

The Search for Excellence: An Encore

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This conference² has been in the planning stage for a long time, and it is a source of satisfaction to me that the plans have been consummated. I am told that this conference grew out of one or more of my earlier writings, and, if true, that is indeed a compliment (Cruickshank, 1975, 1978, 1983). It certainly is a topic in which I have had a long-standing interest and concern.

I do not intend to speak to every issue facing Special Education. For example, I do not intend to discuss differences in teaching methodology. I am not going to speak to the misunderstood relationship between learning disabilities and remediation *versus* learning disabilities and developmental education. To do so would involve too long a paper, for in the face of negative attitudes on the part of national political elected leadership, human services, including those for handicapped persons, are not now a high national priority, nor will they be for some time in the future. I shall speak to a select few of the problems in which we are entangled, and leave others to other persons who are undoubtedly more capable than I in providing solutions.

The title of this conference bothers me considerably, although I understand its rationale. I have worked in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary settings for all of my professional life. I find few professional differences which are irreconcilable whether they be in learning disabilities, administration, dentistry, education, law, or other disciplines related to our specific area of interest. What I do find is that persons of good will and intent, who make personal power subservient to the good of the profession, can with considerable ease positively ecog-

tate differences and erase divergent views. Some divergent views are wholesome, and upon these, as history illustrates, rests the imaginative development of a discipline and progress in services to humankind. If, however, myopic personal drives for power and control of a program, a discipline, or an organization become omnipotent, then hope for positive future creative development becomes more than a little elusive.

I have started in print so often that the field of learning disabilities needs excellence that it seems redundant to repeat the concept again. However, we see the whole field of learning disabilities in children, youth, and adults in nothing short of a crisis state, so once again we shall approach this problem. This time, however, I am going to be much more blunt than ever before, for hard words are necessary as a possible aid to those of similar mind who are seeking to accomplish programs for these children and youth which are of the highest professional order and are devoid of selfish personality motivation.

Leadership.—I would first like to speak to the problem of leadership. In my thesaurus a leader, whether organizational or individual, is variously indicated to be a “chief, ringleader, ruler, captain, supervisor, superintendent, commander, commandant, director, manager, head, rector, dictator, overseer, overlooker, foreman, boss, flugelman, agitator, shepherd, chairman, chair, speaker, demagogue, head man, superior, dean, principal, despot, monarch, king, *ad inf.*” In the field of learning disabilities, we are afraid quite realistically that, with the exception of a “flugelman” or “shepherd,” the field is characterized by some

or all of the synonyms for leadership, many, however, very negative. In what should be a highly professional program and skilled personnel dealing with one of the most complex of all problems in young people, this series of partially negative characterizations is indeed sad, although within the definitional series are a few very positive terms which may characterize some leadership—some who have devoted their entire professional lives to the solution of the problems of these children and youth. Although we are personally concerned about individuals who purport to be leaders, especially those who are driven into leadership positions by personal drive for power, who read little of the research and theory, who are basically mediocre and at worst incompetent, we are at this point in this discussion more concerned about organizational leadership.

Here we shall discuss, very briefly, the issues of non-categorical special education and mainstreaming, while somewhat more fully later in this paper. For now, however, it is sufficient to state that experience is proving that neither is the universal answer to the education of exceptional children, and certainly not those with learning disabilities. When one listens to the complaints of parents, of teachers, and of adolescents and young learning disabled adults themselves, and when one is cognizant of class-action law suits being developed by parents in behalf of their children and against mainstreaming (and to a lesser extent against non-categoricalization), one has to ask where has our special education leadership been all these years to allow these completely inadequate and oftentimes inhumane policies to develop.

For years, since 1939 exactly, I have written in defense of *selective mainstreaming* of some types of exceptional children. Chief among these are the blind, some orthopaedic children, and some of many other clinical types. Such articles under my name have appeared one or more times every decade since the 1930's. We have never advocated the wholesale mainstreaming of total special education groups of children, an approach too often taken by thoughtless leadership in public school systems, state departments of education, and to a lesser extent implied in the former U.S. Office

¹This paper was prepared while the author was a Visiting Professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, and also held the Guglielmo Endowed Chair in Mental Retardation at California State University, Los Angeles, 1984-85.

²This paper was prepared for presentation at a conference on “Irreconcilable Differences” sponsored by the Special Education District of St. Louis County, Missouri, June 7, 1985.

of Education communications.

It is my considered opinion that the special education leadership generally has fallen into a Madison Avenue semantic trap, and has definitely not exerted its influence in behalf of children when this is done. The unholy concept of the Resource Room, for example, which is rarely a resource for anyone, too often has been recommended by local leadership. Fifty-eight children under the teaching guidance of a single teacher in the course of a given week, each child with a different educational problem, is hardly good education by any definition. In the example I use here, each child received approximately 30 minutes of the teacher's time at the most three times a week.

In some instances, due to cowardly boards of education members, chief school officers, politics, union controls and contracts, some special education leaders have been permitted to remain in their posts for many years in spite of a reputation of incompetency which is or was recognized community wide. Administration quietly awaits retirement or death as in one community with which I am intimately familiar, but it is not an isolated example. In another community the Assistant Director of Special Education, one who chaired at HEP meetings, was openly hostile to parents, and in private went so far as to state "I hate parents."

Not all of what I speak is or will be antagonistic to professional persons. Obviously there are special educators who in their varying capacities are doing excellent jobs. I think of an elementary school principal who is his own home shop, together with the coach, made a pair of skis in order that a congenital quadriplegic amputee in the fifth grade could go skiing with his classmates. I think of an occupational therapist who legally adopted two cerebral palsied children. I think of two single college professors each of whom adopted an adolescent, emotionally disturbed boy. I think of another college professor who felt that a family was not giving a deaf child the correct training at home and, packing a suit case, he moved into the home and remained there for two years to insure the boy's progress. The educational world is full of unsung heroes and heroines. At the same time education, whether public

or private, cannot tolerate even one ineffective program or one mediocre or thoughtless teacher, administrator, or university professor. To proceed along the line we began in paragraphs above—

Where, in terms of the unsolved problems of special education, thoughtless mainstreaming, the non-categorical teacher education, and other matters to be mentioned, is the permanent leadership of the national Council for Exceptional Children? In my considered opinion and that of many others, we have not had dynamic or aggressive leadership in that office since the death of Harley Wooden, two executive directors ago. That Council, its officers and board of directors during the period of the 1940's, 1950's, and to somewhat lesser extent during the 1960's, was a dynamic organization with a posture which had to be counted by Congress, state legislatures, and universities. The best leadership of the country comprised the Board, the delegate assembly, and its officers in the years I have mentioned. In large measure, the recent seceding of many members of the Council for Children with Learning Disabilities from CEC was due to a strong feeling among a minority of its members that CEC was contributing little to the profession. Its publications weak; its national conference immense, but repetitive; its topical conferences of limited value; and its observed stance on such vital matters as mainstreaming, class action suits such as *Diana versus the Board of Education*, and others, caused many to feel deep concerns about what should be the focal point of special education's professional action.

Where has the former Bureau for the Education of the Handicapped of the U.S. Office of Education been during these turbulent years? What leadership position was this Bureau given in advising Congress relating to the development of P.L. 94-142? A few years ago we were interested in preparing the manuscript concerned with the effectiveness of the I.E.P. In doing so I wanted to the names of the members of the BEH Advisory Committee which assisted the professional staff in providing up-to-date information which Congressional Committees might request. The last administrator of the old BEH told me directly by telephone that there had been no advisory

committee. He went further to state that BEH had had no input into the thinking of what later became Public Law 94-142. He stated that the entire development had been in the hands of Senator Theodore Kennedy, and that what advice had been requested came from an individual and a committee in the office of CEC. Is this the way for the highest Federal office in the land concerned with exceptional children to function, or should the Executive Branch of the government have exerted a leadership function in ways which would have forced the Congressional Committee to hold hearings until the professions were satisfied? It had been done before; why not then? Can one envision the American Medical Association sitting by while a significant problem affecting medicine was under consideration by Congress? Or the labor unions? If CEC did have a hand in the thinking of the Senator's staff, why were not the senior leaders of the nation in special education called upon as witnesses? Some were on a CEC advisory committee, but in insufficient numbers and with no significant charge to action. The failure to have had broad leadership input into the early stages of planning for P.L. 94-142 is in large part the reason why some significant parts have been ineffective and the need for significant revisions are now required. This is a waste of valuable time, and fails in the service to families as was intended.

As a professional person I am extraordinarily dissatisfied with the leadership in the new U.S. Department of Education's programs for handicapped children. I am doubly concerned when I hear from more than one source that the lay leadership of this program has little use for professionals. Why lay leadership in the first place? The original Section in the old U.S. Office of Education had a chief by the name of Dr. Elise Martens. She was not only a remarkable administrator, she was personable, and, alone in the Office as the single person representing all handicapped children in America she was a sterling professional. Some years later at great personal sacrifice, Dr. Samuel A. Kirk assumed the administration of the Office, and brought high professional attributes to it. He was followed by his former student Dr. James Gallagher, who was an outstanding administrator,

and who brought the Bureau to new heights of respectability. But since his return to his university faculty responsibilities, the status of the Bureau under a new name until today, now under lay leadership, has grown tremendously but has gone down and is characterized by mediocrity. Its former head of training programs had never taught in a university or college at the time of appointment. Its research program has been the cornucopia which has awarded funds to hundreds of so-called research programs which when ultimately completed and reported in the literature too often have proven to be essentially inconsequential. At the same time, for example, in the field of learning disabilities which possesses not one decent epidemiological study, a significant proposal involving complete testing of 88,000 children was turned down because, as the principal investigators was told, "Enough is already known about the incidence and prevalence of this problem in American youth." Is this leadership? My comments are not the way to win friends in the U.S. Department of Education, but at my age I have enough friends to suffice my needs for my remaining years.

Definition. The issue of definition is one wherein there are significant differences of opinion. I have written on this issue so often that I recently promised myself and several others that I would never discuss the matter again. Here there is a necessity of breaking my promise.

It is generally understood that the field of learning disabilities started in 1963 with the formation of the parent group, ACLD. Nothing could be further from the truth. In the 1930's, 1940's, and 1950's a group of researchers in Michigan was working together on this problem as it related to educable mentally retarded exogenous type youth. This group included Heniz Werner, Alfred Strauss, Thorlief Hegge, Sideny Bijou, Boyd McCandless, Samuel A. Kirk, Maurice Fourancre, Bluma Weiner, Laura Lehtinen, Drs. Robert and Ruth Patterson, and myself, among others. It was out of their published research, insufficient as it was, that the field of learning disabilities grew. It is possible with ease to trace the exact steps in this growth and development. But contemporary to the work of those I have just mentioned there were a few

others in the United States who were oriented essentially to the same points of view, e.g., Marianne Frostig, Charles Strother, Helmer Mykelbust, Jean Ayres, and Herbert Birch. But as has been pointed out, there were men who were working on the roots of this problem in the 19th Century, and Gall, the famous phrenologist in Germany, was active in his investigations as early as 1795. The 19th Century was full of men who in isolation from one another were predecessors of learning disabilities. A partial list includes such names as Broca, Bastian, Little, Head, Hinchelwood, de Croly, Homburger, and othes from Germany, Belgium, France, and England. The Weiderholt and the more recent book Kazale and Forness article include some of these names, but in addition there were probably twenty or more additional persons who were active in one way or another.

One must remember that these men were in large measure working blindly, as were Werner and Strauss. There were no scans; fluorscopy was not in wide use. X-ray could not be used for any length of time. And for the 19th Century investigators none of these were invented or available for their use. The field of neurology and neuro-radiology were not even a gleam in professional eyes as yet. I can, but will not, trace the development of this problem in detail, except to state that all of those mentioned to this point plus those who, for brevity's sake, I have not mentioned were approaching the problem from what today would be called a neurophysiological point of view.

In 1963 the parents organized, and at that time two things happened with respect to the rush to develop a definition which supported their organizational title, namely, the relatively narrow limits of what accurately defined learning disabilities is was not mentioned, and the parents, in spite of the then recent history which most of them knew about, excluded all mentally retarded learning disabled children from their definition. This is a tragedy which has yet to be rectified. At the meeting of the Board of Directors of ACLD on September 22, 1984, the Board adopted a "new" definition, the result of the work of a small Task Force consisting of some who should have known better, and this, in

spite of the arduous work over several years, of a joint committee on definition, merely reiterated the old 1963 definition. As a result of this inept action, I resigned from the ACLD Professional Advisory Committee. When the so-called new definition was presented to the delegate assembly of ACLD in San Francisco in 1985, it was rejected. Thus as of this date, the old definition, inaccurate as it is, remains in effect. Federal, state and local educational units have used this definition for 32 years to the detriment of children.

On the other hand, the Canadian ACLD, in 1977, had a lengthy position paper on definition written by one who has been associated with the field since the 1930's. This was presented to more than twenty leading Canadian experts in November of 1978, and was thoroughly critiqued by these knowledgeable people and as needed revised by the author. Immediately thereafter it was also submitted to a meeting consisting of senior political and professional personnel from each Canadian province. Both groups unanimously accepted the document. It then went political, and was sent to every CACLD chapter in the nation for what consisted of nearly four years of local study. In September, 1982, the CACLD accepted a definition based essentially on the 1977 white paper. This includes an historically accurate definition, is based on neurophysiological dysfunction, as it should be, and makes the definition applicable to children and youth of any intellectual level. It is probably as accurate a statement as can be prepared under the circumstances of today's knowledge.

In Canada there is unanimity of purpose and goal; in the United States this field is characterized by acrimony, personal rivalries, segmentation of persons into opposing groups, and certainly a lack of any appropriate notion of what learning disabilities actually is insofar as, I suspect, a majority of lay and professional persons is concerned. This, in spite of writings which have been in the literature for more than 30 years plus the knowledge of the Canadian white paper and subsequent procedures. I am not stating that there is absolute unanimity within the Canadian organization, but there is a huge majority of members which has fully espoused the new definition without

the pangs of minority separation from the parent group. This is unthinkable to a Canadian!

Until the issue of definition is settled appropriately in the United States, children are going to be hurt, state and local educational agencies will continue to move down faulty roads, and the U.S. Department of Education will continue to demonstrate floundering leadership. The sad element in this whole issue is that it could be solved by persons of good intent within days if a recognition of the origins of the field were willingly affirmed and accepted.

In 1975 the International Academy for Research in Learning Disabilities was formed. It is interesting to me that within this small group of world-class researchers the issue of definition has never once come up in the ten-year history of the Academy. Men and women from thirty countries and from almost as many disciplines, who are the thinkers in the field, know what learning disabilities is, and there is thus no need to discuss definition. Countries some fifty times smaller than the United States have programs based on legitimate definitions and programs which outclass ours in almost every conceivable manner, e.g., the Netherlands, Denmark, the United Kingdom, and others which could be mentioned.

The title of this conference contains the ideas of *irreconcilable differences* between and among professional persons and ideas in the United States. The issue of definition may be one of these. Whether or not our various educational agencies are characterized by mediocrity as I personally believe, may be another. A third issue needs inclusion here, and for the sake of brevity others which I consider very important may merely be listed in the comments which follow.

Beginning in the early 1980's agitation on the part of one person and a small group of followers began to be noticed by efforts to "take over" the leadership of Division of Children with Learning Disabilities within CEC. Considerable opposition to this movement immediately developed essentially, because the prime mover of this attempt was not seen by the majority of the professional leadership to demonstrate professional soundness or a personality which would permit the membership to follow that stewardship. As a

result, some good people who were put forward by this side as potential leaders of the Division and of CEC as a whole were defeated.

The next step which became obvious was an attempt to have the Division withdraw completely from CEC. By now tempers were sharpening, and across the nation this effort became a serious topic of conversation. I personally was interested, because in 1952 I was the President of the then International Council for Exceptional Children (ICEC), and the development of the Division concept became a reality at that time. Regardless, the movement to separate continued.

In January of 1983, the membership of the Division numbered 6721 persons. By the time a mail ballot was issued to determine the future of the Division, the membership totaled 7,952. Just how 1,232 new members were enrolled in the Division between January, 1983, and a few months later when the mail ballot was sent is hard to understand. Following appropriate procedures a mail ballot was sent to this number of persons from which according to the CEC Statistical Report only 1,081 ballots (13.6 percent) was returned. Of this minority group, 774 or 71.6 percent voted to withdraw while 307 or 28.4 percent voted to remain within CEC. The CEC constitution indicates that on such matters a majority of those voting will be recognized, so that although only 13 percent of the total number of members voted and of that only .097 percent of the total Division membership voted to withdraw, this small number constituted a majority of those voting, and withdrawal became a fact.

Hundreds of members were dismayed at this action, including dozens of long-time members of CEC, indeed the essential power structure of special education nationally. It was generally felt that no one owns the field of learning disabilities, and any one person with megalomaniac notions that a single person or a single nucleus can control a major professional program is at a minimum facing disappointment, at the maximum encouraging rejection and ostracism by the recognized leadership of the nation. The issue had reached such proportions that criticisms levelled against national leaders were uttered from public platforms. These unnecessary, and to a great extent,

childish ventures into control, were such that class action lawsuits were seriously discussed by a number of individuals to be taken in courts against the offending individual regarding further defamation of character and libel. This information must have reached the proper ears, for suddenly public criticism stopped. To have come to this point on a professional problem which intelligent persons ought to be able to solve in face-to-face situations is a sad commentary on the profession. The withdrawal of the Division from CEC, however, was not the last word. A minor irritation does not necessarily constitute a death blow.

In cooperation with many, the leadership in the field of learning disabilities met in Washington, D.C. in February, 1983, as an ad hoc Committee, and an election of ad hoc officers and an advisory board was accomplished for a new organization again to be formed within CEC and to be called the Division of Learning Disabilities. By March, 1983, 465 petitions has been received by CEC, 200 more than required, asking for development of a new Division. On Wednesday, April 6, 1983, with approximately 250 person attending, the new Division was organized during the Detroit CEC convention, and officers were elected. A strong advisory committee was formed, and significant actions have subsequently been taken or are taking place. The membership at the latest count with which I am familiar totals approximately 9,000 educator-members. I am not privy to the present size of the withdrawing group which was organized, nor do I know the nature of its organization. In a country as large as the United States, two professional organizations can be tolerated, but what a waste of leadership this is. However, until leaders of the two points of view—differences which have been outlined—become allocentric rather than egocentric in their attitudes and behavior, the two groups will undoubtedly continue to function, hopefully ignoring one another. No one in the United States knows enough about learning disabilities to claim ownership of the field, and those who do seek to implement such claims are legitimately being held up to ridicule. Nothing of significance has occurred as the result of the movement to secede from CEC, or by those who stimulated or

organized such action. Rather nearly five years of disharmony and antagonism has resulted in a field which desperately needs unanimous cooperation and effort in the solution of one of the most complicated and elusive problems of childhood growth and development. I do not believe that this duality has to be an irreconcilable difference, if persons of genuine good will subjugate their personal drives for control and enter into genuine cooperative efforts with others in the drive to better the lives of children. Empire building is not on the agenda of such an effort; seeking commonly understood and accepted goals is. Differences and personalities may be too divergent to reconcile. If that be the case, so be it. Then the profession should agree to disagree, and each unit move in peace to accomplish its goals.

Research. At the risk of being somewhat endless, I'd like to address two additional items. In a search for excellence, the first at least is appropriate to the title of this paper. For many years I have been deeply concerned about the quality of research being attempted in the field of learning disabilities. More significantly, I am personally concerned about the ineffective studies which are reported in publications which speak for this professional field. In more recent years and months, leadership personnel throughout the nation has begun to express to one another their disconcertion, if not displeasure, over the contents of what should be significant journals. During this past year I have taught in two California universities—both outstanding—and I have lectured in a dozen others. I meet with world-class and leading professional people constantly. Hardly an encounter goes by, but that my hosts go out of their ways to bring up the matter of journals and their contents. More important, their intelligent reactions to a majority of reported research studies are essentially denigrating.

I have given this a lot of thought, for the publication of inconsequential studies based on group data which are essentially uncontrollable in terms of variables, is a national disease. I compare the research in learning disabilities with that published in the field of neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, space research, evoked response studies, upper brain-

stem studies, and others germane to learning disabilities. These are solid data, and when I ask for reviews of these studies from disciplinary peers, I obtain laudatory responses. What professionally-shaking studies have come from the field of education of children with learning disabilities? I can think of none. Textbooks now appear with regularity which are essentially repetitious one to the other. Examining them in the hope of finding new data results is disappointment bordering on disgust. From psychology there is a bit more published which adds additional dimensions to our understanding of attention, perception, memory, sensation, and learning.

I understand that there are two new journals to be initiated in the field of learning disabilities in the near future. Indeed, if these are not filled with solid substance, better that they remain off the market. We have strong research in the field of perception and cerebral palsy, we have solid data in aphasia and dyslexia. Reye's syndrome and learning disabilities have been discovered to have a relationship not yet understood. The IARLD conference program for Oxford, England, in September, 1985 contained one paper after another dealing with neonatology, birth injury, prematurity and congenital malformation in children. These reports were outstandingly good. The research of the late Norman Geschwind and the young Albert Galaburda of Beth Israel Hospital and Harvard University Medical School Department of Neurology on the neuroanatomy of the dyslexic brain (initiated by the Orton Society) is staggering in its potential. The field of learning disabilities will not move out of the quagmire of confusion, distrust, and ineffectiveness until a comparable level of research efforts is effected within it.

Comments on "the link." As one thinks of research in the area of learning disabilities, it is important that the discussion be extended to the popular phrase of the "link" between juvenile delinquency and learning disability. In a recent paper which is unpublished but which I read in manuscript form, the author states that published studies indicate a range of from 30 to 92 percent of learning disability youths are or will become delinquent. This I cannot accept. Charles Murray, in his report of a study,

states that research in this area is so poor that it can only be distrusted. When one considers this issue a number of cogent questions came to mind:

1. Are all learning disabled children and youth destined to become delinquent?
2. Is there something intrinsic about learning disabilities which results in juvenile offenses?
3. Are the data reported based on juveniles already incarcerated in juvenile detention units, and include both environmentally deprived youths with problems and learning as well as those with accurately defined learning disabilities?
4. Are the studies reported in the literature, of which there is less than a dozen, based on youths who as children had a fundamental education which was specifically addressed to the nature and needs of the child with perceptual processing deficits, i.e., the learning disabled?

Unless these questions are taken into consideration and addressed by those purporting to do investigations in this field, a disservice of monumental proportion rather than a service is being performed. This is the case in reports from Poremba of Colorado (50%, 1967)³, of Border and his associates (37%, 1981), of Podboy and Malloy (49%, 1981), and others. Murray's study (1982) is likewise terribly thin, but he is honest in stating his appraisal of his work. Marianne Frostig and Phyllis Maslow to the contrary in unpublished data studied 323 children who attended the Center for three years and who then had left for a period of ten years. Ninety of these youths which she and Phyllis Maslow randomly selected were studied in terms of contacts with the law. One young man could possibly be defined as having a police record, and was institutionalized in a facility for emotionally and socially disturbed individuals (.0111111%). For the remainder, no police records were found. In a later population which they studied and reported—a study including 67 youths with the same educational backgrounds as the first group, seven had records of delinquency as young offenders (.1044776). Cruickshank also followed forty children at five-year intervals, learning disability child-

ren who had been in a specialized highly structured program for two and a half years. Fifteen years later, one out of forty of the now young men had a serious police record involving seventeen felonies and many imprisonments. He is now diagnosed psychiatrically as Constitutional Psychopathic Inferiority with probable neurophysiologic dysfunction. The most severe encounter with the law on the part of any of the other 39 men was that of overtime parking tickets. These are confirmed data resulting from examination of police files as well as direct two- to three-hour individually videotaped interviews with each of the young men.

From whence do these percentage discrepancies come? There is a significant difference between 92 percent in the study by the British Columbia psychologist, or 50 percent by Poremba, for examples, and the .011 and .104 percentages of Frostig or the .025 percent in Cruickshank's group. Different definitions of learning disabilities may account for some of these differences. The location of populations may account for others. The fact of the matter is, in my considered opinion, that the published studies which have appeared in print to date are erroneous from a scientific point of view, are threatening to parents and educators, and are essentially misleading to all the professions. The problem can be reconciled by further carefully controlled research based on populations adequately diagnosed and defined.

Other unreconciled issues. This has developed into a longer list of issues than I had initially intended. There are two others which I will mention but not discuss in any detail. My personal position is well known on each. We have not discussed the divergent views on mainstreaming *versus* good self-contained classes for learning disabled or other clinical types of children. Personally, I am in favor, and have been for nearly forty years of writing, of selective mainstreaming or normalization of education. I am unalterably opposed to the wholesale integration of handicapped into classes with teachers and administrators who, because of lack of education background, are ill-prepared to meet them.

A few evenings ago I was the speaker at an annual CFC chapter meeting in Los Angeles. It was an evening when also

several physically disabled graduating seniors were honored with scholarships. The event could have stopped at that. The young people themselves said it all. David, a mild cerebral palsied youth, mainstreamed since the fourth grade, Vice-President and Treasurer of the Junior class and President during his senior year of the Student Government in a 3,000 pupil high school, with a better than 3.5 grade point average, insists that in the year 2008 he will be the first cerebral palsied president of the United States! Charming and socially conscious, he will enter UC, Santa Barbara, in September to begin a pre-law program. Whether he becomes President is something only the future will determine, but he will become a force to be heard in whatsoever profession he enters. Jose, a deaf youth, gave a short speech pertaining to his goals upon entering UCLA that made one quiver with excitement. With perfect speech, syntax, and rhythm, he will compete with anyone as he moves into mechanical engineering as a profession. Rosita Gomez, with a left upper extremity congenitally missing, also looks to the future as an engineer. These three of thirteen honored youths, each with high academic averages, represent logical integration into the mainstream of their school system.

My concern is not for them, but for a statement by the Governor of California that one of his goals in California's educational system to be that within 5 years there will be no more special classes or schools in the state. Who is crazy now? The mass integration which we have witnessed in many places is or should be the basis for class action suits against politicians and school administrators who have indeed perpetuated crimes against children. Where is the special education leadership, the strength of the almost-dormant parent groups, and the advocacy of the disabled adults themselves in this horror story? To integrate with no preparation on the part of the receiving educators is criminal and cannot be tolerated. To think that a single orientation course for two hours of credit taken in some college will provide a basis for a rich integrated experience for educable mentally retarded youths, is false thinking at the least. James Paul and his associates in their excellent little book, call for an 18-month

orientation program for hundreds of people in more than a dozen different categories before the first child is integrated.

Second only to thoughtless mainstreaming is the fact of non-categorical education preparation. What is this? Who started this unholy concept? Is it conceivable that a single adult teacher can, with equal facility, teach mentally retarded children, emotionally disturbed youth, learning disabled young people, as is the case of one state? Can special education pre-service teachers be sophisticated through one two-year seminar on the education and psychology of exceptional children taught by visiting faculty members each given from two to six weeks to present the complexities of work with the blind, the deaf, the cerebral palsied, the gifted, and the other clinical problems of special education? This is wishful thinking which lacks any basis in rationality. Again, in reference to our first point regarding leadership, where is the organizational leadership regarding this problem? Do we have a National Council for Non-Categorical Educational being formed? Will this take the place of the ACLD, the National Association of Retarded Citizens, the Easter Seal Society, the United Cerebral Palsy, Inc., the Asthma and Allegy Research Foundation, the National Society for Autism, and a dozen other categorical associations? Why do these organizations not stand up against the non-categorical approach of educators which indeed is in large sense robbing children or their purported interests and the same children of their educational birthright? This, and thoughtless mainstreaming, cannot be left as unreconcilable issues.

The time has come when we in special education must put our house in order. Personal animosities must give way to a concert of effort which is positive in all respects. Parents, lulled into false security by the hopes of P.L. 94-142 must again arise and fight for their children's birthrights. P.L. 94-142 must itself be revised and have its illogical portions torn away. Special education has been set back at least two generations during the past 15 years. Crooked paths must be straightened again. Irreconcilable differences can no longer be permitted to exist to the detriment of children. Logic in special education must prevail. Good spe-

cial education must be the hallmark of every community in the nation.

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³Contact the author for full references.

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation (Act of August 12, 1970, Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code)

Title of Publication — *Journal of Learning Disabilities*.

Date of filing — October 1985

Frequency of issue — Monthly (except June/July and August/September which are combined)

Location of known office of publication (street, city, county, state, ZIP code) — 633 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Location of the headquarters of general business office of the publishers (not printers) — 7 East 12th Street, New York, NY 10003

Names and addresses of publisher. Publisher, Robert L. Wilson, 633 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017. Editor, Gerald M. Senf, PhD, 633 Third Avenue, NY, NY 10017. Managing Editor, William Egan, 633 Third Avenue, NY, NY 10017.

Owner (if owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address as well as that of each individual must be given). — Capital Cities Media, Inc., 7 East 12 St., New York, NY 10003. Capital Cities Communications, Inc., 485 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022; Mr. Thomas S. Murphy, Chairman of the Board, Chief Executive Officer. Capital Cities Communications, Inc., 24 East 51st Street, New York, N.Y. 10022; Mr. David Minkin, 186 Joralemon Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201; Cede & Co., c/o Depository Trust Company, Box 20, Bowling Green Station, New York, NY 10274; Dengel & Co., c/o Fiduciary Trust Company of New York, Post Office Box 3199, Church Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10008; Kray & Co., One Financial Place, 440 South La Salle Street, Chicago, IL 60605; Pacific & Co., c/o Pacific Securities Depository Trust Company, Post Office Box 7877, San Francisco, CA 94120.

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Extent and nature of circulation:

- A) Total no. copies printed (Net press run): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 13,406. Actual no. of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 13,572.
- B) Paid circulation. 1. Sales through dealers and street vendors and counter sales: none. 2. Mail subscriptions: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 13,261. Actual no. of single issue published nearest to filing date: 13,427.
- C) Total paid circulation: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 13,261. Actual no. of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 13,427.
- D) Free distribution (including samples) by mail, carrier or other means: Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: none. Actual no. of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: none.
- E) Total distribution (sum of C and D): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 13,311. Actual no. of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 13,477.
- F) Office use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing. Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 95. Actual no. of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 95.
- G) Total sum of E and F — should equal net press run (shown in A): Average no. copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 13,406. Actual no. of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 13,572.

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