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Topic Proposal: The History of Protesting and the Issues being Protested

Introduction/Overview

In my extended inquiry project, I am aiming to research the art of protesting. This art is as old as the sentiment of disagreement itself. I plan on delving into the history of protesting itself. Along with discovering its history, I plan to discover the issues that have been advocated for and against throughout history, and also, some issues that are significant and are not being protested. For what reason, if any, are they not being protested?

Protesting is nothing new, as there has been Moses's disagreement with the pharaoh in the Bible, causing him to attack workers to protest the treatment of slaves, the Boston Tea Party, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, the Black Lives Matter group of the 2010's, and numerous others. Each of these movements had different motives behind them, but in each one, those who were protesting had a strong sense of responsibility, which is why they decided to participate and go against the norm.

Throughout this project, I have used multiple news outlets, such as Time Magazine and the Washington Post to look into historical incidences of protesting. Along with this, to get an understanding about sentiments during these issues, such as those acted out at the Lincoln

Memorial anti-war demonstration on October 21, 1967 (History.com), I have used and plan to use several history outlets, such as History.com and scholarly publications through various universities. When finding statistics about various issues, I will be using many national databases, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, State Bureaus of Investigation, and various polls.

In terms of issues being protested and those that should be, there are numerous degrees of sentiment, yet normally they can be categorized into two or three groups. For example, when it comes to abortion, there are several aspects that determine several feelings, such as sexual assault or the amount of time that the baby has been in the womb. However, when people have discussion on these issues, normally it is about whether one is for or against abortion in general. In a Gallup poll done from October 7-11 of 2015, 49% of people identified as “pro-choice,” 44% of people identified as “pro-life,” and 6% were either mixed, unsure, or did not know what the terms meant. In the case of police violence, especially lately, the focus is shifted on African Americans who are being assaulted or killed. In this case, the disagreement is on the corruption of the police force. Many people think that all police are corrupt, while some others believe that none are, and even more believe that there are some with malcontent, and those with good intentions. According to a Gallup poll that explores sentiments of confidence in the police with combined data from 2011 to 2014, 56% of adults had a great deal of confidence in the police, 30% had some confidence in the police, and 14% had little to no confidence in the police. It further explores the issue, using data among African American and white participants. Both of these issues are very prolific ones that are widely discussed. However, one is more widely protested.

Initial Inquiry Questions

When thinking of my topic, I came across several questions that piqued my interest and challenged me to do more research. My first, general topic, actually was abortion. Then I began to think of questions like the following: Why abortion is not protested as much as other issues? Do lives only matter after they are born? How many lives have been taken through abortion compared to the lives taken by police violence in the black community? Why is the issue of same-race crime not protested? How many lives have been taken by those of the same race as compared to those which have been taken by the opposite race? What is the history of the Black Lives Matter movement? Finally, I came to a question that somewhat covers all of these questions. How did the act of protesting begin, and what decides which issues are protested?

My Interest in this Topic

I am interested in this topic for several reasons. One would be the occurrences that have finally hit pretty close to home for me, here in Charlotte. Also, as an African American male, these issues affect me, as it pertains to my race. Being a strong believer of Christianity, I am very interested in the issue of abortion, and the motives behind others' decision on the matter. All of these wrapped into one, I want to answer a question that I silently ask fairly often. Why are some issues protested while others aren't? As of right now, I know a few facts, such as the fact that since the Roe v. Wade case, 55,000,000 plus babies have been killed through abortion. Also, I know that black-on-black crime is, numerically, a much higher statistic than deaths by police violence. While I know a few facts, I want to discover how these facts intertwine with the social aspects of these issues, such as why some know it and others do not, and what the motives behind certain people's decision are on these issues.

Next Steps

While continuing to research these topics, I plan on dividing my research into a few categories. For the research of the history of protesting, I will use several history sites, such as History.com and Encyclopedia.com, along with some scholarly publications from various universities. For the purpose of finding some of the prevalent issues that are being protested now, I will mostly use news outlets with republican, democratic, and “neutral” biases. To be able to make a case for those issues that are not being protested, I will be using various polls (Gallup, research organizations), statistic websites (FBI, CDC, etc.), and news articles. I plan on spending a great deal of time on this project, because it seems as though when I think that I have covered a topic pretty well, I ask myself three or four more questions that challenge me to delve further into these issues.