TODAY'S NEWS

Protests and why they're important

Mayra Cuevas 10:30 a.m. 7 march 2017



If you were to look up the the definition of "social injustice" you'd see it's meaning being something along the lines of ; an unfair or what could be considered immoral act takes place in society. Usually when acts such as these occur you can count on a group of determined individuals to demand change. The action of standing up to something one disapproves of and rallying up together with other individuals that share the same disapproval would be called protesting. Protesting happens for no specific issues but rather for a wide variety of reasons. Protests do not only take place domestically but globally as well. Anybody, at any place, at any time, for any reason, could be part of a movement that can help spark the match of progression. There have been many protests throughout history. All for different reasons, some larger in size than others, some organized and some assembled out of the spur of the moment. America along with many other countries has been the home to some of the largest protests in history. Ranging from civil rights, to woman rights, to LGBT rights, and defending the rights of minorities in America in general. There has also been anti war protests like the Anti-Vietnam War protest that took place in Washington In November the year of 1969. (Garfield) In an effort to bring an end to the U.S.'s participation in the Vietnam War in which many felt was unnecessary. Some of the biggest protests have been for civil rights. Americas path into equality has been a long one. Starting with demanding equal rights for African Americans as well as desegregation nationwide. Segregation being the act of restricting people from eating at certain establishments, sitting in certain places, participating in certain activities based off the color of someone's skin. Even education was being put at risk due to some being afraid to send their children off to school not knowing what type of racism they may face. Many found these actions to be unfair and inhumane in which led to people standing up against the unfairness that was taking place in America for far too long (Biggs). Sit in's were a form of protest against social injustice and the oppression that was being experienced day to day. Sit ins were effective because they "involved the physical occupation of segregated public places thereby challenging and disrupting the normal operation of business" (Biggs). Boycotts were also a popular form of protest the act of not purchasing from certain establishments. The Civil Rights movement birthed some of the biggest protests in America including the March on Washington for jobs and Freedom where Martin Luther King Jr. delivered one of the most famous speeches of all time that is still referenced to this day. The Million Man March in 1955 where approximately 400,000 plus more marched in efforts of unification that took place in Washington (Garfield). There have been marches for equality for the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) community. In which up until recent years were fighting for marriage rights and years passed for protection against discrimination. Protests happen all over for all types of reasons; no reason is too small or too unimportant. America isn't the only place where standing up for rights or against oppression is practiced. Protests that have made headlines have also occurred in much further regions of the globe. In about 2011 protests starting taking place throughout Syria in an effort to stand up against their government and their president Bashar Assad. They were taking force they had been using against peaceful protesters (Jost). Protests were happening all across North Africa and the Middle East to overthrow their leaders whom people believed they had been overusing their power (Jost). Protesting in attempts to have a more democratic government have not been in vain. Although, not all of the countries that have participated in these demonstrations have completely changed their government many have started on a slow but steady path to change (Jost). Thus proving that standing up for issues can bring forthcoming change and or raise awareness for the changes that need to take place. Protesting doesn't always come in parades of people and or boycotts or sit ins it may also come in forming organizations to stand up for injustices. One of many organizations that have been formed to demand social change is called Girls Empowerment Network (GENET). An organization formed to demand the rights of young girls and women through out the world. Especially in countries where women have little to no rights. Organizations like GENET "have become the beneficiaries of aid, advocacy legislation and development programs intended to improve girls' lives."(Yee). The goal is to also halt and in a better future permanently put an end to arranged marriages that involve minors. With the help of organizations such as this women's rights in other countries have seen massive improvements in girls' rights although in some regions change doesn't come as rapid (Yee). The act of organizing against injustices has proven itself to be worth speaking up. Change may not come as fast as some may want but when it is demanded and vocalized there is no choice but to pay attention. Global protesting has also played a part in early 2017. When it was announced that The United States of America's new president would be Donald Trump it seems as if though not only the country that he would be running felt despair but the whole world. Many outraged by the election results protests spread across the U.S. in major cities and the world. You'd see videos of massive crowds chanting "Not my President" and "this is what democracy looks like" back and forth in crowds walking amongst the streets to send a message of outrage. His election also prompted to one of the biggest protests to date named The Woman's March where women and men banned together to show president elect Trump that contrary to his thoughts about women they would not go down without a fight. Nor would they stand for his or his cabinets opinions to impose decisions about women's reproductive system. Just a couple months in Donald Trump managed to aggravate a series of countries by attempting to implement a travel ban. Although claims were made from him that it was strictly to secure America's safety many noticed that it was mostly targeting muslims (Grinberg). Thus the outrage and protests formed demanding it be lifted because it was unconstitutional. Protest spread throughout America, the U.K. Scotland and many others to show solidarity with those being affected by the travel ban (Grinberg). Fortunately the cries of many angry people from all around the world were heard and the ban was lifted. Proving that when individuals ban together change can and will occur. Many are unaware of the issues that go on in the world until they make headlines and that's why voicing disapproval when unjustness occurs is important to many. In the midst of all that is happening many question why protesting is so important and a vital step into progression. When asked Brenda Bombela an active protestor why she participates she went on to share that it is because she believes wholeheartedly in standing up for those that cannot stand up for themselves. Also, "injustices have occurred throughout history and they would still be the same if it wasn't for those who have came before and put themselves at risk for change." (Bombela). Changes do not happen overnight and by themselves. Social and any kind of change occur when those willing to demand it speak up. Two voices are louder than one and it is why protesting and standing up together for what is right is so important to many.