Age Discrimination Essay, Research Paper

Age discrimination is one of the worst types of discriminations next to that of racial or ethnic discrimination. A person s age should never be a factor in how they are treated. Once we reach the age where we can make logical conscious decisions on our own, we should be treated like everybody else. Age discrimination is predominant because the majority of this world s inhabitants have unfair and old-fashion ideas or beliefs with respect to two age groups in particular. These two groups that are discriminated against the most are the young and old.

Once a person reaches the age of eighteen in America they are given the privilege of voting. Unfortunately, at the same time they are robbed of certain rights. I have always disagreed with the law in which adults under the age of 21 cannot purchase or consume alcohol legally. This law seems completely contradictory to me; I don t understand how our government can give us the right to choose our leaders or be sent off to war and given a machine gun and told to kill the enemy but deny us the right to legally buy a case of beer. This just does not make sense. This is only one example of how the youth of America are discriminated against based on their age. Another predominant example is with respect to wages. People under the age of 21 usually get paid less than older people for doing the same job. This is a major problem in today s workplace. In order to correct this problem we need to focus our attention on paying people s wages based on their skill and performance of their duties. If a 16 and a 43-year old both have the same skills doing the same job they should be paid the same. Some people argue that older people should be paid more than youths because they have more financial duties and responsibilities than younger people. In order to make a high amount of money you need to posses certain skills and attributes that not many other people have. This is the reason why such fields as car mechanics, lawyers, and doctors make the amount of money that they do. These people are rewarded on the amount of education that was needed to obtain their skills. Everybody has the opportunity to do whatever they want in life no matter what their personal and family circumstances are. Everything in this world is possible as long as you accept the challenge of obtaining it and work hard at achieving it. Many people will hide behind the excuse that they never had any opportunities growing up. This is an utter lie, for what could possibly prevent you from creating your own opportunities? The answer to this is nothing.

There are, however, some instances where a person s age must be a factor in their employment. One of these acceptable times would pertain to actor that must meet an age requirement for the authenticity of a dramatic part. Another example would be that people under the age of 18 are not allowed to operate dangerous machinery for their safety and the safety of other around them. These are just two examples of different instances where it is completely acceptable for one s age to come into factor.

The second group of people that are heavily discriminated against just because of their age are people over the age of fifty. For some reason people believe that once you get older you start to loose your skills and positive attributes. As a result of this primitive thinking, many older people receive a far lower wage for the same job a twenty-five year old does. This is an issue that really needs to be addressed in today s society. Another way older people are discriminated against in terms of employment is that in far too many instances, if an older person and a younger person are applying for the same job it will often go to the younger person. This is a result of employers thinking that younger people are more capable of being productive at whatever they are employed to do than their older counterparts.

Older people are also discriminated against in many other ways besides employment. One venue that is abundant with age discrimination is the media today. Older people are portrayed in today s media as being people who are out-of-fashion, boring, non-tolerant, and in some cases stupid. I am sure that it is possible to find people that fit this scenario but the truth is that older people today have changed greatly from the last generation of older people. In my short time on this earth I have found no other age group that is more helpful and considerate than that of older people. I have grown to appreciate the time I spend with so-called geezers because they provide many different insights on life that I cannot obtain anywhere else. Older people have seen and been though so much during their life that should make us appreciate them as much as we can instead of putting them down.

Older people are also discriminated against when it comes to finding and securing different types of insurance. These different insurances range from automobile to life insurance. Companies feel that they have the right to raise one s insurance once you reach a certain age level because you become a liability. This statement, in most cases, is a completely invalid excuse to make more money on the insurance company s behalf. I can understand insurance companies raising premiums once you reach 80 years of age but how can they justify raising them once you turn 50 years old? The two most common insurance premiums that are raised are car and health. As a result of these higher premiums older people are forced to enter HMO s in which they are limited to certain doctors that the insurance companies have approved for them to go to. These limited doctors are usually the ones who do not spend a lot of time to get to know their patients because they are so busy tending to many other people. As a result of this, the health care of older people usually is not at the level in which it needs to be in order to maintain a healthy life. I personally think that this is a very serious issue that should be addressed because insurance companies are sacrificing the health of thousands upon thousands of people just to save some money.

I, however, feel very strongly that senior citizens should not receive discounts until they reach the age of 70. I feel that giving senior citizens discounts before they reach this age is an unfair advantage because most people are capable and willing to work until 70 years old but quit because their pension kicks in and they receive discounts. I feel that since the average life span is expanding with every passing year, then so too should our laws pertaining to older people.

The United States government has recognized age discrimination and has passed many laws pertaining to the dilemma. The Anti-Discrimination Act was passed to try to curb the unfair treatment of people based on their age. The articles under this act are very specific in pointing out what is and what is not age discrimination. It is your responsibility as a human to speak up against discrimination and fight for your rights. Age discrimination will only end once a new generation of people starts to accept all of their fellow humans equally and judge them solely on their character and not their age. It is important to remember how it felt to be excluded when we were young and we will once again feel that exclusion once again when we are old. We need to prevent this exclusion from happening by respecting all people regardless of their age.