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Intro to Sociology

Writing assignment 8: Disability and Coronavirus

The author argues that coronavirus has leveled the playing field because it forced companies and schools to create a usable online environment. People still had to work and make money throughout the lock downs so there had to be an online presence in order for some work to be done.

A norm that has developed from the pandemic that has made education and employment more inclusive was the presence of zoom in the meeting room and in classes. However, this has only become more apparent. For example, at UMass Lowell, there are Echo360 cameras in nearly every room to record lectures so, if a student missed the lecture for the day, they may watch it remotely to catch up. Now, some professors will have a zoom link available so that students could attend class live if they couldn’t make it, instead of watching the lecture later. This has also allowed professors who may have not been feeling well enough to come into class to hold the whole class session over zoom instead of having a substitute professor come in to teach the lecture. The presence of zoom has also taken off in work meetings. Many people have a decently long commute to work, especially with traffic, so now, instead of coming into the office for an entire day for a single meeting, they are able to take it online and continue working from home. Many people (my boss is one of them) work better from home too as they do not go around chatting with people, so being able to efficiently communicate through slack, email, or a quick zoom call has also led to people working more effectively. These tools being properly utilized has allowed the “playing field” to be leveled by creating a foundation for online schooling and working to be streamlined.

Given all I have learned about inequalities in this class, I would argue that class, race, and gender play no role in this. What happened was suddenly everyone had to learn how to use online systems to communicate, learn, and work effectively during the lock downs and now that that is over and the structure is there, people with disabilities or just too busy to go to campus every day is still able to perform well.