Research Essay

1000-1200 words, NOT INCLUDING YOUR HEADING.

***CHOOSE FROM THE FOLLOWING FOR YOUR RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC***

1. **Some broad ideas for topics (for those of you who like creative freedom):**

Select a current issue related to disability and identity, disability and policy, disability in education, or disability in society and connect it to our class readings, videos, and discussions. Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

Disability and incarceration

Invisible disabilities

Special education

How disability is seen in different cultures

Mental illness and parenting

Disability and work

ADHD and medicating young children

1. **Specific essay questions/ideas (for those who would like specific instructions—Select ONE question to answer):**

* **Paternalism** is defined as the policy or practice by people in authority that restricts the freedom and responsibilities of those subordinate to them, supposedly in the best interest of those subordinates. Drawing inferences from our course readings, videos, and in-class discussions, what role does paternalism play in the lives of disabled people? Give specific examples.
* The book *Good Kings, Bad* Kings, by Susan Nussbaum, makes the argument that abuse and neglect are a natural outcome of the institutional structure. Do you think institutions such as the Illinois Learning and Life Skills Center are still reasonable living alternatives for disabled people? What are some other possible alternatives to institutionalization?
* There is frequent debate concerning whether white writers can authentically represent characters of other races in their work. Disabled people often complain that books written by nondisabled writers can't authentically represent disabled characters. In her talk, Maysoon Zayid discussed the same issue regarding nondisabled actors playing disabled characters on stage and screen. What is your opinion on this issue? Give specific reasons to support your opinion.
* The book *Good Kings, Bad* Kings, by Susan Nussbaum, talks a lot about jobs: job discrimination, jobs with low pay, overwork, relationships with coworkers, past jobs, and even possible future jobs. How important is your job in your life? Since more than 70 percent of disabled people experience chronic unemployment, how might this affect their adult lives?
* The documentary we watched on the Willowbrook facility showed the inhumane treatment of disabled children in 1972, before laws were enacted to protect them. What laws have been put into place since 1972 specific to the rights of disabled people? Have those laws been successful in granting them equal access education, employment, and independent living? Why or why not?

Here is a checklist. Follow these and you will improve the quality of your paper

AVOID FIRST PERSON (“I,” “Me” – e.g. “I think…”, “In my opinion,”)

AVOID SECOND PERSON (“The poem tells **you,” “**As **YOU** can see…”)

Include an **appropriate title**;

Format your paper correctly (MLA Style);

**Thesis is clear, descriptive and a connected** logical argument;

**Include strong topic sentences** to introduce paragraphs;

No more than one claim per paragraph;

**Smooth transitions** between sentences/paragraphs/ideas using appropriate signal words/phrases

**Evidence/quotations are integrated** smoothly, correctly, creatively, and thoughtfully, where appropriate;

**Follow** grammar/mechanics/style expected in college writing.

*Refer to the course website for more specifics about how papers are graded.*