

*Ballet of Tibet*, *Ysrael* and *Longmore Screening Stereotypes* are three texts that I have read and watched. While reading these texts, one word that comes to mind is prejudgment. Many people with disabilities before birth or even being born are already judged by their capabilities and how far they would be able to succeed in their life. Those without disabilities have experienced some type of a prejudgment without any source of reasoning. Many people can take being judged very personally. Many people doubt others because they doubt themselves, which causes them to have a negative towards life. Other make judgments because they have seen others in the same predicament or even look the same way, therefore they feel as if they have an idea of what they can do. Some people judge others in certain situations because they have no knowledge of the situation. They need to put themselves in the other person's shoes and just imagine if they were in their situation. These three-texts provide examples of cases of prejudgment.

Individuals have a prejudgment in their heads that those with disabilities are different from them. They look down upon them and think they are better smarter and more humane. In *Longmore Screening Stereotypes*, it says 'further, the depiction of the disabled person as a monster and the criminal characterization both express to varying degrees the notion that disability involves the loss of an essential part of one's humanity' People with disabilities are a diverse group – the visually, hearing, and speech disabled. People who have lost a limb, a person with restricted mobility. Even people with muscle illnesses such as muscular dystrophy cystic fibrosis or seizures. (Longmore, 65). All disabled people share one common thing and that is prejudgment and discrimination. People with a disability also lack the accessibility in the economy and educational opportunities.

Another theoretical text that can be used is *Kemp No Pity* which explains, “The very human desire for cures for these diseases can never justify a television show that reinforces a stigma against disabled people. These prejudices create stereotypes that offend our self-respect, harm our efforts to live independent lives and segregate us from the mainstream of society. The telethon encourages public prejudices in several ways.” Many people often feel pity for the family of the disabled because they act as if they are struggling day by day with their family member with the disability. They fail to realize that those with disabilities can manage to do things on their own. They raise a concern and question, what will happen if their family isn’t there to take care of their kid anymore? The telethon emphasizes the desperate helplessness of the most severely disabled. It makes the people feel total hopelessness for those with a disability. People feel that those with disabilities are totally destructive and feel embarrassed to be around those with disabilities. This causes public fear of those with disabilities. Telethon also explains that those with disabilities are sick and because they are sick we should allow people to take care of them until a cure is found and they aren’t sick anymore.

*Ballad of Tibet* is about underprivileged blind children that are cast away from society. Three blind children and one almost blind hitched their way to the game show to try their luck. They are prejudged by the local belief that the blind has been punished from heaven, leading to societal discrimination. Therefore because of this prejudgment, the Shezhan tv producer tried to take pity on the children, but their also blind teacher silences the producer by saying “They are not looking for sympathy they are looking to be given a chance.” The children wanted to be given an equal opportunity to showcase their talent and viewed the same as everyone else, not as

a disabled outcasts. In some cases, people with disabilities also must deal with some sort of pity. There will always be a form of prejudgment of those with disabilities just because of the simple fact other people don't understand disability and the struggle to comprehend that there are many different people. What most people don't understand is that people with disabilities go on fine every day with their disabilities. When someone sees someone with a disability, they are usually quick to offer help. It can either be them helping because of pity or just because they need it. People having trouble understanding the blind and what they are capable of. The world thinks that the blind isn't as talented or capable to do what others can. Not knowing that they are sometimes capable of so much more than what certain people expect.

In the short novel, *Ysrael* is pre-judged and cast away from society. He is a symbol of isolation. He is judged by his appearance and no one wants to be near him or around him. The neighborhood children target him and assault him. Ysrael wears a mask to protect himself from those who would prejudge him based on his appearance. The mask covers his physical and emotional wounds and protects his privacy. "He was something to talk about a name that set the kids screaming" (Diaz, chapter 2).

The three texts show a great example of prejudgment in which people target those with disabilities and place a cap on how far they can go today. Prejudgment is something that affects both disabled and non-disabled people. They are cutting people short before giving them the opportunity to showcase their talents or even getting to know them personally. You will never know someone's worth unless you give them the opportunity and have an open mind no matter the situation. We view all these people with disabilities with struggles on television. What we need to see more on television is those with disabilities working, raising families and generally

sharing in community life. Instead, we see people with disabilities being dependent on others instead of them being independent.

*My Life with Tourette's Syndrome* and *My Damn Mind* are also two great examples of people who are looked down upon and judged by other people who obviously have no understanding of what people go through on the inside. They are quick to judge others because they have never been in a predicament where themselves or their loved ones are delusional or have a problem with their nervous system that causes people to make sudden movements or sounds. People argued: "there's no way you have Tourette's! If you don't swear you don't have it! Period. And I know you don't have it because I've seen it on TV!". They felt that because people watch some television and see someone with a certain symptom, they feel as if they know everything and there's no need to know about others. Also, *My Damn Mind* is a great example that shows how powerful the mind is and how easily it can play games with you not being able to tell you what's real or fake.

In *The Miracle Worker*, twenty-one-year-old Annie Sullivan teaches Helen Keller how to read. Helen was left deaf and blind by an early childhood illness. Sullivan teaches Helen to use American sign language and helps her understand the world around her. Helen Keller was isolated by her disabilities, unable to comprehend the world around her. She threw fits and would run into objects frequently to express her frustration at the world. "She is like a little safe, locked, that no one can open. Perhaps there is a treasure inside." (Gibson,13). This quote explains how much of a mystery Helen was to those around her. Once Annie came into her life, she unlocked her safe and allowed Helen to find herself by teaching her how to communicate.

The *Elephant Man* is based on a true story, it is the story of the life of a man named Joseph Merrick, who lived in England in the 19th century. The essay exposes Merrick's life from

the point where Dr. Frederick Treves discovers him until his death. Merrick is not an ordinary man. He suffers from a disease that causes him to be deformed. He is called the Elephant Man. People fear him, but they pay to look at him. "The result is plain to see... ladies and gentlemen... The Terrible... elephant...Man." (Sparks,1980). Merrick relates to Helen where they both felt like outcasts and separate from society and those around them.

While reading the second half of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon, an issue that stood out to me was the fact that Christopher's mother was fired from her job because she took a leave to care for her son, who has special needs. Christopher's diagnosis was never confirmed in the novel because it is fictional, but his symptoms are like those of a person with Asperger's. For example, while on leave his mother takes him shopping for items he needs, such as pajamas, but she must take Christopher home when he becomes frightened in store. I'm sure most parents with children who are of special needs must constantly deal with taking off from work to care for their children. Jobs should be more understanding of this circumstance because these parents are constantly scarfing a lot to give their children the best care and treatments. Their medical bills must be extremely high, therefore they need to continue working to have money to pay these bills.