

LESSON 3.1h – History of Disability Rights

Learning Objectives:

Unit 3: Rights and Responsibilities

- A. Understanding the history of disability discrimination and institutionalization
- B. Learning about disability civil rights laws

Materials:

- Disability History Timeline
- Disability History Assignment Sheet

Time:

One or more class sessions and homework (depending on implementation)

Setting:

Group and individual research and writing

Directions:

Lesson Preparation

Reserve the use of a computer lab for Option 1 of this lesson. Prepare information for students about the bibliography format used in your classroom / school.

Lesson Implementation

Option 1 –

The purpose of this part of the lesson is to expose students to the historical perspective regarding specific disability civil rights issues including but not limited to the following:

- Adaptive Technology
- Advocacy Organizations
- Assisted Suicide (End of Life Issues)
- Education
- Employment
- Health Care
- Housing
- Immigration
- Institutionalization
- International Disability Rights Issues
- Public Accommodations (Accessibility)
- Reproductive Rights
- Sub-group Issues (Women, Children, or Minorities with Disabilities)
- Transportation

Have students divide into work groups with 2 – 4 students per group. Distribute the Disability History Timeline, and the Disability History Assignment Sheet to each student. Review the Assignment Sheet with students and answer any questions they may have about the assignment. Students may use the Disability History Timeline and Internet references found on the Assignment Sheet as the foundation for their research.

During the remainder of the first class session, students should work in their groups to identify each group's history topic area and develop a research plan. By the end of class, each team member should have an identified homework assignment. As time allows, choose to schedule a second in-class research session. Through individual research, each team will create an annotated bibliography of resources dealing with their chosen history topic. Give students information on the bibliography format requirements used in your classroom. The team members will compile their information into one electronic and hard copy document. The study guide documents should then be made available to all students via the school's library.

Option 2 –

The purpose of this part of the lesson is to provide students the opportunity to pursue more in-depth knowledge about the history of specific disability civil rights issues. This implementation option is recommended for use in history or government classes and can serve as a stand-alone lesson or a follow-up to lesson option one.

Use the Disability History Timeline to identify one or more specific report prompts relating to a specific point in history the class is studying. Working independently or in small groups, students write a report following an instructor designed report outline. The outline should reflect research, format and content requirements appropriate for the grade level.

Lesson Wrap-up / Follow-up

Review what students have learned about the history of disability rights issues and how they relate to historic and present day civil rights issues. Assign homework as needed depending on the lesson implementation schedule.

Supplementary Activities:

As an extra credit opportunity, students may read one or more of the books addressing disability history topics listed below. Students should follow instructor designed guidelines when preparing a written or oral report.

- *By Trust Betrayed: Patients, Physicians, and the License to Kill in The Third Reich* by Hugh Gregory Gallagher
- *Claiming Disability: Knowledge and Identity* by Simi Linton
- *Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language: Hereditary Deafness on Martha's Vineyard* by Nora E. Groce
- *FDR's Splendid Deception* by Hugh Gregory Gallagher
- *No Pity: People with Disabilities Forging a New Civil Rights Movement* by Joseph P. Shapiro
- *Nothing About Us Without Us* by James I. Charlton
- *The New Disability History: American Perspectives* by Paul K. Longmore
- *Why I Burned My Book and Other Essays on Disability* by Paul K. Longmore

Notes: