

Powerful vindication of human rights essay

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



Although he was not denied an education, he was denied the same rights as white members of society, but he did not let his disadvantages stop him from becoming an acclaimed author, publishing several books.

Helen Keller had different disadvantage in that she was both blind and deaf since infancy. She was able to learn how to communicate through sign language and learned to read and write Braille. She did not let her disadvantages keep her from her dreams.

She graduated from college and became a renowned speaker and author. After reading Frederick Douglass', " Learning to Read", Richard Wright's, " The Library Card", Helen Keller's, " Three Days to See", it is apparent that all these authors are classified as being able to break through the barriers of their disadvantages through determination, pursuit of education, and courage. Frederick Douglass, Richard Wright, and Helen Keller all showed determination in overcoming different challenges and in doing so, were able to realize their full potential. Frederick Douglass' disadvantage in life was that he was born a slave in 1818. Only through determination was he able to escape slavery and go on to become an acclaimed abolitionist speaker as well as a published writer. Frederick Douglass was determined to read and write and taught himself.

His sisters taught him the alphabet, but no more. In Douglass' essay he describes his plan, " The plan which I adopted, and the one by which I was most successful, was that of making friends of all the little white boys whom I met in the street. As many of these as I could, converted into teachers" (152). Through reading and writing he gained knowledge which gave him

choices and he was determined not to be a slave for life. Richard Wright was born in 1908, but because he was a Negro and born in the South in a time of segregation, he was not afforded opportunities that were given to white members of society. He was fortunate that he was able to go to school and knew how to read. He had a love for reading and a longing for knowledge, however: because he was a Negro he was not allowed to patronize the library to check out books. He was determined to find a way to do so.

He not only had to find a way to check out books at the library, but he explains that he had to be careful in doing so. Richard Wright states: I had gone into the library several times to get books for the white men on the job. Which of them would now help me get books? And how could I read them without causing concern to the white men with whom I worked? I had so far been successful in hiding my thoughts and feelings from them, but I knew that I would create hostility if went about this business of reading in a clumsy way. 247) Through his determination he was able to find a way to get a library card and as a result of his love of reading, became a published writer.

Helen Keller had different disadvantages to overcome. An illness that affected her when she was very young rendered her blind and deaf. She was determined to learn how to communicate with those around her. She learned how to read Braille and write and became a renowned speaker and author. With her determination he became a respected and valued member of society and an inspiration to all.

In her essay, ' Three Days to See", she was determined to teach others to be more appreciative of what they have and take nothing for granted. She

writes, " I have often thought it would be a blessing if each human being were stricken blind and deaf for a few days at some time during his early adult life. Darkness would make him more appreciative of sight; silence would teach him the joys of sound" (212). As a result of her determination, she did not let her physical disadvantages deter her from a rewarding and fulfilling life. Without determination these authors would never have been able pursue their dreams and accomplish their goals. Education played a major role in the pursuit of a better life for Frederick Douglass, Richard Wright and Helen Keller.

Frederick Douglass realized that education, learning to read and write, was the key to freedom. Through reading, he learned about emancipation and about abolition. He explains that, The moral which gained from the dialogue was the power of truth over the conscience Of even a slaveholder. What got from Sheridan was a bold denunciation of slavery, and a powerful vindication of human rights. The reading of these documents enabled me to utter my thoughts and to meet the arguments brought forward to sustain slavery; but while they relieved me of one difficulty, they brought on another even more painful than the one of which I was relieved. The more I read, the more was led to abhor and detest my enslavers. (153) Reading provided Frederick Douglass with the knowledge and hope that a better future was attainable.

Richard Wright knew that with education brought knowledge and opportunities. He knew that a Negro could be a doctor, lawyer, and newspapermen. He explains his need for reading, " a ague hunger would come over me for books, books that opened up new avenues of feeling and

seeing, and again I would forge another note to the white librarian" (254). Without his education he would have never been able to reach his goal of being a writer. Helen Keller also knew that education was essential in her pursuit of a better life. Because of her physical disadvantages, she was frustrated that she could not communicate. Education was the only means to learn those skills.

She had aspirations of going to college and was the first blind and deaf person to graduate from Radcliff College. Education revised skills and knowledge. Helen Keller wanted to teach others to appreciate and " make the fullest use of these blessed faculties" (212) and said, " If I were the president of a university should establish a compulsory course in Who to Use Your Eyes" The professor would try to show his pupils how they could add joy to their lives by really seeing what passes unnoticed before them. He would try to awake their dormant and sluggish faculties" (213). Frederick Douglass, Richard Wright and Helen Keller knew the value of education and the role it played in their lives in that it provided them with more options.

Courage is an attribute that all the authors shared and it enabled them to overcome their disadvantages in pursuit of a better life, not just for themselves, but for others. Frederick Douglass was a slave and his mistress and her husband believed that " education and slavery were incompatible with each other (151). Not only did he teach himself how to read and write, but had to do so in secret.

Without courage, Frederick Douglass would have never been able to accomplish his goals. Courage also allowed Richard Wright the ability and

strength to find a way around the laws of segregation that denied IM access to the one thing he loved, books. Reading opened up a new world for Richard Wright and he explains that, plots and stories in the novels did not interest me so much as the point of view revealed” (252). The more he read the more “ he knew what being a Negro meant... No longer felt that the world about me was hostile, killing; I knew it” (253).

Not only did he have to obtain books from the library illegally, he had to hide his true feelings that were brought about from the knowledge he gained from reading. Even though he states that, “ reading also cast me down, made me see what was Seibel, what I had missed” (253) it took courage to “ guard and hide the new knowledge that was dawning within me” (253). With knowledge came options and with his courage he was determined to overcome his disadvantages. Helen Keller had the disadvantage of being blind and deaf, but that didn't stop her from learning how to communicate, read and write. Courage was the only way Helen Keller could overcome her devastating disadvantages and accomplish so much.

Even though she lost her ability to see and hear, she still had appreciation and gratitude for her life and tried to instill that in others. She believed that, “ We should live each day with gentleness, vigor, and a keenness of appreciation which are often lost when time stretches before us in the constant panorama of more days and months and years to come” (21 1). Her accomplishments and attitude towards life was courageous. Courage gave Frederick Douglass, Richard Wright, and Helen Keller the ability to pursue a better life in spite Of their disadvantages. Sometimes disadvantages can be

advantages. Frederick Douglass was born a slave, Richard Wright was born a Negro in the South during segregation, and Helen Keller was blind and deaf since infancy.

Clearly, Frederick Douglass, Richard Wright, and Helen Keller all had insurmountable disadvantages, but their disadvantages were the foundation of their self-improvement.