to react towards this burden is what determines their future. The idea of having a mental condition that limits an individual to proceed in physical movements, senses, and or activities is considered to be having a disadvantage and being handicapped. This all then translate to the individual having a disability. Society tends to categorize the term disability as a disadvantage to someone's life, causing them to believe they now live a burden life. However, that is not the case because only the strongest warriors receive challenging battles that can only be fought through patience. Good things come to those who wait. Disabled people deserve more credit than what they are given. We should not pity them, instead we should be their form of motivation and protection. Throughout my essay I will explore the theme of control and how society plays a major role in contributing to this idea of controlling others. Also, this essay will begin to explore deeper into psychiatric disability and individuals overcome this idea of normal through their disability. Society has let the media and society's environmental factors turn protection into neglect towards disability. Through violence, exploitation, and stereotypes we have let down the disability community and have let the rest of society take control and dominate over others.

The idea of protection brings about a sense of security and feeling secure among any environmental factor an individual may be under. As for individuals with disabilities, society has failed to provide this protection leading for others to feel the need to take control. Society often

feels threatened by individuals who may have a mental illness. Feeling threatened by these individuals is what causes the, to react to certain situations leading to horrible outcomes for everyone. However, it's actually the other way around. These patients feel attacked, rejected and isolated from the rest of the world. In "My Life with Tourette's Syndrome" by Shane Fistell, Shane describes his life being questioned throughout his time leading him to self-imposed house arrest. "Do these people truly think that I want to face being ridiculed, embarrassed and being shunned and ignored, not being believed, having little or no credibility, being barred, threatened, rejected, isolated, rebuked and laughed at." This comes to show the lack of protection that we as a society fail to provide to those individuals with a disability. It's outrageous to read about people shutting themselves out of the community by subjecting themselves to house arrest, simply because society allows them to feel this way.

The outside world can be threatening, especially for those individuals that let everything and everyone around them dictate their every move. As heard in "My Damn Mind" by This American Life, the idea of the outside world being threatened by mental ill people is brought to our attention as we listen to Allen Pean's story. Allen was shot and handcuffed to his hospital bed and considered a criminal for the way in which he responded to authority. If there's one lesson to be learned from this recording is to look closely on how we view protection, rather than protecting individuals instead we are causing more harm physically and emotionally. The way society treat disabled people can't be justified "how you can show up in an emergency room needing psychiatric help and end up shot by the police in the hospital". Not only are we shutting them out, we can't even protect the people of this country as it is their duty as a police officer. "Police handcuffed him to his bed...that's because police saw him as a criminal." Labeling disabled people as criminals is certainly not ideal. We as a society need to learn how to treat

psychiatric patients without labeling them as criminals. This idea of criminality brings the individual to feel threatened by society and fearful to live a “normal” life. However, for disabled people achieving this idea normality was definitely more difficult when trying to portray this image to the rest of society.

The media sometimes tends to portray disability as a form of criminality causing the rest of society to push back on this idea of lending a helping hand to those disabled. “The connection between criminality and disability continues... giving disabilities to villainous characters reflects and reinforces.... three common prejudices against handicapped people: disability is a punishment for evil, disabled people resent the nondisabled and would, if they could, destroy them.” The media paints this picture to mirror reality as a way to show how society treats people with disabilities, and Longmore makes us aware of this. However, people tend to forget disabled people and ones with psychiatric disabilities are also regular people and deserve the same treatment. Through the media this is portrayed in many different instances. For example, the show “The Good Doctor” portrays a young surgeon with autism doing the job of any typical surgeon. However, Dr. Shaun Murphy is a surgeon with autism, of course this makes him stand out from the rest of your typical medical surgeons. “Autism, a mental condition characterized by difficulty in communicating and using language and abstract concepts. That’s the definition. Does it sound like I’m describing a surgeon?” This emphasizes on the idea of how the media tends to portray people with disabilities. In this case we are discussing a psychiatric disability in terms of not being enough for the common standard. Who said a surgeon can’t be great and also be autistic? The idea of meeting a specific standard in order to be accepted by the rest of society is a constant reminder of that being “normal” is what it takes for society to accept an individual.

The media makes it much harder for one to be accepted for who they are and the baggage they bring to the table.

Throughout society going by day to day feeling pity towards others sometimes seems like the easiest way out, but still showing everyone that we care for the ones we pity. “It’s less trouble to feel sorry for her than it is to teach her anything better.” Sometimes feeling sorry for someone may seem reasonable, however that fails to provide the protection and support the individual may need. Of course it’s difficult to not feel pity towards one that has a disability and sometimes people feel this way unconsciously simply because it’s in our nature to feel this way. However, that does not make it right all it means is that this way of feeling has been accepted by society and has become norm.

The idea of accepting societal norms may be challenging, however it’s up to the individual to try to understand the true meaning behind each situation. In this case, with reference to disability there has always been some type of intersection of violence in disability. Throughout literature and real life situations one can see the interaction between the two. Steinbeck brings about justifying violence among people through the idea of disability. The novel “Of Mice and Men” tells a story of escalating violence. This is emphasized through the killing of Lennie because in society its acceptable to think that people with intellectual disabilities are uncontrollable and a burden to someone’s life. This leads to disabled characters typically ending up dead. Steinbeck reinforces the act of violence being acceptable by justifying death as merciful and leaving one with no choice but to act violently against the disabled ones. People behaving this way leads to bad interpretation of how one should treat the disabled. This turns back to the idea of “normal” being taken out of context and creating a new meaning to how one should act upon the face of reality in order to be accepted as what can be considered normal.

There's no real definition to what is the standard for someone to be accepted into society. The only real standard is how one may view themselves.

Learning to accept yourself for who you are is a part of life we all need to learn how to cope with. No matter the challenge you're faced with only the individual can fence for themselves and create a better living outside of the expected societal norms. If you fall into the category of trying to please the outside world by doing what is accepted in society rather than doing what makes you happy can lead to living a life that is controlled by the rest of society and its standards. The way in which people categorize disability and how having a disability can be portrayed as a disadvantage to people is what leads them to act accordingly to what is accepted rather than living a life that makes the individual happy. Exploring the idea of protection and how the media has the destroyed the image of disability through society's environmental factors that turn protection into neglect towards disability. Through violence, exploitation, and stereotypes as a society we have let down the disability community.