



The Nature of Discrimination

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Today, all forms of discrimination are found in the society. This prejudicial treatment is practiced not only by one person but by groups of people who have the same reaction towards other individuals. They often perceive the same negative and stereotypical conclusions which then results to their discriminatory actions. One group might be influenced through looking at a group member's behavior or through looking at the privileges which are offered to another individual. This then leads to various conclusions leading to irrational and illogical perspectives.

The word discrimination has been applied in various contexts and in various settings. It has been used to describe derogatory prejudice during 1830 and it has been used to describe prejudicial treatment between ethnic groups. Discrimination is derived from *discrimire*, a Latin word which means to distinguish or separate. That is why most of the people who were discriminated upon were the ones who created their own groups.

Discriminatory acts are common everywhere. We can see people who are discriminated because of their traditions, practices, rituals, ideologies, policies, culture and race. In some cases, radical discriminatory acts are applied by fanatics. A good example for this scenario is the story of the KKK or Ku Klux Klan, a separatist group of southerners which started in the 19th century. Their main objective was to accept slavery through the practice of terrorism of the African American people. In reality, the practices of the KKK were not only centered in African Americans but also in other religious and social groups such as the Jews and the Homosexual community.

The most common type of discrimination practiced today is racial discrimination. This form of discrimination is centered on racial differences and about the policies provided by the government in order to protect the rights of other cultures. Most individuals are not comfortable when dealing with other races. They often look at the color, gender and national origin of the person. Once they are exposed to another cultural group, they tend to act passive and they feel threatened. They then practice discriminatory acts by saying racial slurs and by becoming judgmental. They even feel that people from other countries should not have the same rights as with citizens.

In order to defeat discrimination, people should be educated and they should be informed about the concept of respect and acceptance. According to A.E Housman, great literature should be provided for readers in order to quicken their perception, sharpen his understanding about discrimination and soften the rawness of personal opinions. This means that through literature, people will be able to learn more about others and they will be able to accept personal opinions given by others.

Questions:

- 1) Who mentioned that great literature is the key to combat discrimination?
- 2) What is the KKK?
- 3) What is the most common type of discrimination practiced today?
- 4) How can we combat discrimination?
- 5) What Latin word means to distinguish?