

FROM A CULTURE OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION TO A COMMUNITY OF INCLUSION

Stacey Milbern
Center for
Independent
Living, Inc.

ABOUT CIL

- Peer resource center run by and for people with disabilities
- More than 5000 Information and Referral sessions annually
- Over 1,000 persons with disabilities served yearly
 - ✓ Peer Counseling
 - ✓ Independent Living Skills Training
 - ✓ Assistive Technology Consultations
 - ✓ Residential Home Modifications
 - ✓ Employment Services
- CIL is the model for over 500 federally funded Independent Living Centers and similar projects in 22 other countries

LET'S JUST NOTICE FOR A MINUTE

Who is not in the room that would
want to be here?

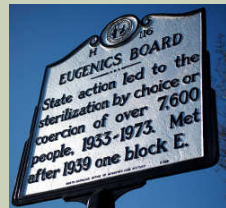
- ✓ Why not?
- ✓ What could we do to cause future change?

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

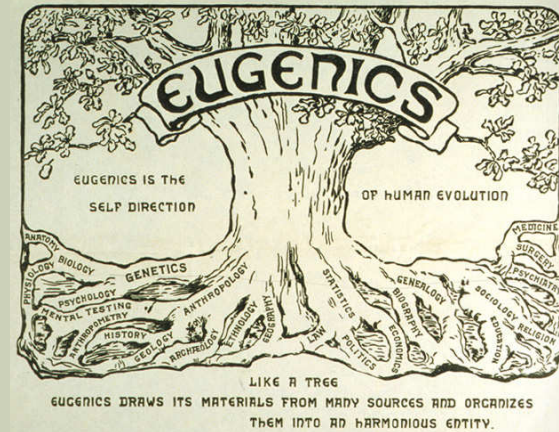
- People with disabilities throughout history have been defined as objects of shame, fear, pity or ridicule
- Kept in back rooms, or even incarcerated in state institutions and nursing homes
- Community based living seems obvious to some, but is still very controversial

“WE DON’T WANT MORE LIKE YOU”

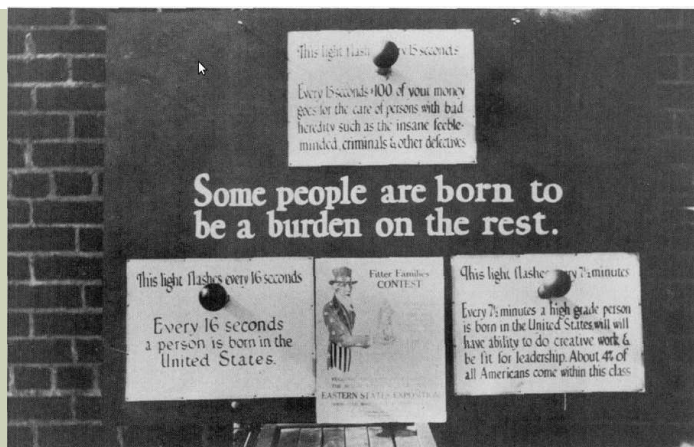
- Forced legal sterilization of disabled people
 - ✓ As recent as 1979
- Entrenched in fear of the unknown
- Its roots crossed almost every sector



ACROSS SECTORS



BURDEN



“WE CAN’T HANDLE YOU HERE”

- Students with disabilities often leave their communities to go to segregated schools
- Argument for Institutionalization is that the need of the individual cannot be met in a particular environment
 - ✓ **Value Question:** What actually needs to be a specialized service? What can be a mainstream service?

“WE DO NOT WANT TO SEE YOU”

- Some laws prohibited people with certain disabilities from appearing in public
 - ✓ Started in San Francisco in 1867; many not repealed until 1970s
- Designed to reduce “beggar population”, had devastating effect

“WE DO NOT WANT TO SEE YOU”

Minneapolis City Code

Est. 1877

“Persons who had “no visible means of support”, who live “idly without lawful employment”, and who could not give a judge a good account of themselves could be fined or required to spend 90 days in the workhouse.”

<http://www.accesspress.org/>

UGLY LAW ORDINANCE

Chicago City Code

Est. 1881

“No person who is diseased, maimed, mutilated or in any way deformed so as to be an unsightly or disgusting object or improper person to be allowed in or on the public ways or other public places in this city, or shall therein or thereon expose himself to public view, under a penalty of not less than one dollar nor more than fifty dollars for each offense.”

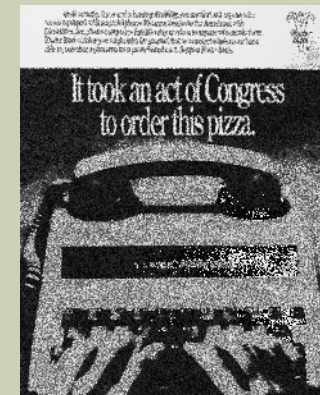
<http://www.accesspress.org/>

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

- Bipartisan
“Hidden Army”
advocated for ADA

“Let the shameful walls of exclusion finally come tumbling down.”

– *President Bush*, at signing



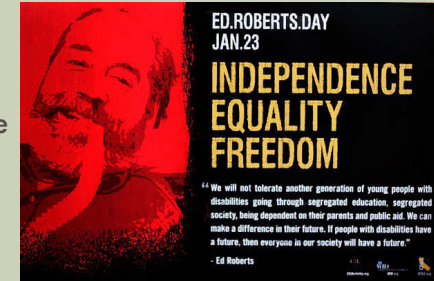
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

- Affords rights to people with disabilities in employment, commerce, communication, transportation and other areas
- Requires commerce and public places to be accessible



OLMSTEAD DECISION

- Two institutionalized women with developmental disabilities wanted to receive services in the community
- Upheld ADA
- Requires services to be provided in the least restrictive environment possible

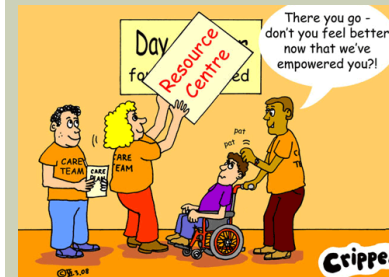


SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

- The problem is not with the individual and their impairment, but an inaccessible, inflexible environment
- Foundation of Disability Rights Movement



PROGRESS MADE, STILL WORK TO DO



- Recent changes around federal workers with disabilities, can still do more advocacy (e.g. sheltered workshops)
- Medical care for people with developmental disabilities
 - ✓ How do we resolve issues around time it takes to serve us, and time that is billable?

PROGRESS MADE, STILL WORK TO DO

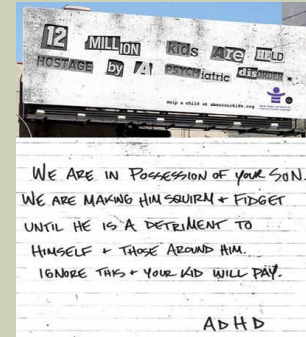


- Many continue to be institutionalized unnecessarily
- Money Follows the Person Demonstration project
 - ✓ How can we make the transition to a community-based setting more than a geography change?

PROGRESS MADE, STILL WORK TO DO

- Independent Living Skills and transition-oriented training
- Blogs and modernization of resources for parents and people with disabilities

The more a community is exposed to differences, the less fear there is around it.



CONTACT US



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*Donations make the work we do possible.
Please consider supporting us. 😊*