

Democracy Reflection

Compared to when I applied to K4F my vision on democracy has been both challenged and strengthened by our course. A challenge for me was reading Aristotle, who is referenced throughout the history of democracy, believed that man is born into who they are meant to be. Such as that slaves are born to be slaves, and the elite was born to be elite -*Politics, Aristotle*. Aristotle's stance is one that deeply disturbed me. It seemed crazy to me how this idea served as a base for the democracy I'm a part of today. Yet, other authors gave me a true sense of hope. A prime example of this for me was author Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Stanton wrote about the wonders women have done for civility throughout history –*The Matriarchate, or Mother age, Elizabeth Cady Stanton*. Stanton not only highlighted women's impact that challenged the status quo that was built even before Aristotle's time, but left her readers with a promise that women's time in democracy will come once again.

Pillar Reflection

What I believe was our most intriguing pillar in regards to democracy was education. Education, separate from the institutional schooling of the state, is liberation. Education is a means of finding the truth and deciding what it means for you. For author James Baldwin, his ideal for education was to teach a true history to the people and especially children of the US. To Baldwin, education was the best way to teach the youth that who they are is up to them and not society -*A talk to teachers, James Baldwin*. It's so important to a democracy that the people are not threatened by the thought of difference... diversity. Diversity is the lifeblood to free thinking and forward movement. And it takes education to accept and understand what a just democracy means for everyone.

Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is the best way to affect a democracy directly. The act of civic engagement is purely to better the people. Protesting is a prime example of civic engagement, no matter the controversy. To Martin Luther King Jr. peacefully protesting was often the only form of getting officials to recognize that there were issues of injustice. As well as keep officials to their promises of bettering the people's way of life - *Letter from Birmingham City Jail, Martin Luther King Jr.* The practice of civic engagement was the pinnacle of the civil rights movement. Not only in MLK, but also in the Black panther Party. Who had free food, clinics, and education for the people.

Program Reflection

My biggest take away from this course was realizing just how powerful the people are. Being able to see my peers make and plant their stances on big complicated topics gives me hope for the future and pride in myself and my generation. Far too often my generation is shut out from politics and decisions on our own futures. This course has shown me not only how the generations before me have gotten us to this point, but also how the fight for justice is strong and ever going. I'm not alone, my peers aren't alone, the people aren't alone in the continuous fight for a better future. This course has shown me that the youths' voices do want to be heard, and has given me the confidence to take that responsibility and go forward without shame with my vision for our future.

