

The Hidden Story Of How The Americans With Disabilities Act Gave The Largest US

People with disabilities long fought for equal rights and equal opportunities in society. In the past, they faced countless challenges and discrimination. However, a turning point came in 1990 with the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the United States. This landmark legislation, often considered the most comprehensive disability rights law, has transformed the lives of millions of individuals with disabilities across the nation.

The Road to Equality

Before the ADA, individuals with disabilities often faced significant barriers in various aspects of their lives. They encountered difficulties in employment, access to public spaces, and participation in everyday activities that many people took for granted.

However, the momentum for disability rights flourished during the late twentieth century. Advocates and activists with disabilities fought tirelessly for changes that would afford them the same opportunities as others. Through protests, rallies, and powerful advocacy, they brought attention to the unique struggles they faced and demanded justice.

ENABLING
ACTS



LENNARD J. DAVIS

"Enabling Acts reads like a spellbinding political thriller, with
intricate fighting for the rights of people with disabilities.
The personal fighting for movement calls to be different."
—*American Memory*, author of
The Road to 1990: A Personal Journal

Enabling Acts: The Hidden Story of How the Americans with Disabilities Act Gave the Largest US Minority Its Rights by Lennard J. Davis (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5



The Birth of the ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law on July 26, 1990, by President George H.W. Bush. It was a groundbreaking moment that promised equal protection, equal access, and equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

The ADA encompasses numerous provisions across different domains, such as employment, transportation, public accommodations, telecommunications, and more. These provisions ensure that individuals with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as anyone else.

Under the ADA, employers are required to provide reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities, enabling them to perform their jobs without discrimination. This includes physical modifications to the workplace, flexible scheduling, and modifications to job duties or requirements. Moreover, the ADA prohibits employers from discriminating against individuals based on their disabilities during the hiring process.

Breaking Barriers: Accessibility and Inclusion

One of the most significant impacts of the ADA is the increased accessibility it has brought to public spaces. Buildings, sidewalks, transportation systems, and other infrastructure have undergone significant modifications to ensure they are accessible to people with disabilities.

Ramps, elevators, widened doorways, accessible restrooms, and designated parking spaces are just a few examples of the changes that have made public

spaces more inclusive. This not only benefits individuals with disabilities but also promotes inclusivity and diversity across society.

Education and Empowerment

Alongside the physical changes, the ADA has also opened doors to education and empowerment for individuals with disabilities. Schools, colleges, and universities are now required to provide reasonable accommodations, ensuring that students with disabilities can fully participate in educational programs.

This equal access to education has empowered countless individuals to pursue their dreams, strive for excellence, and contribute to society in various fields. The ADA has fostered a culture of inclusivity in the education system, enabling students with disabilities to learn and grow alongside their peers.

Moreover, the ADA ensures that individuals with disabilities have equal access to various forms of technology. Telecommunications providers must offer services accessible to people with hearing or speech impairments, guaranteeing equal participation in telecommunication networks.

The Legacy of the ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act has had a lasting impact on American society. It has broken down barriers, challenged stereotypes, and created a more inclusive future. By recognizing the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities, the ADA has played a fundamental role in shaping a more equitable society.

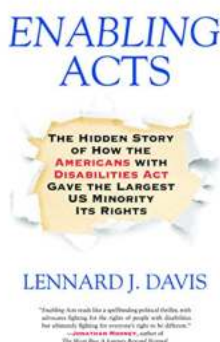
However, there is still work to be done. Despite the ADA's progress, there are ongoing challenges and areas where further improvements are needed. Increased awareness, enforcement, and continued advocacy are crucial to

address these issues and ensure that the ADA's vision of equality extends to all aspects of life.

Celebrating Progress, Inspiring Change

The Americans with Disabilities Act remains a testament to the power of social change and the tireless efforts of individuals with disabilities and their allies. It symbolizes the importance of recognizing the value and potential within every individual, regardless of their abilities.

As we commemorate the ADA's legacy, let us celebrate the progress made and recommit ourselves to the ongoing fight for inclusivity and accessibility. By continuing to champion the rights of individuals with disabilities, we pave the way for a brighter, more inclusive future for all.



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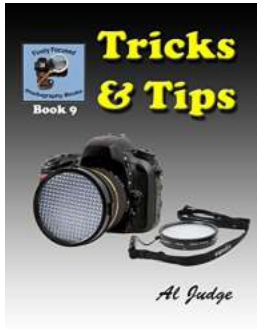
A behind-the-scenes account of the passing of the ADA—the moment when millions of Americans won their civil rights

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the widest-ranging and most comprehensive piece of civil rights legislation ever passed in the United States,

and it has become the model for disability-based laws around the world. Yet the surprising story behind how the bill came to be is little known.

In this riveting account, acclaimed disability scholar Lennard J. Davis delivers the first on-the-ground narrative of how a band of leftist Berkeley hippies managed to make an alliance with upper-crust, conservative Republicans to bring about a truly bipartisan bill. Based on extensive interviews with all the major players involved including legislators and activists, Davis recreates the dramatic tension of a story that is anything but a dry account of bills and speeches. Rather, it's filled with one indefatigable character after another, culminating in explosive moments when the hidden army of the disability community stages scenes like the iconic "Capitol Crawl" or an event when students stormed Gallaudet University demanding a "Deaf President Now!"

From inside the offices of newly formed disability groups to secret breakfast meetings surreptitiously held outside the White House grounds, here we meet countless unsung characters, including political heavyweights and disability advocates on the front lines. "You want to fight?" an angered Ted Kennedy would shout in an upstairs room at the Capitol while negotiating the final details of the ADA. Congressman Tony Coelho, whose parents once thought him to be possessed by the devil because of his epilepsy, later became the bill's primary sponsor. There's Justin Dart, adorned in disability power buttons and his signature cowboy hat, who took to the road canvassing 50 states, and people like Patrisha Wright, also known as "The General," Arlene Myerson or "the brains," "architect" Bob Funk, and visionary Mary Lou Breslin, who left the hippie highlands of the West to pursue equal rights in the marble halls of DC.



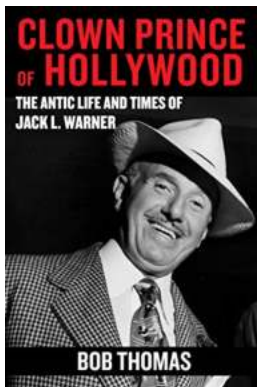
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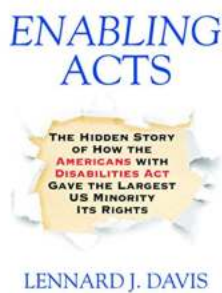
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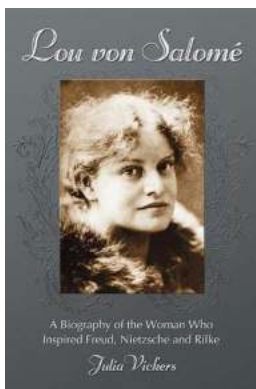
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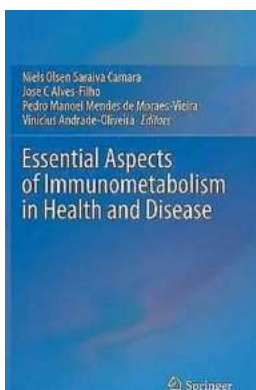
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