Summary and Response Essay

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### Introduction

This is all based on the essay by Luticha Doucette If You’re in a Wheelchair, Segregation Lives. Imagine if the world was separated by your abilities or disabilities. What if I told you that the truth is the world is in fact separated by disabilities and color of skin? No one should be treated less than humans just because of a disability or the color of their skin. People with disabilities should be able to move freely without impingement from anyone or anything. Luticha Doucette, an african american woman who has quadriplegia, chronic pain, and is a full time wheelchair user speaks on these issues from her perspective. In this paper I will summarize the facts of how disabled people are treated unfairly, and how buildings are often built without disabilities in mind. African American people are treated like outsiders, and some people don't respect the personal space of African americans.

### Struggles of disabled people in a non accessibility inclusive world

As Luticha Doucette explains her struggles with accessibility she explains that most of the restaurants and bars she goes to do not have an accessible entrance. She often has to enter through back entrances or through kitchens to get to her seat and even then she usually gets a poor seat in the back corner of the restaurant. She also explains that there are times that people think that they are being helpful when they push her wheelchair around but they often move her into the corner, or face her towards the wall, which is not helpful at all.

### Agricultural development with disabilities not in mind

In the same way in 1990 when the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was made, buildings that were created before the ADA were built without disabilities in mind. So now that the ADA is in place businesses have to try and make accommodations that were not there before. These accommodations are usually made erratically and not very well. As there is a law against discrimination, it still happens all the time to disabled people in a way that may not seem a big deal, but is to that person. Like when the checkout counter is too high for the wheelchair user to see over and reach can be something that feels like discrimination to that person. And a quote from Luticha Doucette that explains this well is as follows, “the building was built in a time when people with disabilities were almost entirely hidden from society, and architects did not consider how such a person would use the building. This makes retrofitting an even bigger challenge.” (Graff et al., 2024, #375)

### Socal barriers

Furthermore Segregation is a real problem even in our world today. A lot of people think that segregation is history, and not an issue still, but if you ask any African American person you would hear otherwise. Like in public, people often move their children behind them when in the presence of colored men, and women clutching their purses when near a black person. These problems are more prevalent than we think, and we need to be aware of this so we can work on these issues. In addition to this, African American people often feel singled out because people will touch their hair without permission. Just think how it would feel to have random people come up to you to touch your hair because it has a different texture than theirs. At the end of the essay Luticha Doucette ends with the fact that she will not give up the fight as a black and disabled person to be treated the same measure of respect and ableism as everyone else. People should not be treated any differently based on outward appearances just because.

### People Underestimate Disabled people

Furthermore Luticha Doucette explains how people will push her wheelchair without asking, and that is not helpful at all. She also explained that when people do this they often push her in the wrong direction. Similarly I agree with Luticha Doucette, because my sister has a connective tissue disorder called Ehlers Danlos Syndrome (EDS) which has caused her to have many surgeries on her knees and hips, and she is only 23 years old. A lot of her teenage years she was on crutches or in a wheelchair, and found it hard to do the same things her friends would do. She felt left out, and she is an active person, so not being able to do a lot was hard for her. People think that when you are in a wheelchair that you can't do anything by yourself, and that is wrong because there are a lot of wheelchair users that only need the wheelchair because of limitation issues. So some wheelchair users can walk just not much. My sister would often get annoyed by being babied and would push herself to do things so she could feel normal. Helping people is good, but not when they don't want the help because most of the time un-needed help is really less than helpful. You should always ask before you help someone.

### Accessible buildings

Conversely to what Luticha Doucette said about building accessibility, she would often have to use a separate entryway to enter buildings. Where I grew up most of the buildings are made in such a way that it can be easily accessible to the disabled.One of her key points, “The building was built in a time when people with disabilities were almost entirely hidden from society, and architects did not consider how such a person would use the building.” (Graff et al., 2024, #375) Sure the buildings may not have been built for accessibility before, but now when I go into stores or any public building there are ramps, handy caps, and braille for the blind in many places. I mean many places were created in a time when accessibility was not necessary for that build, people have done pretty well in updating those buildings to be accessible. But also things will be very different in the view of a disabled person so I could be wrong, but from where I have been places are made to accommodate a lot of disabilities.

### My view on social barriers

Additionally I would say I have to agree with Luticha Doucette on the fact that this is still a major issue of racism in america. America has come far since slavery but America won't admit that we still have a racism issue. Even as a white person I see the issue and I have quite a few African American friends that would tell me stories about the time that they were judged based on the color of their skin. I think that America has a problem with stereotyping people based on the color of their skin. For example, I was out at the grocery store with someone ( I'm not going to say who ) , a colored person was being rude to us, and the person I was with told me “that's just how they act.” I told that person that they were being racist, but they did not think they were. As a free country that claims to be accepting, we definitely have a hard time being inclusive to everyone.

### Conclusion

Overall we as people that would expect respect wherever we go, also need to give that same respect to all other people around us no matter the color of their skin or the disabilities someone might have. We should go the extra mile to make everything we can accessible for people with disabilities. We should really celebrate our differences because that is what makes us special. No person can control the color of their skin or their disabilities that they may have. The reality is we should not judge anyone based on outward appearances, because you never know what someone is or has gone through. Try to see things from other people's point of view before we judge them, all people deserve respect until they prove otherwise. As we go through our day to day lives we need to be aware of the people around us that we encounter, and be kind to everyone no matter their race or how they look.

### **References**

Graff, G., Birkenstein, C., Durst, R., & Panning Davies, L. J. (2024). *They Say - I Say with Readings: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. W. W. Norton, Incorporated.

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