IDEOLOGICALLY INFORMED: A POLICY ARCHAEOLOGY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IN ONTARIO, 1965-1980

by

Yvette Marie DeBeer

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
Graduate Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Yvette Marie DeBeer, 2011
Waves of education reform in Ontario since the 1960s have resulted in widespread changes to curriculum, governance, and policy directives. Despite these continual reforms the structures and the practices of special education have changed very little since the early twentieth century. This dissertation looks at special education policy historically (1965-1980) in Ontario and offers an explanation for this resistance to change.

Policy archaeology is developed in this study to map policy texts backwards through time and to interpret the meaning of policy discourses in these texts. The discourses produced by various policy actors are interpreted within the historical context to illuminate the ideologically informed beliefs of society about children with disabilities and their education.

The ideologies of conservatism, liberalism, and scientific rationalism continue to construct the identities of children with disabilities as deviant from “normal” children. These differences are scientifically measured and quantified by medical and psychological professionals. The hierarchical organization of schooling sorts students into homogeneous groups according to ability. The constructed identities and segregated placements marginalize children with disabilities from the opportunities available to children in the regular classroom. Ideologies are stable and enduring and contribute to the stability of beliefs about special education in spite of extensive and continuous reforms in other areas of education.
This dissertation builds on the earlier theories of the policy web (Joshee & Johnson, 2005). The large policy web of special education is composed of individual webs of meaning that represent the condensation symbols of disability, education, professionalism, management, and equality in particular ways that support the marginalization of children with disabilities. These webs are internally cohesive and related to each other by shared discourses. These interconnections give the web an intricate, irregular design but also give the web strength.

Based on Pierre Bourdieu’s theories of capital, the members of the Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, and its members as individuals, held high forms of capital that were used as power. This association shaped policy discourses in particular ways that influenced beliefs about learning disabilities, acquired resources for children with learning disabilities, and reproduced privilege for the association.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank my supervisor, Dr. Reva Joshee for her unflinching patience and guidance as I stretched and grew as a scholar. A writing week in Canmore, Alberta clarified my thinking and energized the process. Thank you for the experience.

I thank my committee: Dr. Lauri Johnson for her expertise and her continued confidence and support. I am grateful to Dr. Stephen Anderson for his insightful commentary. Their suggestions have substantially improved this dissertation.

Thanks to Edith Binns and Carol Ann Sloat who provided me with generous access to the historical records of the Council for Exceptional Children and the Association for Bright Children. I also wish to thank the office staff from the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario and to the Autism Society for their help accessing their records. My thanks also extend to Mark Zammit, the designer of the postmodern lace graphic. He took parts of a photograph and my vague descriptions to create the graphic that forms a central concept in this dissertation.

Colleagues at Lakehead University provided insightful analysis and cogent focused suggestions. I am indeed surrounded by brilliance.

To my family and friends who have supported me through the length and intensity of this journey, I am forever grateful. Special thanks to my children, Jason and Anne. Their unfailing encouragement and confidence in their mother’s abilities helped me through the most challenging times.

This dissertation represents more than “a book on a shelf.” It is a culmination of a lifetime of learning and represents my growth into academia. I look to my future with joy and excitement.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .................................................................................................................. ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ......................................................................................... iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS .......................................................................................... v
LIST OF FIGURES ................................................................................................... viii
Chapter One: INTRODUCTION .............................................................................. 1
  Situating Myself ................................................................................................. 2
  Research Questions ............................................................................................ 3
  The Historical Context ....................................................................................... 5
Striving for Equality ............................................................................................ 5
  Linguistic Equality ............................................................................................ 8
  Cultural and Religious Equality ......................................................................... 9
  Women’s Equality .............................................................................................. 10
  Indigenous Equality .......................................................................................... 11
  Equality Through Constitutional Reform and The Charter of Rights and Freedoms .. 12
Disability Advocacy ............................................................................................ 14
  Single Disability Advocacy ............................................................................. 15
  The Independent Living Movement .............................................................. 18
  Cross-Disability Political Advocacy ............................................................. 19
  Advocacy for Children with Disabilities in Ontario ...................................... 21
Significance .......................................................................................................... 24
Limitations ............................................................................................................ 26
Chapter Summary ............................................................................................... 27
Chapter Two: LITERATURE REVIEW ................................................................. 31
  Special Education in the Historical Period .................................................. 31
  The United States and Special Education .................................................... 31
  Ontario and Special Education ...................................................................... 33
Current Literature ............................................................................................... 41
  The Medical Model .......................................................................................... 41
  Eurocentrism .................................................................................................. 45
  Ability Streaming/Tracking ........................................................................... 47
Chapter Three: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ............ 53
  Historiography ............................................................................................... 53
  Critical Policy Sociology ............................................................................... 54
  Policy as Discourse ....................................................................................... 56
Conceptual Framework ....................................................................................... 59
  Discourses as representational systems ..................................................... 59
  Levels of Discourse ...................................................................................... 60
Ideology ............................................................................................................. 60
Condensation Symbols ....................................................................................... 61
Policy Web .......................................................................................................... 62
Power .................................................................................................................. 66
Chapter Four: METHODOLOGY ................................................................. 69
   Current Understandings of Policy Archaeology ...................................... 70
   Archaeological Field Work .................................................................... 73
   Doing Policy Archaeology ..................................................................... 75
Chapter Five: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS ............................................. 81
   Data ........................................................................................................ 82
   The Web of Disability ........................................................................... 83
     Deficit .................................................................................................. 83
     Deviance ............................................................................................. 84
     Difference .......................................................................................... 87
     A Dimension of Diversity .................................................................... 92
     Differing Abilities ................................................................................ 97
   Learning Disabilities ............................................................................. 98
   The Web of Management ....................................................................... 104
     Measurement ...................................................................................... 105
     Legislation .......................................................................................... 108
     Standardization .................................................................................. 110
     Efficiency ........................................................................................... 112
   The Web of Professionalism ................................................................... 116
     Professional authority ........................................................................ 116
     Hierarchy of Authority ....................................................................... 119
     Specialized Knowledge ....................................................................... 120
     Benevolent Humanitarianism ............................................................. 122
   The Web of Education ........................................................................... 126
     Reproducing Christian Values ............................................................. 127
     Stratification ......................................................................................... 129
     Meritocracy ........................................................................................ 131
     Child-Centeredness ........................................................................... 132
     Opportunity ........................................................................................ 135
     Unemployment .................................................................................... 137
   The Web of Equality ............................................................................. 142
     Equality as Access ............................................................................. 142
     Equality of Outcomes ......................................................................... 144
     Normalization ..................................................................................... 145
     Equal Educational Opportunity ........................................................ 146
     Rights .................................................................................................. 148
Chapter Six: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS ................................ 151
   Responding to the First Three Research questions ................................. 151
     Early 1960s ......................................................................................... 152
     1968-1970: Change ............................................................................. 154
     The Retrenchment .............................................................................. 156
   The Discourse of Advocacy ................................................................... 157
     The Picture Today ............................................................................... 158
   Responding to the Fourth Research Question ................................ ........ 160
     Implications for Policy as Discourse Theory ....................................... 163
     Implications for Policy Web Theory .................................................... 163
Implications for Theory of Power ................................................................. 164
Implications for Special Education Knowledge ........................................... 169
Implications for Education Reform .............................................................. 170
Continuing the Journey .............................................................................. 171
REFERENCES .................................................................................................. 172
APPENDIX A: ABBREVIATIONS .................................................................. 202
ENDNOTES ...................................................................................................... 203
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Traditional Lace and Postmodern Lace ................................................................. 63
Figure 2: The Special Education Policy Web ........................................................................ 65
Figure 3: Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 100.................................................................................. 67
Figure 4: Hall & Dennis, 1968, Cover .................................................................................. 72
Figure 5: Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 47 .................................................................................... 78
Figure 6: Hall & Dennis, 1968, inside cover ........................................................................ 92
Figure 7: Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children Report, 1970, Front Cover ......................................................................................................................... 94
Figure 8: Roberts & Lazure, 1970 p. 152 .............................................................................. 95
Figure 9: Roberts & Lazure, 1970 p. 312 .............................................................................. 95
Figure 10: Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 60 ............................................................................. 96
Figure 11: Ideological Agreements About Disability .............................................................. 104
Figure 12: Ideological Agreements About Legislation .......................................................... 110
Figure 13: Ideological Agreements About Management ...................................................... 116
Figure 14: Ideological Agreements About Professionalism .................................................. 126
Figure 15: Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 56 ................................................................................. 128
Figure 16: Ideological Agreements About Education ............................................................ 141
Figure 17: Ideological Disagreements About Education ....................................................... 142
Figure 18: Ideological Agreements About Equality ............................................................... 147
Figure 19: Ideological Disagreements About Equality .......................................................... 150
Chapter One: INTRODUCTION

Public schools are seen as integral to a democratic society. As Ranu Basu (2004) argued, dominant ideologies of how democracy should really work serve to legitimize policy paradigms (p. 621). Maude Barlow and Heather Jane Robertson (1994) add that “what one believes to be in the best interests of society (or of a particular slice of society) shapes one’s beliefs about what should go on in schools” (p. 121). Consequently education reform is an ongoing preoccupation of governments, business leaders, educators, and academics.

Special education reforms in Ontario have included revisions to categorical definitions, dedicated funding to special education on an equal, per pupil amount, additional funding for specialized equipment, and specialized funding for students who demonstrate very high needs (Jordan, 2001, p. 354). The Ministry of Education states that approximately 79% of elementary students and 82% of secondary students are included in regular classrooms for over 50% of their day (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009). This appears to demonstrate a movement away from specialized placements to more inclusive placements (Anderson & Ben Jaafar, 2003; Jordan, 2001). This statistic focuses on placement and creates the image of the student as a “guest” in the general education classroom for large parts of the day. Further, reform focuses on high academic standards ignoring differences in ability (Carrier, 1990; Hursch, 2007). All students must pass a standardized, province wide, achievement test in order to graduate. These targets focus on the structural and the procedural aspects of special education leaving the framework (curriculum pedagogy, management, and structure) of schooling unexamined (Carrier, 1990, p. 224; Vincent, Evans, Lunt, & Young, 1996, p. 488).

Despite successive waves of education reform from the 1960s to the present day that have seen changes to programs, governance, finance, and curriculum in elementary and secondary divisions, special education continues to resemble practices dating back to the beginning of the twentieth century (Tyack, 1974). Specifically, practices of assessment, categorization, differentiated/segregated programs, and unequal outcomes for students with disabilities closely resemble historical practices. Therefore significant change in these practices has not occurred.
School reforms are unsuccessful because schools are adept at assimilating reforms into existing structures and practices (Bascia, 2001; Tyack & Tobin, 1994). As it relates to special education, I submit that it is the stability of enduring cultural beliefs rooted in ideologies about children with disabilities and their education that are reasons for the resistance to change. I focus the study in Ontario because I am most familiar with special education in this jurisdiction. I examine policy documents between 1965 and 1980 because this was a period of vigorous and intense policy work in special education by governments, school districts, state and non-state-based policy actors, in preparation for the enactment of mandatory legislation. This period in Ontario was also a time of extensive analysis of public education, changes to curriculum and pedagogy (Gidney, 2002), and a new interest in the welfare of children. Societal beliefs about children with disabilities and special education were very visible in this historical period and an opportunity was created to influence policy direction.

_Situating Myself_

My interest in the history of special education policy in Ontario has been part of a long career as an educator. I can still recall the “moment,” as a teacher, when mandatory special education policy was announced to me by the school district’s superintendent. The school and the board were small and rural and I wasn’t aware of special education. Nor had this topic been part of my teacher training experiences. I remember having many questions related to learning about exceptionalities and the management of these new programs. Additionally, I felt fear of the unknown and a desire to understand the background to this policy that brought such concern to the school district and, by extension, to me.

Subsequent reading and course work did little to help my understanding as most historical descriptions focused on the “heroes” who, through their compassion, generosity, and skill, developed education for children with disabilities who were excluded from society or deemed to be evil. The documentation of major policy decisions by government policy actors completed these historical accounts. The historical literature on special education which specifically documented Ontario’s history was limited and situated within an understanding of policy as a guide for action. From this perspective, the work of policy actors related to special
education was not considered to be policy work and was, therefore, not documented in mainstream historical accounts of special education. I conceive that policy actors are individuals or groups that participate in social or political activity related to a particular policy problem.

Prior to my doctoral studies, I shared the conception of policy as a written directive. I believed that special education policy in Ontario was the passing of Amendments to the Education Act, 1980 in the legislature, commonly known as Bill 82. This understanding was a reflection of my professional responsibilities. As an educator, my primary concerns were to ensure policy compliance and responsiveness to the educational needs of students struggling to meet curriculum demands. The immediate concerns of policy administration precluded critical interrogation of the policy framework within which I operated or the assumptions underpinning special education. Central to my work was a belief that policies in special education demonstrated democratic principles of fairness, equal opportunity, and social justice.

My understandings of policy have evolved during my doctoral studies. Previously held views of policy as text and of policy neutrality have been replaced. I now hold a broader view of policy that sees no separation between policy development and implementation. Further, my view of policy foregrounds an understanding that policies are dynamic expressions of ideologies and I now use a critical lens to interrogate the values and beliefs that underpin special education policy. I have moved from understanding policy as a directive for action created by authorities like government and school districts to believing that policy actors also create policy through their language and actions. I approach the study of special education policy from a perspective that troubles the conceptions I held previously. I now question the common sense view that special education is humanitarian. The beliefs and practices of special education replicate inequalities and limit future opportunities for social mobility. I bring these evolving perspectives to this historical study of special education policy in Ontario.

**Research Questions**

Most studies of special education policy in Ontario are chronological historical accounts of policy events typically written as a narrative, documenting the policy decisions made by the government and usually begin with the passage of the Amendments to the Education Act in the

Some researchers have taken a case study approach. John Mombourquette (1985) examined Bill 82 as a case study of policy implementation in a school district. Vera Pletsch (1997) and George Hackett (1970) documented the evolution of the provision of education for children with “mental retardation.” Edward Godsell (1991) studied the adjudications of the special education tribunal in the first six years of its history. He concluded that the special education tribunal is functioning reasonably well and is an advantage to parents and advocates of children with exceptionalities. Angela Valeo (2002) conducted descriptive analyses of the special education tribunal decisions from 1984-2000. She found that the majority of tribunal case decisions supported the school district and not the parents. Valeo (2002) concludes that the tribunal has not been the vehicle for parental voice and involvement that it was originally intended to be (Valeo, 2002, p. 130). These accounts focus on a single aspect of special education.

Most of these studies take the events and aftermath of Bill 82 as the starting point. These accounts present a univocal account, documenting a single narrative implying a consensus among policy actors in their intentions and interpretations of policy events. Bill 82 did not just materialize in 1980. This legislation evolved from many years of significant policy work in the province by many policy actors. I take a broad interpretation arguing that the work of policy actors related to a particular topic is policy. This dissertation theorizes special education policy during a historical period in Ontario of heightened policy work.

I start from a position that policy is embedded with societal beliefs and values. These beliefs and values are expressions of ideologies about how the social world should operate. These ideologies are invisible and taken for granted but explain the practices associated with policy and policy effects, i.e., which members of society are privileged or marginalized. As Allen Luke (1995-1996) writes, discourse analysis provides tools to see how texts represent the social and natural world to construct particular versions of the social world (p. 12). A study of policy discourses reveals these enduring societal ideologies about children with disabilities and their education. The permanence of these ideologies is a reason for the resistance of special
education policy to significant change. Therefore this dissertation is guided by the following research questions:

1. What were the discourses within Ontario’s special education policy between 1965-1980?

2. How were these discourses taken up and reconstituted in the texts of non-government policy participants over time?

3. How were the discourses related to ideologies in the broader society?

4. What explanations can be offered for special education’s continued resistance to reform?

**The Historical Context**

This section considers the policy context. I align with other scholars who state that policy is influenced by the events and discourses found in the policy context (Ball, 1990; Gale, 2003; Joshee & Johnson 2005; Olssen, Codd, & O’Neill, 2004). From the history of the period under study I have categorized the events and activities into two themes related to the study of special education policy: (1) Striving for Equality (2) Disability Advocacy. Equality was selected as a related theme because special education often claims to provide educational equality for students with special needs (Howard, 2001). Disability Advocacy was selected because children with disabilities were a subgroup of persons with disabilities. The politicization of disability led by advocacy groups was an important advancement towards equality for all persons with disabilities.

**Striving for Equality**

Equality was an important historical theme in the 1960s and 1970s in Canada. Canadian society was situated within a political tradition that espoused equality of all persons (Manzer, 1994). Despite the rhetoric that Canada was a country of equality, scholars like John Porter (1965) were providing evidence of significant inequalities. Porter stated that systemic barriers in Canada’s social structure resulted in inequalities for minoritized groups (Malik, 1970). Further, Porter’s studies demonstrated the relationship between higher social class position and higher educational attainment that reproduced existing inequalities (Lessard, 1995). Canadian society
was structured so that the greatest rewards went to the elites who were white males of European
descent. These ideas about equality challenged previous beliefs that education was the vehicle to
ensure equal opportunity for all (O’Connor, 1998, p. 182).

Legislation enacted between the end of the Second World War and the 1960s focused on
human rights based on an assumption that all persons have the same rights and duties in a
democratic state (White, 2007, p. 20). It should be noted that individual human rights protections
had been legislated by most Canadian provinces following the signing of the *Universal
Declaration of Human Rights* in 1948, in response to the atrocities of the Second World War
(McGowan, 2003). These individual rights included the right to a fair, public trial if accused of a
crime, the right to practice the religion of one’s choice, the right to free primary education and
the right to participate in one’s government (McGowan, 2003, p. 10). In the 1960s, equality
defined as equal access was evident in the civil rights movement and the desegregation of
schools in the United States (Joshee & Johnson, 2005, p. 61). The Brown vs. Board of Education
legal case in 1954 redefined equality as a measure of outcomes (Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

Individuals are also members of societal groups and there is a need to support and be
sensitive to group differences (White, 2007, p. 120). In the 60s and 70s, minoritized groups in
Canadian society sought equality because they felt they were denied social status, democratic
participation, and the opportunity of equal pay for equal work. These groups included women,
cultural and linguistic groups, indigenous groups, and disabled persons. These groups sought
legislation that would prohibit discrimination against members of their groups. Striving for
recognition and protection of group rights became a major theme in the 1960s and 1970s
(Varpalotai, 1995; Wotherspoon, 1993, p 226).

Minority groups were using rights-based arguments to gain equal access to higher
positions of employment, higher education, social benefits, economic opportunity, and
citizenship (Silverman, 1993, p. 175). Provincial Human Rights statutes that were in existence
generally prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, creed, religion, colour, ethnic origin,
age, and gender, but were limited to fair employment and accommodation practices (Sussel,
1995). In addition, citizens had little means of redress for violations since the legislature, not the
courts, determined if violations had occurred. *The Canadian Bill of Rights* was enacted by the
Diefenbaker federal government in 1960. This legislation recognized and guaranteed political freedoms: freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and association, and freedom of the press, but did not address other rights for minorities, especially those with disabilities (p. 154). Terry Sussel (1995) argued that this legislation offered limited protections in that it applied only to federal legislation and did not extend to provincial laws. This is significant for education since, in Canada, education is a provincial responsibility. Second, because it was a statute, it could be repealed at any time by the prevailing government and so it lacked moral and political authority (Sussel, 1995). Third, the bill contained an exemption provision that allowed the government to exempt certain legislation from its protections. In addition, rights were seen as adult rights and did not apply to children who were still viewed as chattels belonging to their parents or were seen as a special and vulnerable class in need of protection (Howe & Covell, 2005, p. 20).

In the years following the Second World War, successive governments introduced legislation to protect citizens against unemployment, sickness, dependence in old age, and maternity benefits (Coutts, 1990, p. 179). During the 1960s and early 1970s, these benefits included pension income for senior citizens through the Canada Pension Plan in 1964, universal free health care through Medicare in 1966, and income protection for unemployed citizens through the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1971 (O’Connor, 1998, p. 204). These policies were part of the Welfare State or Keynesian policies intended to provide a social safety net for citizens of limited financial means. These policies did not address the protection of group rights and class stratification was becoming more widely acknowledged (O’Connor, 1998; Porter, 1965). John Porter’s *Vertical Mosaic* (1965) made visible the social stratification and inherent inequalities of the existing meritocratic organization of society. John Porter’s (1965) claims of inequalities in *The Vertical Mosaic* were supported by other reports documenting that Canada also had a high level of poverty amidst its affluence. The Economic Council of Canada advocated that a more highly educated workforce was a requirement for Canada’s economic prosperity (Manzer, 1985; Malik, 1970). Therefore education became linked to meeting the needs of the economy.

*The Royal Commission on Bilingualism & Biculturalism* (1963) documented evidence that immigrants and French citizens were considered second class (Palmer, 1993, p. 171). In 1967, the *Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women* (1967) identified that women
held unequal status in employment, the legal system, health care, and child raising (Silverman, 1993, p. 181). These groups began advocating for equality. The definition of a Canadian citizen was fueled by the national preoccupation with preparations for hosting the World Exposition in 1967 in Montreal and the selection of a Canadian flag in 1964. A nationalistic fervor encouraged many minority groups to lobby for equality legislation arguing for citizenship rights.

**Linguistic Equality**

French Canadian linguistic rights were the first to receive national recognition and action. *The British North America Act* (1867) entrenched the French language as one language of debate in the Federal parliament, in the Quebec legislature, and before Federal and Quebec courts. However, the right to education in English or French was not specifically included (Majhanovich, 1995). Because of an increase in tensions between the linguistic groups of English and French, the federal government of Lester Pierson established a *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (B & B Commission) in 1963. The preliminary report in 1965 demonstrated an enormous linguistic inequality in Canada. In short, people of French descent were considered second class citizens (Palmer, 1993, p. 171). The B & B Commission concluded that the language of instruction in schools was an important influence on language retention. It recommended education in the minority language, even for small numbers of students. Further the B & B Commission recommended that Anglophones should become functionally bilingual, at least in official capacities. The *Official Languages Act* (OLA) was passed by parliament in 1970 to enforce this recommendation. The OLA declared English and French were official languages in Canada requiring all Federal institutions to provide services in both official languages. The Canadian Parents for French/L’Association Canadienne-Francaise de l’Ontario became a national pressure group to protect and promote French language in education (O’Reilly, 1995).

In the 1960s, in Ontario, the francophone population was requesting more use of their language in the instruction of their children (Purdy, 1995). Franco-Ontarians’ levels of educational attainment were below those of the English-speaking majority (Stern, 1991, p. 226). French language instruction in elementary, secondary, and post secondary institutions was necessary to reduce this difference. By 1970, public French secondary schools were authorized for full public funding. Advocacy continued for the creation of French language school boards
(O'Reilly, 1995). However the creation of French language school boards in Ontario was only legislated in 1986 (O'Reilly, 1995).

**Cultural and Religious Equality**

Almost simultaneous with demands for French language equality in Ontario, religious and cultural groups were demanding equality. Roman Catholics \[iii\] were asking for public funding to extend their school system beyond Grade 10. In 1863, the *Scott Act* gave Roman Catholics the right to operate publicly funded schools up to Grade 10 in the province. The schools were to use the same textbooks, curriculum, and qualified teachers as the public system and were to be inspected by officials from the Department of Education (Purdy, 1995, p. 115). Catholics argued that this arrangement did not give them a complete education system. In addition, Catholic school boards also claimed inequality existed in school board funding. Catholic school boards only had access to funding through the local municipality’s residential taxes while public school boards could access the more lucrative commercial and industrial taxes (Gidney, 2002, p. 125). Continued lobbying in the 1960s and 1970s kept the questions of extension and full funding on the political agenda for several years. It was not until 1984 that the province agreed to support the full funding of the Roman Catholic school system to Grade 12 (Gidney, 2002, p. 127).

Cultural groups who wanted to preserve their traditions and languages justified their demands by referring to *The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (Majhanovich, 1995, p. 94). This report recognized Canada’s cultural diversity and recommended measures to recognize cultural groups and to ensure the survival of traditions, ethnic organizations, cultural symbols, and languages. Canada’s Multiculturalism policy, enacted in 1971, attempted to foster national unity by giving ethnic groups a sense of belonging to Canada which was described as a multicultural, tolerant, and egalitarian society (McAndrew, 1995, p. 168). \[iv\] In Ontario, one example of government recognition of cultural diversity was in the teaching of nonofficial or ancestral languages. The Ministry of Education announced its intention, in 1977, to fund and implement a Heritage Language Program because of continued advocacy by cultural groups in Ontario. Classes in any language would be offered whenever requested by a group of interested parents. Classes for Heritage Language were to be held outside of regular school hours. Boards would be responsible for staff, curriculum, and supervision of classes; however, the instructors were not required to hold teaching qualifications.
Women’s Equality

Beginning in the 1960s, English and French women’s organizations began to organize and regroup across Canada. This second wave of the women’s movement sought to bring women’s equality issues onto the political agenda. By this time, many more women were in the labour force, many were home owners, and women represented 95% of the students enrolled in Canadian universities in undergraduate programs in household science, nursing, secretarial science, and physical and occupational therapy (Prentice, Bournam, Cuthbert Brandt, Light, Mitchinson, & Black, 1988, p. 327). Yet societal structures and legislation perpetuated stereotyping and discrimination (Prentice et al., 1988, p. 320).

Pressure forced the Liberal government to convene a Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW) in 1967 (Prentice et al., 1988, p. 348). The general mandate of the Commission was to inquire on the status of women and to make recommendations to ensure women received equal opportunities with men in all aspects of Canadian society. The RCSW Commission held hearings in fourteen cities in all ten provinces and territories, and received 469 briefs and approximately one thousand letters. The final report spelled out four principles: (1) women should be free to choose whether or not to take employment outside their homes; (2) the care of children is a responsibility to be shared by the mother, the father, and society; (3) society has a responsibility for women because of pregnancy and childbirth and special treatment related to maternity will always be necessary; and (4) in certain areas women will, for an interim period, require special treatment to overcome the adverse effects of discriminatory practices (Silverman, 1993; Prentice et al., 1988, p. 349). Following the release of the report, the RCSW Committee became the National Committee on the Status of Women in Canada. In its efforts to address social policies of inequality in Canada, the women’s movement addressed issues of poverty, child care, violence against women, pornography, prostitution, sex role stereotyping in curriculum materials, women’s health, and women’s sexuality, as these issues related to all women including indigenous women and women of other cultural heritages (Cohen, 1993).

The government sought to improve the conditions of women through a wide variety of measures including repealing provisions in the Criminal Code prohibiting the dissemination of birth control information, and introducing provisions allowing for therapeutic abortions. The Prime Minister appointed a minister responsible for the Status of Women, incorporated maternity
benefits into the unemployment insurance plan, introduced the concept of “equal pay for equal work” into the labour code, allowed income tax deductions for child care costs of working women, and amended rape legislation.

Women’s groups were active participants in the evolving federal debates related to Constitutional reform. The first draft of the equality section tabled in the House of Commons in 1980 was drawn up without consulting women’s groups. The draft language was almost identical to the 1960 Canadian Bill of Rights that women charged had never been interpreted to benefit women (Bourne, 1993, p. 323). Many prominent women’s groups wrote to the Prime Minister and presented briefs to the joint committee of the House of Commons. These briefs detailed objections to the proposed wording. The Senate convened to hear complaints. Following a conference on Constitutional reform, women began a vigorous lobbying campaign. Their efforts resulted in an equality clause in the new Charter of Rights and Freedoms (CRF) that included gender, marital status, sexual orientation, and political belief, as named grounds for non-discrimination (Bourne, 1993, p. 323).

**Indigenous Equality**

Prior to the 1960s, indigenous peoples’ struggle to increase citizenship rights were primarily local in nature (Wotherspoon & Satzewic, 1993, p. 226). However, the government’s White Paper of 1970 proposed to end existing treaties, to give authority for Indian Affairs from the federal government to the provinces, and to remove many of the citizenship rights that Indigenous people already had. In short, the White Paper proposed that indigenous people would have the same citizenship rights as non-indigenous people and nothing more. The White Paper also expressed a plan to transfer the responsibility for education of indigenous children to the provinces. The federal government had been transferring funds to provinces for Aboriginal education for some time. Education for indigenous people had traditionally been the responsibility of the federal government. Unfortunately the schools on reserves had fallen into disrepair during the time when the federal government was transferring funds to the province (Castellano, Davis, & Lahache, 2000).

There was an unprecedented backlash by indigenous communities such that in 1970, the White Paper was formally withdrawn. Indigenous leaders responded with the Red Paper of 1970.
The position here was that indigenous people should have citizenship rights consistent with those of non-indigenous people and they should also be accorded special status. Indigenous people should be regarded as citizens plus. By the 1970s, the National Indian Brotherhood was a political voice. Indigenous people also saw an opportunity to advance their social status and equality claims through the proposed constitutional reform of the Liberal government. The government also began intensive and extensive negotiations with indigenous leaders.

Indigenous people also wanted control of their own education. Confrontations about control of school governance erupted in Alberta in 1970 (Castellano et al., 2000, p. 6). Subsequently the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood and the National Indian Brotherhood issued reports that redefined ideas about integration and school governance (Castellano et al., 2000, p. 6). Responsibility for education would be the responsibility of local bands and the federal government would provide the funding.

**Equality Through Constitutional Reform and The Charter of Rights and Freedoms**

In the late 1960s, the Liberal government had a new leader with a new vision for Canadian society. Although the government of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau continued the Liberal tradition of extending the social safety net by introducing such measures as unemployment insurance, family allowance increases, and a child tax credit, another thrust of the Trudeau government’s program was to broaden social policy to embrace quality-of-life issues (Coutts, 1990; Access to Justice Net Canada, n.d.).

The Liberal government under Pierre Trudeau is often cited for its focus on the values of a “Just Society” (Couture, 1998; Coutts, 1990). Canada’s “Just Society” called for freedom, equality of opportunity and, with it, the elimination of poverty. Canada was an ideal country for a policy of greater equality of opportunity. Canadians recognized the need for both government and the private sector to protect the weak from the strong and the disadvantaged from the well off. Equality through constitutionally guaranteed rights was Trudeau’s particular focus. He introduced the *Canadian Human Rights Act* that improved on the previous *Canadian Bill of Rights*. But Trudeau wanted to extend equality provisions through constitutional reform and by entrenching a *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (CRF) in the constitution. Trudeau
argued that a CRF would protect fundamental rights and freedoms of all Canadians and be an instrument of national unity.

In 1978, a Special Committee heard submissions by minority groups who saw an opportunity to advance their claims for equality through the CRF (Boyce, Tremblay, McColl, Bickenback, Crichton, Andrews, Gerain, & D’Aubin, 2001). In June 1978, based on the Special Committee meetings, the federal government released a new White Paper that identified only “official bilingualism, minority language education rights, equality of French and English in federal government institutions and the courts, mobility rights, freedom of expression, and freedom of association” as part of the proposed CRF (Boyce et al., 2001, p. 45). From late fall 1980 to spring 1981, a second parliamentary committee was commissioned to travel across the country and gather responses to the government’s constitutional proposals. This committee “met with individual citizens, interest groups, and advocacy groups across the country….It is in this context that equality rights for person with disabilities, gays and lesbians, women, and multicultural groups are mentioned for the first time” (Boyce et al., 2001, p. 47).

By the spring of 1980, the government accepted the recommendations of the special parliamentary committee for a section on non-discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, gender, colour, religion, age, sex, or physical or mental disability, and added these conditions to the CRF.

The central focus of striving for equality for minority groups was to eliminate the structural barriers in Canadian society that denied them equal access to higher levels of employment and education, as well as equal participation in the political and economic positions of leadership and power. This is one meaning of the term “equality of opportunity.” In this context, equality of opportunity was the absence of discrimination to enable persons to access important societal goods (White, 2007, p. 57). The CRF was an opportunity for minority groups to be identified and guaranteed equal treatment and participation in the rights of citizenship. Natalie Belanger (2001) notes that this is equality “before the law” and “in the law.”
Disability Advocacy

Persons with disabilities were another minoritized group seeking equality. However, equality for persons with a disability differed from the groups previously discussed because this group contained children with visible and invisible disabilities. The problem of equality, then, was twofold. First, the disability rights movement worked to transform disability from a concept of charity to a concept of rights which would argue for the elimination of discriminatory attitudes and systemic barriers. Second, children with disabilities required the removal of educational barriers to permit equal access to education and the opportunity for education that would lead to productive future employment and independence.

Historically, the predominant view of disability was the lens of impairment, often identified as the medical model, which focused on limitations (Bailey, 1998; Frattura & Topinka, 2006). Persons with disabilities were given medicalized diagnoses and labels and then categorized for treatments that resulted in their exclusion from many aspects of social life (Bailey, 1998). Viewed as sick or perpetual children or deviant (Wolfensberger, 1972), persons with disabilities were prevented from independent living and gainful employment. Persons with disabilities were dependent on the charity of others to meet their basic needs. The concept of rights would give persons with disabilities status as persons who could access social, political, and civil rights.

Alfred Neufeldt (2003b) described the first three waves of disability awareness in establishing disability as a public issue in Canada. The first wave was the development of services, institutions, and service groups. The second wave was the development of coherent community services and the third wave was about inclusion and obtaining full civil and legal rights (p. 22). In this section, I will build on Neufeldt’s conception of three waves because there appears to have been three different types of activities occurring almost simultaneously within disability advocacy. However, I depart slightly from Neufeldt’s titles for the waves. I have chosen to identify the three types of activities as: Single disability advocacy, the Independent Living Movement, and cross-disability political advocacy. This will be followed by a description of local advocacy that supported children with disabilities with respect to equal education.
Single Disability Advocacy

Single disability advocacy had its origins following the Second World War. Returning war veterans lobbied for the supports to live and work in their communities. Local associations initially represented the war veterans and the physically disabled. With the advances in medical treatment and rehabilitation and the advocacy efforts of the Canadian Paraplegic Association, the physically disabled became employed and participated in social and recreational activities in the community (Drieger, 1989; Wight-Felske, Stienstra & Waters, 2003). Medical and rehabilitation advancements meant more persons with disabilities survived the polio epidemics of the 1940s and 1950s and the thalidomide disasters of the 1950s and 1960s. Advances in rehabilitation and the Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled Act in 1951 meant that employment was possible for many persons with a physical disability. For those unable to participate in full time employment, support benefit programs were available from the federal government. Small disability pensions were available from many provincial governments for those who could not work (Jongbloed & Crichton, 1990; Drieger, 1989). However, during the period between the Second World War and the 1960s, the prevailing attitudes of charity, pity, or fear of persons with a disability, meant marginalization in other areas of society continued (Drieger, 1989, p. 9; Rioux, 1994, p. 70). Many adults and children with physical and mental disabilities were denied an education. Without education and income, persons with disabilities could not become independent and enter the mainstream of society (Drieger, 1989, p. 2). Persons with disabilities were warehoused in institutions or shut away in homes and so had few opportunities to interact with non-disabled persons. Persons with physical disabilities could not participate fully in society because they did not have access to many of the buildings. Integrating persons with disabilities into community living was situated within a provincial, national, and international context of increasing advocacy for the normalization of lifestyles for persons with disabilities (LeFave & McWhorter, 1982). The Independent Living Movement began in the United States in the late 1960s and was driven by mobility-impaired persons who needed to have services available in the community in order to live and work (Dreiger, 1989, p. 21). The growth of the advocacy group “People First” in Canada illustrated the increasing opposition by persons with disabilities to previous stereotypes and their concern with issues affecting their quality of life (LeFave & McWhorter, 1982, p. 95).
The memories of institutional living shared by persons with disabilities provide some insight into living conditions (Le Fave & McWhorter, 1982). These individuals became members of advocacy groups who sought to be known as consumers of services rather than patients of institutions.

If the person is accepted into an institution, virtually all their personal choices and privacy’s are set aside. The consumer of institutional services has no choice but to accept what one will wear, where one will sit, when one will rise in the morning or go to bed at night, all of these decisions are made by others for whole categories of people. [Patients] are accountable to the provider for all minute aspects of their behavior…Powerful drugs or behavior modification techniques may be employed to enforce accountability. (Le Fave & McWhorter, 1982, p. 95.)

Provincially, the Department of Health commissioned a study into institutionalized living. The chair was Walter Willistin. The report, released in 1971, firmly advocated for society to provide for the social, financial, custodial, and educational needs of persons in institutions as a moral and ethical responsibility. This report’s findings began the decline of institutionalized living for persons with disabilities.

In the early 1960s, a number of international and national events began to focus on the neglect and inequalities for persons with disabilities. In the United States, President John Kennedy was developing programs and legislation aimed at improving the lives of children with “mental retardation” through raising awareness, developing programs and services, and improving the status of persons with “mental retardation.” School districts were permitted to exclude children with disabilities in Ontario. However, in the United States, President Kennedy signed Public Law 88-164 which declared that children requiring special education were to have access to public schools (Winzer, 1993, p. 378). In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the United States passed Acts that continued to legislate that students with disabilities would receive services at the public expense. For example, in 1968, the Amendments to the ESEA included support for programs for students with disabilities (Joshee & Johnson, 2005). In 1963, President Kennedy formed a federal department to study and fund programs to advance the education of children with disabilities (Winzer, 1993, p. 37). Dr. Samuel Kirk, noted for identifying learning disabilities, became the Director in 1964. “Mental retardation” was a particular interest of the Kennedy family. Eunice Kennedy-Schriver, sister to the President, began the Special Olympics in Chicago in 1970.
Soon after, in 1971, the United Nations issued the *Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons*. This was followed by the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, in 1975, declaring equal rights for all persons regardless of disability (Tarulli, Yardiff, Griffiths, Owens, McQueen-Fuentes, Feldman, Sales, & Stoner, 2004). In October 1963, President Kennedy signed a public law which broadened the earlier legislation to include most children with severe handicaps in public schools, including those who were hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, crippled, or other health impaired children (Winzer, 1993). These students required special education. Therefore, special education expanded through federal and state assistance and the preparation of teachers in teaching institutions.

At this time, Canada was slowly following the lead of its southern neighbour. In October 1964, the first Canadian Conference on “Mental Retardation” was held in Ottawa. Topics for study related to both adults and children and briefly discussed education. Ray Graham, Director of Special Education in Illinois, stated that “there has been a definite up-surge of interest, understanding, acceptance, and readiness on the part of school administrators and teachers to provide for ‘all the children’” (1961). While this might be true in the United States, a different picture emerged in Canada.

In 1966, Nadine Chidley, the Director of Special Education, Winnipeg School Division, Manitoba, reported on the dismal situation with respect to educational planning and programs for children with severe “mental retardation” in the Canadian provinces. In British Columbia, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, and Ontario, the provincial governments were providing grants to school boards to operate schools for persons identified as “trainable retarded.” Chidley also reported that despite these incentives, there were an insufficient number of classes and that most classes existed in Canadian urban centers, marginalizing those who lived in rural communities (Chidley, 1966, p. 10).

The normalization movement and the work of Wolf Wolfensberger and the National Center for Mental Retardation, in Ontario, furthered the ideas that persons with disabilities should participate in all aspects of social life just as non-disabled persons do. Normalization was based on documented evidence that when living in normalizing communities, persons with
“mental retardation” led a nearly normal life. Wolf Wolfensberger (1972) argued for the physical and social integration of persons with disabilities into all aspects of community life.

**The Independent Living Movement**

In the 1950s, many persons with disabilities were represented by organizations of parents, professionals and friends who made decisions about services on behalf of persons with disabilities. These organizations concentrated their charitable work on a single disability (Drieger, 1989; Derksen, 1980). Few of these organizations included persons with disabilities in their membership, let alone in the decision making aspects of the organization (Phillips, 2003; Drieger, 1989).

The Independent Living Movement began in the United States in the late 1960s and 1970s (Dreiger, 1989, p. 21). This movement spread to Canada and resulted in the development of community based services and living arrangements and the phasing down of large institutions where services would be provided (Neufeldt, 2003a; Willistin, 1971). These ideas were influential in expanding the perceptions of “normal.” In Canada, the philanthropic work of Jean Vanier with adults with “mental retardation” highlighted that persons with disabilities could flourish in a supportive community. Society began to be exposed to disability not as a loss of the ability to cope requiring institutionalization, but as the need to adopt alternative approaches to performing tasks and to adapting to a different way of living.

In addition to independent living centers, the new consumer movement emerged (Dreiger, 1989). The consumerism concept was that persons with disabilities were consumers of services and had a right to select and monitor the quality of those services (Dreiger 1989, p. 22; Derksen, 1980). Prior to the consumerism concept services for people with disabilities were provided and controlled by non-disabled, professional service providers, hospitals and rehabilitation centers. Parents and people with disabilities began to question society’s definition of persons with disabilities as “abnormal,” “cripples,” “deviants,” “clients,” or “patients,” and were demanding greater participation in all aspects of social life (Drieger, 1998, p. 80). Membership and advocacy association leadership began to shift to persons with disabilities who began taking a more assertive role working for changes in policies and services that would give persons with disabilities control over decisions about acquiring and managing services to meet
their own needs (Hutchinson, Arai, Pedlar, & Lord, 2004; MacDonald & Oxford, 2002). Persons with disabilities wanted the opportunity to live in their home community, to receive an education and other social benefits and to participate in productive employment.

Greater participation would be possible through community based services. As a result, the Community Living Association was founded at the national level in, 1958, from a collection of local associations composed of parents and friends of disabled persons (Richler, 2003, p. 138). Community based services was a central element in a demonstration project in 1965, led by the Metro Toronto Association for Retarded Persons. This project included having the full range of services for persons with disabilities available in the community (Anglin & Braaten, 1978, p. 35).

Throughout the 1970s, the focus of the Community Living Association was on developing a range of services in the community without the need for institutions. This would enable persons with disabilities to stay in their communities and interact with non-disabled peers (Richler, 2003, p. 138). With the inspiration of People First, an international movement of people labeled as “mentally handicapped” (Park, Monteiro, & Kappel, 2003), the Association for the Mentally Retarded changed its name and focus to the Association for Community Living. They chose this new name because they wanted personal autonomy to live in a community with their peers (Park et al., 2003, p.190). People First, became synonymous with “self-advocacy” and more recently, “consumer control” (Hutchinson et al., 2004, p. 9). Gradually, persons with disabilities were seen as entitled to education, recreation, and social relationships (Tarulli et al., 2004).

**Cross-Disability Political Advocacy**

Advocacy associations began to exhibit a growing resistance to the use of words and images of pity and sickness, and wanted their members to be seen as competent and valued members of society (Derksen, 1980). These organizations became strategic and tactical as they worked towards “community living, deinstitutionalization, educational integration, and greater support for competitive employment instead of sheltered employment” (McColl & Boyce, 2003; Derksen, 1980). Persons with disabilities began to view themselves as consumers with personal power and rights. The Independent Living Movement had started a change in attitudes that
included environmental changes needed to support independent living (Phillips, 2003; MacDonald & Oxford, 2002; Kilgour, 2002).

As their numbers grew, persons with disabilities began to organize worldwide. Associations began to form alliances across disability lines and across the nation. The Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) was organized in 1976 and became Canada’s first national cross-disability, consumer-driven advocacy association. The Coalition of Provincial Organizations for the Handicapped (COPOH) built alliances with other disability rights groups (Peters, 2004), including the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL), to advocate as a united front. This association was a political voice that lobbied the federal government for protection of persons with disabilities in the Canadian Human Rights Act and, subsequently, in the CRF (Drieger, 1998, p. 22). The COPOH was one of the founding members of Disabled Peoples International, the worldwide organization that held its founding Congress in Singapore in 1981 (Drieger, 1989, p. 2; Derksen, 1980). 1981 was the tenth anniversary of the Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons (Levy, Levy, Liebman, Dern, Rae, & Ames, 1982).

Internationally, the United Nations proclaimed 1981 as the International Year of Persons with Disabilities. The theme was “full participation and equality,” defined as the right of persons with disabilities to take part fully in the life and development of their societies. In respect of the International Year, a special Parliamentary Committee held hearings on disability issues across Canada during the summer of 1980. The Government of Canada hosted the World Congress of Rehabilitation International in Winnipeg in June 1980 (Peters, 2004). The COPOH were particularly successful in raising the awareness of disability issues at the World Congress in Winnipeg in 1980. COPOH had fifty of its own delegates funded by the Canadian government. Because the United Nations International Year of Persons with Disabilities was in 1981, some individuals with disabilities in the developing countries received funding from non-government organizations to attend (Drieger, 1998, p. 34). This created a large number of conference attendees who were persons with disabilities. COPOH developed a daily newsletter called Newsline to highlight meetings and events about persons with disabilities. Persons with Disabilities International (DPI) was subsequently founded at the World Congress in Singapore, in 1981 (Drieger, 1998).
The impending release of the Constitution and the enactment of the CRF encouraged persons with disabilities to lobby politicians to entrench the rights of people with disabilities in the CRF (Drieger, 1989, p. 22). The voices of persons with disabilities were finally heard by the committee and disability became a prohibited ground of discrimination that was included in the CRF.

**Advocacy for Children with Disabilities in Ontario**

Children and adults with a disability lived a life of dependency on their families, on charity, or dependent on institutional health care. Advocacy groups provided many direct assistance and supportive services to families and individuals. Advocacy groups were organized along single disability lines and the majority of their activities concentrated on acquiring services for their adult members. For example, in the 1960s, the Ontario Association for Mental Retardation (OAMR) association supported recreation and camping, home care, and various services for persons with “mental retardation.” The association provided research, surgical and medical treatment, education, vocational training, and job placement to children with physical disabilities (Fleming, 1972b). Advocacy groups received no public funding and funded their administration and work through charity drives and volunteers. In 1961, an eighteen-hour telethon raised money to support the work of the OAMR Association. The Ontario Society for Crippled Children created the Easter Seal campaigns. Annually, a representative of all physically disabled children, dubbed as “Timmy,” became the public face of the fund raising campaign.

In Ontario, the membership of many advocacy groups consisted of parents and educators committed to improving social and educational programs and services for their children. Disseminating research, sharing instructional strategies, providing a forum for sharing parental concerns, creating public awareness, and lobbying school boards and governments for policy and legislative changes, were typical activities. Advocacy groups represented the interests of children and/or adults with physical disabilities, “mental retardation,” learning disabilities, giftedness, and emotional disorders. The following is a brief description of the advocacy associations representing children with special needs in Ontario between 1965 and 1980.

In 1948, the Association for Retarded Children in Ontario was created (OAMR, 1973-74, p. 6). In 1965, the name changed to the Ontario Association for the Mentally Retarded,
signifying the Association’s support for children and adults. Before the 1950s, the government did not finance schools for students with severe “mental retardation.” The parents often financed and operated their own schools. By the 1970s, the Association had expanded its activities to include fundraising, recreation, preschool, family services, and adult services. The Association’s political activities related to social and educational services for children were directed at changing government and school board legislation and policies. Association members also held an annual conference and workshops advising teachers on pedagogical strategies (Anglin & Braaten, 1978). The Association was affiliated with a national association creating a Canadian advocacy presence.

The Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (OACLD) was formed, in 1963, by a small group of parents (Fleming, 1972a, p. 166) The OACLD distributed a monthly journal to members that featured current research and the Association invited leading researchers to address regular meetings and speak at the annual conference. The group also mounted a public awareness campaign about learning disabilities, wrote numerous briefs, was a sponsor of the national Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children, advocated with school boards and the government about appropriate programs, and suggested improvements to teacher education (Fleming, 1972a). The Ontario Association was affiliated with The Canadian Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (CACLD) that began in 1971, with the first president being from Ontario. This Association was linked to the American Association for Children with Learning Disabilities through the umbrella organization of the Council for Exceptional Children.

The Council for Exceptional Children, an advocacy group of parents and special educators, was formed in 1923 in the United States. Initially, Canadian members were considered to be a Division. Divisions were special interest subgroups, such as The Ontario Council for Administrators of Special Education (OCASE), the Ontario Division for Children with Behavioural Disorders (ODCBD), or The Association for Gifted Education in Canada (TAG). In 1956, Ontario members were permitted their own Federation. This was quickly followed by a national Canadian Committee in 1958 (McIntosh, 1970, p. 7). By the 1970s, the CEC in Canada had grown to 38 chapters and four provincial federations. The Ontario
federation’s annual convention planned on 2000 delegates (McIntosh, 1979, p. 7). The Canadian Committee financed the quarterly publication of the magazine *Special Education in Canada*.

The Ontario Association for Emotionally Disturbed Children’s original membership was largely parents of children with emotional problems. After incorporating in 1957, the membership expanded to include professionals, teachers, and members of the general public. Much of the work of the association was distributing informational materials to child care workers, to teachers, to nurses, hospitals, and governments. They produced a journal entitled *EDC, Emotionally Disturbed Children* (Fleming, 1972a, p. 167).

The Association for Bright Children (ABC) began in Toronto in 1972-1973. The association increased its membership and the number of chapters grew through the late 1970s. Members were teachers and parents. The Association continued to host conferences for teachers and parents and to publish quarterly newsletters. The Association became a registered charity in September, 1980. The Association members staffed Saturday schools for students with giftedness. In North York, many of these “teachers” were preservice teachers in the Faculty of Education (ABC, n.d.).

The Ontario Society for Crippled Children (OSCC) was incorporated into an Association in the 1930s and received modest government support. The Association provided research, surgical and medical treatment, education, vocational training, and job placement to children with physical disabilities (Fleming, 1972a). To raise funds to support its work, the association created the Easter Seal campaigns. In 1962, the Ontario Crippled Children’s Center (OCCC), a school and treatment and rehabilitation center, was opened. The OCCC collaborated with Variety Village, a residential vocational school in Toronto, to produce prosthetic and orthotic devices for children and adults.

The Ontario Advisory Council on the Physically Handicapped (OACPH) was established by the government in 1975 (Dunlap, 1976). The council was composed of a Chairman and nineteen members from across the province. The Council was created to review government policies and programs pertaining to the physically handicapped, to recommend improvements to current policies and to promote opportunities for self help for the physically disabled. Unlike other associations, this advocacy group did not begin as a grassroots parent association.
Each of these associations represented the interests of children with a single disability. Membership in these associations was primarily parents and educators. These associations advanced their advocacy work through fundraising and the work of volunteers. There appeared to be very little collaboration between associations during this period.

This section has provided the context for the data and analysis. Minority groups politicized their struggles for political, social, and economic equality and used the constitutional reform and impending Charter of Rights and Freedoms as an opportunity to have equality rights entrenched in national legislation. Secondly, disability advocacy became organized at the national level and became part of a political agenda. These two types of activity form a background to the special education policy activities in Ontario.

**Significance**

This dissertation will complement existing studies of special education policy that take the form of chronological accounts or case studies. Chronological studies are necessary to provide a temporal perspective. Case studies provide in-depth study of a particular aspect of policy. This dissertation theorizes special education policy and therefore fills a gap in the literature. This study of policy discourses illuminates the assumptions and values underpinning special education policy work and the broader societal ideologies that inform special education. Further, this study will support Felicity Armstrong’s (2002) position that special education is marked by contradictions, political struggles, and social practice. This study will show that special education policy is not value neutral and that the “taken-for-granted” reality of special education is socially constructed and reflective of particular ideologies. Ideologies are shared across groups in society presenting a common sense reality that appears to be unquestionable. These ideologically-informed practices are resistant to change because ideologies are slow to change.

This dissertation studies policy texts from non-state-based policy actors. These texts are primary source documents but have no authority to direct action. The directive perspective of policy presents a univocal, value-neutral interpretation of policy. This study begins from the position that policy is complex and not the sole purview of authoritative institutions. Policies affect people and policy texts are created out of the work of various policy actors. Policy actors
have different interpretations of the policy process, goals, and outcomes. A more richly textured account of policy is created by incorporating the policy work and viewpoints of multiple policy actors who may not be focused on creating a guide for action but on sharing their policy reality.

Key points about policy are highlighted in this dissertation. First, policy is more complex than a value-neutral directive for action (Ball, 1994; Goldberg, 2005; Joshee, 2007; Olssen et al., 2004). Policy is a field of activity by many policy actors related to a particular problem. The activity reflects the many explanations about how the social world works. Second, policy cannot be studied in isolation but is interrelated with other policies. For example, policy texts about special education were located in areas related to general education, teacher education, education reform, and advocacy groups. The interrelationships among policy areas show that the values that inform policy exist across the political, social, and economic context (Fairclough, 1992; Gee, 2005; Joshee, 2007; Joshee & Johnson, 2005). Third, a study of the discourses in policy illuminates the patterns of logic (Joshee, 2007; Scheurich, 1997), worldviews (Lakoff, 2002), or taken-for-granted beliefs in society that are ideologically informed (Johnston, 1996; Reid & Knight 2006). Different ideologies permeate the social world and are used by various cultural groups to explain their beliefs about how the social world should work and the actions that emanate from these beliefs. I use the term “discourse” to mean the more abstract ways of representing the social world. I use the term “everyday talk” to refer to the ways of communicating about simple concepts that James Gee (2005) identified as little “d” discourses. I have chosen different terminology to avoid confusion.

This dissertation contributes to the growing literature on the policy web. The interrelationships among policy discourses can be conceptualized using the metaphor of the policy web (Joshee, 2007; Joshee & Johnson, 2005; Winton, 2007; Goldberg, 2005). The policy web is a visual representation showing that special education policy is a collection of discursive webs. The discourses form smaller webs that define, and are defined by, complex abstract concepts related to special education, such as disability, education, or equality. The policy web is a visual representation of the ways that special education and children with disabilities were represented in society. The interrelationships and mutual support between and among these discursive webs give strength and a sense of permanence to these representations.
This study contributes an alternative tool of policy archaeology to the field of policy study. I build on the methodology of policy archaeology articulated by James Scheurich (1997) and Trevor Gale (2001). The version used in this dissertation is a metaphor for fieldwork in archaeology. Field archaeology interprets artifacts to develop an explanatory narrative of their cultural significance. The methodology of policy archaeology in this study locates policy discourses over time and across multiple policy texts. This is followed by the interpretation of the meanings of the discourses. Policy actors used discourses in particular ways that makes visible the underlying ideologies that explain the abstract concepts associated with special education. These concepts include disability, professionalism, education, management, and equality. The interpretation of ideologies is informed by the historical policy context.

Pierre Bourdieu’s understandings of forms of capital and their relationship to power has been extended in this study. I submit that forms of capital accrued by a group of individuals can be shared with an association. This increases the forms of capital for each of the members as well as the entire association. The Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities was an association whose executive members each had high levels of cultural, social, and symbolic capital. These forms of capital were shared with the association. The association accumulated symbolic capital and achieved the status of “expert” in matters related to learning disabilities. These experts had the power to use discourses that reflected their ideological beliefs.

Limitations

Interpretation of policy texts is subjective. This study is situated within my own experience and understanding as a teacher, principal, special education teacher, and as an emerging scholar. Further, my worldview is shaped by my identity as a mature white woman of privilege. Therefore the findings of this dissertation do not profess to identify a universal truth about special education.

One of the challenges of historical inquiry is the availability and accessibility of archival data sources. Michael Hill (1993) defines and describes a process called archival sedimentation that limits available data. Archival records, like sediment, are what is left over after various forces of erosion and destruction have influenced the availability of institutional documents. The first phase occurs when people and organizations create, discard, and save materials of potential
archival interest. The owner of the material engages in a process of sifting, sorting, and judging what is worth keeping. This is called erosion. In a second phase when materials are transferred to a formal archive, more sifting and sorting occurs. What remains is the end product of a process of erosion. Other forces contribute to the unavailability of data. Specifically, historical records of one advocacy group had been destroyed and were no longer available for viewing. Some film media was inaccessible because the films were not archived. Other archived material had been sorted. What remained was deemed to be important, but importance is subjective. Other contextual or explanatory material may have been lost. Michael Hill (1993) states that because data is organized and ordered according to the archivist’s labels and chronologies, there is a very real possibility that the “socio-historical reality might escape the researcher” (Hill, 1993, p. 64).

Chapter Summary

The literature review in Chapter 2 reviews the chronological history of special education activities in the United States and in Ontario. Legislation in the United States served as a model for Ontario and the politics of recognition of disabled persons as bearers of rights follows a similar trajectory on both sides of the border. This section is followed by an examination of the current literature in the field of special education. Three broad categories of assumptions underpin special education currently. These are the medical model, Eurocentrism, and ability streaming. The medical model creates a specific image of the normal body and mind. Children with disabilities deviate from these idealized images and are pathologized with labels based in disease. This orientation promotes practices that treat the individual as a helpless, dependent patient. Eurocentrism privileges the values, beliefs, and cultural traditions of the white, middle class, European-based culture. This results in systemic bias in special education that disadvantages students of other cultures, races, and socioeconomic statuses. Ability streaming is the homogeneous grouping of students based on ability. This practice rests in the belief that the school should sort, classify, and group students based on their presumed abilities and predicted future employment. Then each homogeneous group of students receives curricula and instruction appropriate to their anticipated future employment needs.

The third chapter outlines the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of this study. The study is situated within historiography, critical policy sociology, and post-positivist theory. Critical policy sociology and post-positivist theory support studying the meanings of policy, in
particular, illuminating multiple perspectives not previously included in univocal historical accounts of policy. Historiography is an approach to history that takes the social context into account as multiple narratives about an event are studied. I align with policy as discourse theorists who focus on the meaning of policy language and action. Discourses are representational of broader, more abstract, logical, worldviews or ideologies (Joshee, 2007; Gee, 2005). Ideologies are pervasive systems of meaning about how the world is or ought to be (Johnston, 1996). These versions privilege the dominant group. In this study of special education, policy discourses that are ideologically informed define abstract, complex, concepts like disability, measurement, education, and equality.

A critical policy approach considers the workings of power. In this dissertation, power is the authority to use discourses that define reality for others (Apple, 2001; Howarth, 2000; Nicoll & Edwards, 2004). In the tradition of Pierre Bourdieu, authority derives from the possession and utilization of social, economic, cultural, or symbolic capital. I extend the work of Pierre Bourdieu to show that these forms of capital can be held by individuals and then shared within an organized advocacy group to create capital for the advocacy group.

My conception of a policy web builds on the previous work of Joshee and Johnson (2005) who focus on the interconnectedness of policies. Susan Winton (2007) focused on the points of intersection in the policy web as the sites for policy reinterpretation. Michelle Goldberg (2005) conceptualized a discursive web of power relations. I conceptualize the policy web as made of many smaller webs of related discourses. These discourses give meaning to and receive meaning from a larger more abstract concept that I identify as a condensation symbol (Kaufer & Carley, 1993). The large policy web of special education is composed of related webs or nets of discourses. These webs are related to each other by shared discourses. These interconnections give the web an intricate, irregular design but also give the web strength.

Chapter Four describes the methodology used to answer the research questions. Policy archaeology is a methodology appropriate to the historical study of policy from a critical sociology perspective (Gale, 2001; Scheurich, 1997). A detailed methodology has not been previously offered. This chapter provides a detailed methodology for conducting this type of inquiry. The process of policy archaeology serves as a metaphor for field archaeology. Policy
archaeology analyzes policy texts backwards through time from the most recent to the most distant. References in the policy texts lead to other texts to investigate. Policy archaeology identifies condensation symbols that repeat across policy texts. Condensation symbols are complex concepts or ideas represented by discourses. The discourses are all mutually reinforcing to create a strong web of meaning. Discourses change over time but the condensation symbol remain the same. Policy archaeology traces the patterns and changes in the way individuals and society historically used language to represent these important abstract and complex concepts e.g., education, democracy, disability. These ways of representation are ideologically informed. Ideologies like scientific rationalism, liberalism, or conservatism are relatively stable, explanatory frameworks, for how the world works.

Chapter Five outlines the analysis and findings. Five condensation symbol webs are identified and analyzed. In the web of Disability, the discourses of deficit and deviance were replaced by the discourses of difference, a dimension of diversity and differing ability. In the period under study, the discourses of Disability changed significantly. Learning disabilities served as an example of the changing discourses of Disability in the school setting. The meaning of learning disabilities moved from an intrinsic deficit to being the result of disadvantage by the learning environment. The web of Management contains the discourses of measurement, standardization, legislation, and efficiency. The web of Professionalism was defined by discourses of professional authority, specialized knowledge, hierarchy of authority, and benevolent humanitarianism. These discourses remained stable during the period under study. The web of Education articulated the changing beliefs about the purpose of schooling. The discourses representing traditional education, progressive education, and vocational education, were evident in this web. The discourses of reproducing Christian values, stratification, and meritocracy, define traditionalism. Progressivism is defined by discourses of individual growth and child-centeredness. Vocational education’s discourse of opportunity was replaced by the discourse of lack of employment. The web of Equality is defined by discourses of equal access, equal educational opportunity, equal outcomes, and social justice. In each web, the discourses are dynamic and ideologically informed. The ideologies of conservatism, liberalism, and scientific rationality, informed the beliefs and practices associated with special education during this period of study.
The Conclusions and Implications form the sixth chapter. This chapter responds to the research questions. First, the changes in predominance of the condensation symbol webs will be discussed in relation to the events in the historical context. These webs ascended or diminished in predominance during the period of study. National and international events influenced some of the discourses in the webs of Disability, Professionalism, Measurement, Education, and Equality. This discussion will answer the first three research questions. Next, the discussion reviews how the ideologies of conservatism, liberalism and scientific rationalism supported the events in the historical context and in special education. This chapter also presents an extension to Pierre Bourdieu’s position that forms of capital are tools of power owned by individuals. The forms of capital held by individual members of the Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities were shared with the Association resulting in high levels of symbolic capital for the association and its members. Symbolic capital meant status and prestige as “experts” in the area of learning disabilities. Status and prestige meant that members, acting on behalf of the Association, had the authority to use discourses in particular ways that advanced their ideological view of how education should support students with learning disabilities.

This chapter next discusses three explanations for the resistance of special education practices to reform. These explanations are (1) agreement among the enduring ideologies of liberalism, conservatism, and scientific rationalism, (2) the pervasive beliefs about children and their rights, and (3) the strength of the webs of Professionalism and Management. This chapter then describes the contributions this dissertation makes to theory, to research methodology, and to special education knowledge. I conclude the chapter with a continuation of my story that began in the “situating myself” section of Chapter 1, as an example of taking action for social justice.
Chapter Two: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section will outline the practices associated with special education prior to and during the period under study. This section begins by describing special education developments in the United States, followed by a brief overview of the history in Ontario. The historical developments of special education will provide background information to assist in understanding the period under study. Next will be a review of current literature. The underlying assumptions that are evident in special education today have been grouped as the medical model, Eurocentrism, and ability streaming. The literature for this chapter is taken from the literature in the United States and the United Kingdom as well as Canada. Special education is very similar in these jurisdictions.

Special Education in the Historical Period

The United States and Special Education

Identifying, categorizing and educating children with disabilities in segregated settings was an accepted practice dating back to the early years of the twentieth century (Winzer, 1993). Margaret Winzer (1993) stated that in the early 20th century “school districts, under pressure to maintain increasing numbers of unruly, disabled, low functioning, and immigrant children, created the community equivalent of institutions — special segregated classes” (p. 252). Special classes often served to eliminate unwanted or difficult to teach students from the regular classrooms. Special education teachers and students were isolated from the regular education classrooms. Problem children were removed from the mainstream and could not harm the learning of normal children or the standards of the school.

By the 1930s, there was a distinct separation between regular and special education among teachers and pupils fueled by the ideas of hereditary determinism. This theory held that social and economic differences among social groups were based on inherited abilities (Rioux, 1994, p. 70). The use of the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) test in education was based on a public confidence in the ability of professionals to accurately identify children who could not profit from regular education. Students who demonstrated physical, mental, or social characteristics
outside the “normal” range were candidates for segregated classrooms (Winzer, 1993). Intelligence was believed to be heritable and inevitable, ignoring the role of environmental conditions (Rioux, 1994, p. 71). Further, the theory claimed that the distribution of societal rewards simply reflected this inborn inequality. Members of low socioeconomic classes and persons with disabilities were believed to be of low intelligence and so were overrepresented in the poor and were placed in a low status in the social hierarchy. Eugenicists and psychometricians used the intelligence scale as proof of scientific evidence of inferiority and superiority (Rioux, 1994, p. 72). The eugenics movement evolved from a belief that low intelligence was hereditary. These persons were portrayed as dangerous to society. Society had a responsibility to prevent the propagation of individuals that society deemed to be undesirable and unproductive (Winzer, 1993, p. 293). Consequently, many persons with disabilities were sterilized or put to death.

The procedures of identification and separate education led to the increase in associated professions such as social workers, probation officers, and psychologists. As state funding to support special classes and schools increased, special educators developed a mission, credentials, qualifications, teacher training, professional associations, and beliefs about their status and power in relation to clients and parents (Winzer, 1993, p. 315).

The United States had a tradition of advocating for Civil Rights as witnessed by the decades of riots and protests (commonly known as the Civil Rights Movement) to achieve equality and eliminate the existing the social stratification. Society and schools were segregated along racial lines. However in the 1954 Brown v Board of Education case in the United States, the Supreme Court ruled that racially segregated classrooms were not providing equal education. This led the way for the desegregation of schools in the United States. Until the 1960s, schooling was believed to be an instrument of social mobility, the great equalizer, contributing to the meritocratic organization of work and society (Lessard, 1995, p. 179). However inequalities remained a vexing problem. The Coleman Report (1966) was commissioned to determine why minority students continued to achieve lower academic results. This report clearly showed that inequalities are not related to race, ability or to resource inputs but to social class, clearly establishing the relationship between socioeconomic status and academic achievement (Johanningmeier, 2009, p. 112; Smith, 2003).
The belief that separate special education was unequal education was not far behind. Attention became focused on all children and their rights when the United Nations released the *Declaration on the Rights of the Child* in 1959. Equal education was declared to be an educational right for all children. Special education became considered as an example of the denial of educational privileges to minorities by the majority (History of Special Education, n.d.).

In the 1960s, there were a series of American federal court cases that attacked special education (History of Special Education, n.d.). These events prompted parents, professionals, and persons with disabilities to question the legitimacy of the traditional educational practices of segregation (Stroman, 2003, p. 70). Other reports in the United States were also critical of the existing practices of special education. In 1968, Lloyd Dunn and Orville Johnson wrote a landmark article questioning the value of segregated education in special education (Mombourquette, 1985).

By 1975, the United States passed Public Law 94-142 that mandated school districts to educate students with disabilities and to develop an individual education plan for each exceptional student (Yell & Shriner, 1997, p. 4). All students now had access to free and appropriate publicly funded education (Osborne & Dimattia, 1994; Yell & Shriner, 1997, p. 3). The legislation called for students to be educated in the least restrictive environment, usually the regular classroom, unless it could be shown that the nature and severity of the student’s disability precluded satisfactory instruction in the general education class (Osborne & Dimattia, 1994, p. 6). Parents were granted legal rights to information and to challenge decisions that school districts made with respect to their exceptional child. The legislation has been described as very legalistic with heavy procedural paperwork (Hodder, 1984, p. 45; Yell & Shriner, 1997, p. 3). In effect, the mandatory legislation sanctioned the practices of testing, labeling, categorizing, and segregated education that already existed in school districts in the United States.

**Ontario and Special Education**

The close proximity of Canada to the United States and the similar societal structures meant that ideas flowed easily to Canada from our neighbour to the south (Joshee & Winton, 2007, p. 17). Structures and procedures for educating students with special learning needs in
Ontario paralleled the system of special education in the United States. Further, legislation mandating schools to educate exceptional pupils in the United States served as a model for similar legislation in Ontario and was “inevitable” according to Clive Hodder (1984) and Dennis Marshall (1990). John McIntosh, General Secretary of the Canadian Committee of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), wrote, in 1970, that “the Council for Exceptional Children in Canada is really a child of the American CEC and owes many of her present activities to the training and experiences given her by the parent group” (p. 7).

The following description outlines the provision of special education services offered in Ontario during the 1960s and 1970s. Typically, special education was available in large urban public school districts. This description is very generalized and is not intended to detail services in any specific school district. There was a significant range in services available across the province from no services to services for all children with disabilities recognized in legislation.

Students had been sorted into separate educational programs since the early 1900s. Students who were unsuccessful in the regular classroom or whom educators believed would be suited for jobs in the labour force were removed from the regular classroom and educated in another classroom or school (Winzer, 1983). Special classes for students with disabilities began in Ontario in 1908 when the Hospital for Sick Children started an open air class on Toronto Island (Editor, 1965a). In 1910, the Special Classes Act was passed to legalize existing classes. These classes were also inspected by officials from the Department of Education. Special classes offered by school districts became known as Auxiliary classes because they operated outside of the regular classroom. In Ontario, these Auxiliary Classes were legislated in 1914. These classes could be found in some urban school districts.

The boom times of the 1920s in North America caused an expansion in the need for special education (Winzer, 1993). Auxiliary classes in public schools were renamed as Opportunity Classes and, by the 1960s, were evident in both the elementary and secondary divisions of education in some urban school districts (Hayward, 2004). Vocational classes existed in some schools for the purpose of providing skills training so these students could enter the workforce. The Vocational Classes were for students identified as slow learners or those with social, emotional, and behavioral problems (Hackett, 1970, p.187). The academic vocational
classes began in Maurice Cody Public School in Toronto in 1936. Specialized schools and classes continued to grow in the Toronto Board of Education throughout the 1940s and 1950s.

A Royal Commission under the direction of Justice J.A. Hope was convened in Ontario to study education. The report, released in 1950, called for the expansion of specialized schools and classes (Fleming, 1972a). Further, the report recommended expansion of institutions to remove the potential menace to society that persons with disabilities might bring (p. 383). The Report also recommended legislation to require school districts to provide education for children with disabilities within their jurisdiction.

At that time, the regular classroom had a fixed curriculum to be learned by all students in a predictable linear fashion. Instructional strategies consisted mainly of rote memorization and repetition and writing (Holmes, 1984). Children with disabilities were rarely successful in this educational environment. One significant problem in Ontario was that school districts were not required to provide special education programs and services. Consequently the provision for students with learning difficulties or other disabilities was voluntary, haphazard, and limited to urban centers (Gidney, 2002). There was great disparity between what was available in urban versus rural settings.

By 1952, it was estimated that about 12% of children in a large community probably needed some special education programs. Their disabilities included blindness or partial sight, deafness or hard of hearing, crippling defects, “delicate,” speech defects, epileptic, “mentally retarded,” gifted, and behaviour problems (CEC, 1952). According to Ray Graham, who was the Director of Special Education in the state of Illinois, the expansion of special education followed a predictable trajectory from the most visible disabilities to the invisible disabilities. In 1961, he stated:

Attention was given to crippled children, delinquent children and the blind and deaf. This was followed by recognition and attention to the socially maladjusted, the emotionally disturbed, the speech defective, and the educable mentally retarded. Next were those with brain injury, the perceptually handicapped, slow learners, educationally handicapped aphasics, and severe language disorders. The last group to be recognized and served were students with giftedness. (Graham, 1961, p. 93.)
In publicly funded schools, not all the aforementioned groups of children would find a place in school district classrooms. Some opportunities for learning existed under the responsibility of the Department of Health. Therefore, services focused more on diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation in the medical tradition. Separate institutions were specifically designed for specific conditions, e.g., the Powell Brown Nursery for emotionally disturbed children from 3 to 5 years old. In 1929, schools began inside the Ontario Hospitals. These were large, isolated institutions for the care and treatment of children and adults with mental illness or “mental retardation.” These institutions were found in Orillia, Smiths Falls, and Cedar Springs. Children would be residents for their lifetime (Winzer, 1993). In the school classes, known as Occupational Classes “girls were taught how to unravel cloth and sew cloth strips together while boys learned how to shovel earth and carry wood” (Hackett, 1970, p. 214).

The polio epidemics of the 1950s may have contributed to the enormous expansion of segregated classes in public schools in the 1940s that continued until the 1960s (Editor, 1965b). The Ontario Crippled Children’s Center opened in 1962. This was a treatment hospital for the total rehabilitation of physically handicapped children. The Center provided dental services, physical education, recreation, and education (Editor, 1965b). The Department of Education operated schools for the blind and schools for the deaf and schools for children with mental illness (Ballance, Kendall & Saywell, 1972). In some cases, school districts transported students to these centers for their education.

Special education classes were available in some urban centers and included special classes for children “clinically diagnosed as neurologically impaired, including perceptually handicapped children, and who are unable to profit from a regular classroom program.” There were “opportunity classes” for “educable retarded” children, slow learners, or educationally retarded children, and classes for emotionally disturbed children (Weber, 1974). Students with learning disabilities and those with mild “mental retardation” were frequently grouped together in elementary schools and streamed into vocational programs at the secondary level because it was believed these two conditions were the same. Special education was believed to be a location and a program of specialized instruction to help students return to the regular classroom (Clark, Dyson & Millward, 1998, p. 47). Access to special education was contingent on diagnosis and measurement of potential ability and classification according to The Diagnostic
and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders established to classify mental disorders. A growing confidence in the ability of scientific professionals to accurately measure human ability increased during the Cold War. In the 1950s, the Cold War was responsible for the growth of science and a belief that science could solve the world’s problems (Wotherspoon, 1998).

Prior to the 1960s, children with severe disabilities were often not educated at all. The prevailing opinion was that children with severe “mental retardation” (defined as an IQ below 50 points) had little capacity for any sort of feeling and were for the most part uneducable (Hackett, 1970, p. 175). Parents could keep the children at home, accepting responsibility for health, education, and supervision, with no services or support for the family. Sometimes they were cared for by relatives or left to fend for themselves by baking, working at menial tasks, or receiving charity (Woodill, 1984, p. 104). Children with moderate and severe “mental retardation” experienced particular difficulties gaining access to public education. Because the prevailing opinion was that children with a high degree of “mental retardation” had little capacity for any sort of feeling (Hackett, 1970, p. 175) and were for the most part uneducable, parents of children diagnosed with “mental retardation” in Ontario had limited choices for education.

Children with an Intelligence Quotient (IQ) below 50 were classified as “trainable retarded pupils.” Parents could send their child to an Ontario Hospital School, home school, or organize and operate an Auxiliary class. Ontario Hospital Schools operated within the institutions known as Ontario Hospitals. All three hospital schools provided education and training under the general direction of a psychologist and medical superintendent. In general, school programs in these hospital schools were operated on a rotary system with separate organizations for academic work, crafts, music, physical education, and traits and training (Hackett, 1970, p. 317). Alternately, parents could pay for private schools. Persons with a disability required custodial care and treatment. Society deemed that persons who were not contributing to the labour force had questionable worth.

In 1961, in Ontario, three categories of exceptionality were recognized in education legislation: mental growth and development deficiencies (slow, retarded); behavioral problems, and physically handicapped (vision, hearing, muscles, bones and joints). There were schools for “slow learning boys” and schools for “retarded children.” As the population grew, largely
because of the “baby boomers” and also because of immigration, the need for special education grew.

In 1966, hospital schools were transferred from the jurisdiction of the Department of Health to the Department of Education. By the early 1970s, there was a Hospital School in Orillia, in Smith’s Falls, and in Cedar Springs (Anglin & Braaten, 1978). In 1970, the amalgamation of small school districts into larger administrative units meant that more of the students identified as “educable retarded” and “trainable retarded” were served in schools. Parents also organized and operated Auxiliary Education Classes. These classes were authorized in 1914 and inspected by the Department of Education and, over time, the government paid more and more of the operating costs. Teachers were not required to hold qualifications and there was no set curriculum.

By 1974, Ontario Regulation 191, section 43, (Ontario Department of Education, 1974) recognized many more categories of childhood disability that would require the establishment of special classes by school districts (MacDonald, 1975, June). There was no requirement to establish these classes, but once established, the Department of Education would provide grants to offset the cost of operating these programs. These classes included Braille classes for blind children; classes for children clinically diagnosed as emotionally disturbed; classes for children clinically diagnosed as neurologically impaired or perceptually handicapped; classes for gifted children; classes for children who had hearing loss; classes for children with health problems; hospital classes for children confined to a hospital, classes for children in detention; language classes for newcomers to Canada; classes for children with limited vision, opportunity classes for “educable retarded” students or slow learners; oral classes for deaf children; and orthopedic classes for physically handicapped children. Approval to operate classes for students with neurological impairments or perceptual handicaps (learning disabilities) was only granted in 1965.

Special education programs operated parallel to regular education programs. Enrollments in the special classes were significantly reduced from the regular classroom enrolments. For example, classes for the neurologically handicapped contained eight pupils, opportunity classes contained sixteen students. Access to special education programs was available through an
“admissions committee.” Section 44 of Regulation 191 (Ontario Department of Education, 1974) described the admission process. A board of admissions would determine a student’s eligibility to a class for the emotionally disturbed, a class for the neurologically impaired/perceptually handicapped, or an opportunity class. Compulsory education notwithstanding, children with exceptionalities could not be guaranteed admission nor an appropriate program. Admission was also contingent upon an intellectual assessment and diagnosis by a medical practitioner. In 1973, new regulations standardized the admissions committee criteria (OAMR, 1973). Many urban school boards were hiring psychologists in the early 1960s because of the demand for assessment and diagnosis (Fleming 1972a). Students would be assessed to determine their “problem” and would wait for a placement to become available in the special education classes. Students had to endure long wait lists for assessment, and the maintenance of special classes by school districts was precarious. Joan Simons from the London chapter of the OACLD describes the uncertainties associated with special education service provision.

The yearly scramble to assure services to children in need could be met with optimism, not pessimism, if there was a collective and dedicated effort to provide leadership by all those connected with education. At budget time, special education is open to attack. Each year, there are fights to preserve services… (Simons, 1975, 3.)

There was a severe lack of services for students at the junior high and high school level. Students were typically streamed into the two-year vocational program and left school at age sixteen for the labour force.

Students with neurological impairments/perceptual handicaps (presently known as learning disabilities) were not all educated in the public school system. Services and programs fell within the ministries of Health, Education, and Community and Social Services, and the private sector (Leon, 1974). The Ontario Government under the Ontario Hospital Insurance Plan (OHIP) partially covered fees for education in the United States if the child was attending a hospital school. If the child was attending a private school, parents could apply for funding to cover tuition costs (Sullivan, 1973). The Federal government allowed tax deductions under medical exemptions for tuition and board at private residential schools in Canada and the USA (Nichols, 1989). After sixteen years of age, students could obtain training and financial support from the Vocational Rehabilitation Branch of the Ministry of Community and Social Services.
(MacDonald, 1975b, p 1). However, in 1973, a cabinet committee agreed that the education needs of children with neurological impairments/perceptual handicaps would become the responsibility of education system. This led to changes in the *Vocational Rehabilitation Act* in 1975, excluding youth from accessing funding.

By 1973, schools were permitted to offer classes for students with “mental retardation.” In the publicly funded elementary school opportunity classes contained students diagnosed with educable “mental retardation,” neurological impairments/ perceptual handicaps, those diagnosed as slow learners, and others who may have had autism or emotional and behavioural disorders. Students diagnosed with “educable mental retardation” had an approximate Intelligence Quotient between 70 and 80 points. These classes focused on the teaching of English, especially reading and the teaching of mathematics (Hackett, 1970, p. 317).

For pupils who were transferred because of age into secondary schools, there were different secondary school programs available: occupational classes and two-year terminal courses with shop facilities; junior, special, or regular vocational schools. Occupational and two-year terminal courses with shop facilities were intended to provide students with skills in preparation for entering the workforce at age sixteen. Junior or special vocational schools offered vocational equipment and experiences for pupils twelve years of age or more who had been transferred from elementary opportunity classes. Schools of this type existed only in large cities and densely populated suburban areas. Vocational schools were for non-academic pupils intended to serve the slow learner and “educable mentally retarded pupils.”

By the late 1970s, declining enrolments and financial retrenchment caused many school boards to curtail the expansion of special education programs. Joan Simons from the London Association for Children with Learning Disabilities said that special education is vulnerable to cuts and reductions at budget time. (Simons, 1975). Funding for special education was divided into three main categories: funding for the “trainable mentally retarded,” funding for pupils in special facilities, and funding for all other special education programs. School districts received a specific amount for special education within the transfer grants and additional special education funds were given based on weighting factors. The weighting factors were designed to recognize the additional costs of special education programs in excess of the basic level (Editor, 1974, p.7).
In other words, there was a recognition of the extra costs associated with setting up and maintaining special education classes. A minority of school districts took advantage of their potential entitlement to special education grants. It could be concluded that financial incentives were not advancing services for special education in an increasingly consistent manner.

In summary, the organizational structures, practices, and procedures related to special education were in existence in many school districts, albeit on a voluntary service basis. Special education operated as a parallel system of service for those deemed “unable to profit” from the regular education system (Hayward, 2004, p. 9). Access to special education services was available on a limited basis and protected by the processes of diagnosis and the admissions committee. The regular education classroom was perceived as a privilege to be earned by demonstrating ability and conformity. The regular education classroom led to graduation and employment and higher education opportunities. The special education classroom did not.

**Current Literature**

The literature about special education policy can be categorized according to three sets of assumptions that guide practices: the medical model, Eurocentrism, and ability tracking.

**The Medical Model**

The medical model is also known as scientific determinism, norm-referenced model, or the clinical model (Baglieri & Knopf, 2004; Smith, 2001). This system of beliefs is associated with the medical and psychological practices of diagnosis, the categorization and classification of illness, the construction of normativity, conceptualizing difference as deficit, and privileging the knowledge and practices of the medical and psychological professions. In this model, there is an assumption of abnormality as a pathology or a disease to be cured. The attention is on prevention or remediation to return to the state of normalcy. The diagnostic conditions are medically or psychologically based categories of illness and disease found in *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, e.g., blindness, deafness, “mental retardation.” These categorizations are based in the disciplines of medicine and psychology.

The medical model constructs a biological ideal of “normal” which privileges a specific type of body and mind. By creating one image as the normal and therefore valued ideal, all other
types of bodies or minds are by definition “different.” Difference is seen as an impairment and pathological (Brantlinger, 2001). The binary of normal/abnormal creates a group who meets a presumed set of standards and another group that is labeled as deficient or sick and stigmatized. If the dominant group considers itself normal and able, then others become abnormal and disabled. Abnormality evokes themes of “fear, prejudice, pity, ignorance, misplaced patronage, aversion, and even resentment” (Fulcher, 1989, p. 30). Socially constructing the category of “Other” can render the “Other” as invisible. “Othering” can be based on skin colour, language, culture, ethnicity, religious affiliation, class, sexual orientation, gender, and the presence of disability (Smith, 2001). Privileging a normal group leads to identifying the abnormal group as having “special needs.” Special education differentiates or sorts children according to their “special needs” and they are given different treatments, otherwise known as programs or placements. Connor and Ferri (2005) argue that disability is equated with deficit and traditional special education programs have been fashioned according to the medical or deficit model, which assumes functional limitations (Bunch & Valeo, 1997; Lupart, 1998). The medical model assumes that the problem lies within the individual’s own pathology or deficits, labeling the limitation as a disability (Baglieri & Knopf, 2004, p. 76; Riddell, 1996; Slee, 1997).

Within the medical model, categories are presented as a fact, although categorizations of exceptionalities like learning disabilities, emotional and behaviour disorders, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, are social constructs. James Carrier (1986) argues that the category of learning disabilities was constructed to explain a physiological basis for school failure. The source of the problem was located in the neurology of the student rather than considering that the problem might lie in the school system, instructional strategies, or the curriculum (Carrier, 1986, p. 76).

The practice of sorting students into labeled categories that occurs within special education is contested. These labels are medically-based identifiers for the medical or psychological condition that has been diagnosed. In special education, the presence of a label slots the student within a typology of categories of disability. The category and the diagnosed condition lead to a specialized placement or program. Some researchers argue that labels and categorization are a normal part of our lives as we tend to categorize work, relationships, and weather patterns. Typically we accept that “difference is not an exception, but … something that
happens in the natural course of things” (Stiker, 2004). Labeling is a part of the medical model and there are arguments that support positive effects of labeling. Labels may lead to a better understanding and sensitivity towards a labeled person (Kauffman & Hallahan, 1995, p. 70). Labeling can result in parents and teachers being better informed and more supportive. A label may be a useful starting point for a further elaboration of a student’s specific strengths and needs. The categorization of a student’s learning difficulties leads to access to specialized funding, programs and services, unavailable in the general classroom (Daniel, 2005; Dworet & Bennett, 2002; Lieberman, 1992; Specht, 2004).

Others argue that labels are disparaging (Brantlinger, 2001) and reflect deficit thinking that is stigmatizing and discriminatory (Thomas & Loxley, 2001; Hallinan, 1994). Peter Farrell (2001) offers powerful arguments against using categories. First, the problems experienced by pupils, their teachers, and parents are often extremely complex and cannot be adequately described by a single label. Labels or categories tend to stick with the child and can imply that he or she will always have this problem. Second, categories suggest the problem lies within the child and that, by implication, no responsibility for the difficulties should be attributed to parents or teachers (p. 4). Focusing on categories or labels may lower expectations as to what a child might achieve. Third, labels ignore the influence of social class, ethnicity, and gender on categorization (Corbett & Norwich, 1997). Fourth, using categories might suggest that a child requires a special form of intervention that is exclusive to students only within this category. Peter Farrell (2001) argues that the effectiveness of teaching approaches commonly employed with pupils who have severe learning difficulties may be effective with [other, non-learning disabled] pupils. Categories are not very helpful in making decisions about educational provision and in planning educational interventions (Farrell, 2001; Hallinan, 1994).

Sally Tomlinson (1982) considers the types of labels in special education. She concludes that there are two types of special education labels (Tomlinson, 1982). First, there are those that identify students who have visible handicaps like blindness, deafness, or physical handicaps, or those who are profoundly “retarded.” Sally Tomlinson uses the term “normative” to describe these labels since determination of a disability is objective. In contrast, is another type called “non-normative” which designates those who are diagnosed and placed in specialized settings, based on observations and evaluations of classroom behavior, repeated academic failure,
psychological reports, and standardized aptitude or intelligence tests. These criteria are not objective and not universally or consistently applied (Farrell, 2001; Curtis, Livingstone & Smaller, 1992, p. 55). These categories are based on subjective judgments (Winzer, 1994).

The medical model presents professionals as humanitarian, reflecting a “child saving” orientation (Trent, Artilles & Englert, 1998). According to this theory, “well intentioned educators developed special programs to support students toward self sufficiency” (p. 23). Individual special educators may be committed to serving the needs of individual children, but institutionally, special education creates competition and failure for students (Dudley-Marling, 2004). Schools label and segregate students in their care and exercise a form of social control under the guise of benevolent humanitarianism (Jongbloed, 2003; Tomlinson, 1982). Ellen Brantlinger (2001) observes that an underlying assumption of labeling a student with a disability “is that special education service has a positive influence on subsequent school or post-school careers of students, despite efficacy studies that do not substantiate this claim” (p. 4).

Social workers, therapists, physiotherapists, nurses, and teachers borrow the logic and politics of deficit and use its authority and influence to legitimize their own practice, regulate and control students in special education (Fulcher, 1989; Tomlinson, 1982). Professionals hold the power and control to make decisions about all aspects of the student’s life and control the funding for and nature of services made available to the parents and child. This view perpetuates a belief that experts know best. The student and the family have limited, if any, choice. Often professionals blame parents for the lack of progress or the problems the children have at school. This is an extension of the deficit model applied to the family (Freeman & Gray, 1989).

Framing special education solely within a disability model is problematic. Disabilities are about what people cannot do, compared with the non-disabled person. A focus on disability ignores the whole person and the disease or disability becomes the sole focus, i.e., the person is the disability (Rioux, 1997). For example using the term “disabled student” privileges the disability not the student. The label that privileges the student would be “student with a disability,” also known as “person first language.” The stereotype of disability includes a conception that the attribute is fixed and inherent in the individual (Carrier, 1990 p. 212) leading to a belief that there is only one way to teach a student with a particular disability. Disability
excludes rather than includes and is seen as a personal tragedy (Fulcher, 1989) or a medical problem to be managed within the health system to keep disabled people out of the labour market and as dependent consumers (Riddell, 1996, p.410). A focus on disability serves as a reason to keep children with disabilities out of the regular classroom.

A focus on the individual’s pathology overshadows the person’s human characteristics (Gilson & Depoy, 2000; Rioux, 1999; Stanovich & Jordan, 1998). Baglieri and Knopf (2004) argue that the creation of disability is discursive and socially constructed. Within the social construction are conceptions of good and bad (Carrier, 1990, p. 212). Stereotypes present the person with a disability as criminal and immoral (Carrier, 1990, p. 212). Others conceptualize disability within a charity discourse that means they are the object of pity or eternal children (Fulcher, 1989 p. 28). Beth Ferri (2004) posits that the focus should be on diverse abilities (p. 510) or on inaccessible classroom contexts (p. 513). The medical model of understanding disability is “limited rather than universal” (Ferri, 2004, p. 513).

**Eurocentrism**

Another set of beliefs and assumptions underpinning special education relates to Eurocentrism. Eurocentrism rests in beliefs that the “normal” state is the European ideal of whiteness, middle class affluence, and strong academic ability (Reid & Knight, 2006). Teachers judge students as normal or abnormal based on standards that conform to the historical white European ideal (Reid & Mc Knight, 2006, p. 19). Many researchers note that the labeling, classification, instructional, and sorting practices of special education are based on a Eurocentric and middle-class orientation that disfavours other races and ethnicities (Gay, 2002; Voltz, 1998; Artiles, Trent & Palmer, 1994). Studies show there is an overrepresentation of students of different races and ethnicities (Voltz, Dooley, & Jeffries, 1999) and students of colour in identifications of learning disabilities and behavior disorders (Artiles et al., 1994; Oliver, 2001). The same is true for identifications of “mentally retarded” and emotionally disturbed (Reid & Knight, 2006, p. 19). Further there is an “overrepresentation of poor children and children of colour in segregated and low–status programs” (Brantlinger, 2001 p. 4). Oliver (2001) contends that both research and direct experience reveal systemic bias in special education as indicated by proportionately more black than white children, more working class than middle class children, and more boys than girls in special education. Some categories in special education are socially
constructed and based on the assumption of a universal, normative progression and pattern of
development (Pugach & Seidel, 1998; Tomlinson, 1982). This pattern of development reflects a
typical white European trajectory. Norms have been constructed to define this progression and
the development of individual children is compared against these norms. An example is the
presumption that increased sophistication with oral language is an indicator of normal mental
maturation (Carrier, 1986). This becomes problematic for members of cultures that do not
prioritize the importance of language use or that use patterns of language that differ from the
European-based linguistics. This behavior leads to a designation that the child is abnormal,
creating social, economic, and educational disadvantages for the child.

Schools favour certain ways of knowing, thinking, and interacting that reflect and
reproduce the middle class culture (Brantlinger, 2001). The practice of labeling enables the
removal from the classroom of students whose behaviour or mental abilities don’t fit the
dominant class culture (Carrier, 1986). The white, middle class, able-bodied and sound-minded
stereotype is the dominant image. Effectively, all members of other groups who cannot achieve
these standards are labeled with stigmatizing descriptors (e.g., failure, disabled, at-risk) and sent
to separate locations such as special education rooms, or “low tracks, vocational schools”
(Brantlinger, 2001, p. 200). A school system that reproduces and privileges the values of the
Eurocentric middle class marginalizes students of other races, ethnicities, and ability.

Likewise, other authors have identified the existence of an implicit hidden curriculum
that consists of the unstated norms, values, and beliefs about the social relations of school and
classroom life (Banks, 1994; Gollnick & Chinn, 1994). Children from cultures that hold beliefs
and values that differ from the dominant, white, middle class values, are usually unsuccessful in
school. Unsuccessful children are often the children from the least advantaged families in society
(Freeman & Gray, 1989). Exclusion is the typical response to dealing with differences from
normality (Brantlinger, 2001; Pugach & Seidl, 1998). Repeated school failure starts a journey
into special education that further excludes the student from the hidden curriculum that enables
academic success. Further, the socioeconomic class of students influences the way teachers treat
them. Teachers favour white, middle class students (Carrier, 1986, p. 77).
Tests used to assess and identify children are Eurocentric, class-specific, and in standard English, and, thereby, privilege certain children’s knowledge, language, and ways of knowing, while disadvantaging other children (Pugach & Seidl, 1998). Jeannie Oakes (2005) describes that a disproportionate number of black students are placed in classes for students with “mental retardation” based on the results of standardized tests. The cultural bias in standardized tests of intelligence results in disproportionate numbers of children of colour and economically poor children in special education (Artilles, Trent & Palmer, 2003; Pugach & Seidl, 1998).

The age-graded and factory model of education privileges those students who can manage the pace and academic structure that school success requires (Baglieri & Knopf, 2004). The consistent failure of particular groups in society indicates an inherent bias in schooling (Freeman & Gray, 1989, p. 21). Cultural deprivation theory is a way to explain away the poor performance of students from lower classes by locating the problem within poverty (Carrier, 1986, p. 47). The theory argues that culturally deprived children are unable to think and use language abstractly because of deprived backgrounds. This theory supports social stratification, justified by supposed inherited cognitive differences that cause class and racial inequalities. In this scenario, little can be done to improve the lot of poor people because their poverty results from inherited low intelligence. Children born on the bottom tend to stay on the bottom. This theory was used to represent African Americans as unintelligent.

Another popular misconception to account for the poor performance of children living in poverty is that poor people do not value education and choose not to do well in school and to live in poverty (Brantlinger, Madj-Jabbari & Guskin, 1996). These explanations locate the source of the problem within the students and their lower social class and leave unexamined the implications of Eurocentric, middle class values and school organization.

**Ability Streaming/Tracking**

The typical organization of schooling also represents segregation and streaming. Within the meritocratic structure of schooling, students with high ability and a strong work ethic deserve to achieve high grades and other rewards associated with schooling. Student abilities are determined to a great extent by the results of intelligence and standardized achievement tests. Students are ranked, sorted according to perceived future employment, and then instructed in
ways that would suit them for their predetermined levels of employment in the workforce (Stevens & Wood, 1987). Students are assigned curricula suitable for their presumed aptitudes. The school’s primary objective is for all students to receive an education that will prepare them equally well for their particular life work.

The purpose of sorting is also to create a group of students of a specific age that share homogeneous learning abilities (Dudley-Marling, 2004). The practice of creating homogeneous groups is based on the assumption that learning rate among students of a specific age-grade configuration is the same. Proponents of ability streaming or “tracking” argue that students should have the opportunity to take courses at a level of difficulty that matches their ability and with other students who share the same ability. Within this perspective, equal educational opportunity is provided when the program matches the student’s ability. This line of argument further states that students learn better and develop more positive attitudes in homogeneous groupings. Further, it is advocated that teachers can better accommodate the range of student differences in homogeneous groups (Krahn & Taylor, 2007). Advocates for streaming also argue that until all students can succeed in regular education, instruction in specialized settings should be retained (Lieberman, 1992). Others argue that a continuum of specialized settings has been articulated in legislation and should be maintained (Dworet & Bennett, 2002; Anderegg & Vergason, 1997). Maintaining the continuum of services does not mean giving up the benefits of an appropriate education (Andregg & Vergason, 1997, p. 49).

Sally Tomlinson (1982) states that removing some students from the class, as in tracking or special education segregated placements, is really about allowing the teacher to “function unimpeded by troublesome pupils” (p. 73). Baglieri and Knopf (2004) suggest that students are recommended for placement into special education classes based on three aspects: the social competence of the child, the degree of difference from an ideal pupil, and the nuisance value or amount of stress the teacher experiences. These aspects relate to teacher perception and comfort rather than the student’s academic achievement.

Students in the lowest tracks are often labeled or categorized as slower learners, students with behavioural problems, or students with learning disabilities (Curtis et al., 1992). Others observe that students in the upper tracks are predominately white and from the higher social
groups, while students in lower or special education tracks are predominately the poor and minorities (Artiles et al., 1994; Brantlinger, 2001; Curtis, Livingstone & Smaller, 1992; Gay, 2002, Kalyanpur, Harry, & Skrtic, 2000; McCray & Garcia, 2002; Oakes, 2005). Jeannie Oakes (2005) describes that a disproportionate number of black students are placed in classes for students with “mental retardation” based on the results of standardized tests. Studies show a correlation between lower tracks or streams and socioeconomic status. “Students from wealthier and more advantaged family backgrounds were more inclined to enter academic programs while students from poorer and disadvantaged family origins enter vocational programs in disproportionate numbers” (Krahn and Taylor, 2007).

Students in upper tracks are exposed to high status curriculum (literature, library research, mathematical ideas) while students in lower tracks practice language mechanics, computation, and isolated reading skills from kits (Oakes, 2005, Reid & Knight, 2006). The remediation of specific skill deficits, also known as the "reductionistic fallacy," is an approach believed to be effective with learning difficulties of generalizing and maintaining what was learned (Poplin, 1988). Retention and low track placement do not lead to increased student engagement or learning. Some researchers declare that students in special education receive substandard “educational preparation and teaching methodology” (Heshusius, 1989 in Baglieri & Knopf, 2004) and that teachers have lower expectations for these students (Barton & Oliver, 1997; Curtis et al., 1992). A large percentage of students in special education classes are denied the opportunity to graduate and access higher education (Brantlinger, 2001; Curtis et al., 1992) because they lack the requisite skills. Achieving a graduation diploma has important implications for the students’ future higher education opportunities and eventual employment. Anastasia Vlachou-Balafouti (1999) states that the high profile given to equal opportunities masks the real inequalities that exist between different groups in terms of access to experience, opportunity, and power.

Inclusion appears to stand in opposition to ability streaming. Inclusion has been theorized as a moral and ethical imperative reflecting our basic societal values (Stainback, Stainback & Ayers, 1992; Dyson, 1999). Advocates of inclusion hold that segregated classes are discriminatory and unequal (Schlifer, 2005; Stainback et al., 1992; Gartner & Lipsky, 1987;). In other words, to be against full inclusion is to be in opposition to the moral and ethical standards
of society. Inclusion debates are frequently about placement. One approach to inclusion is that “children attend their community or neighbourhood schools and receive instruction, supports, and services in a regular class setting” (Porter, 2004, p. 48; Stainback et al., 1992; Lipsky & Gartner, 1999; Stainback, Stainback, Pearpoint, & Forest, 1992). In theory, children with disabilities will receive differentiated programs in the regular classroom. This leaves the structures and processes of schooling unquestioned.

Paul Howard (2001) argues against full inclusion stating that the identical treatment implied in full inclusion is discriminatory. Other scholars point out that inclusion is actually assimilation (Clark et al., 1998, p. 130). Bram Norwich (2002) argues for a middle ground where special education is “both an integral and a distinct aspect of education” (p. 483). He argues that this perspective permits the specialism necessary for some aspects of special education, but also supports the connectedness of special education to the whole of education.

Others advocate that choice of educational setting is a human rights issue (Collins, 2003; Grover, 2002; Farrell, 2001; Langone, 1998; Lieberman, 1992). A focus on human rights for exceptional students ignores the fact that students have rights in name only (Milne, 2001; Kenworthy & Whittaker, 2000). Parents actually exercise the rights to participation and decision making in special education, on behalf of their child (Grover, 2002).

Theorists who deconstruct the language of inclusion in special education policies of the United Kingdom and South Africa argue that the term inclusion supports a functionalist (status quo) position with a focus on individual pathology or is about managing difference or measuring the amount of time students spend in a regular classroom, without making substantive changes to pedagogy or curriculum or the structure of schooling (Lloyd, 2000; Slee, 1997). In this case, the term inclusion really means placing the child with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers (Slee, 1997; Van Rooyen, Le Grange & Newmark, 2002). Chris Lloyd (2000) argues that children in special education still receive an inferior education (p. 139). Still others argue that inclusive education is really about assimilation wherein students are made to fit the school as it is (Oliver, 1996, p. 172).

The review of the literature illustrates that the beliefs and practices of special education today are informed by beliefs about the medical model, Eurocentrism, and ability streaming. In
the findings of this dissertation, these same beliefs and practices were evident in the historical data in the discursive webs of Equality, Education, Disability, Professionalism, and Management.

Special education today is constructed within medical and psychological beliefs about disability that is evident in the language and practices of diagnosis and treatment, which usually separates the student from the regular education classroom. These same beliefs and practices were evident in the historical data for this study in the discourses of disability and professionalism. These discourses privileged the knowledge and authority of professionals. Disability was constructed within discourses that stigmatized any physical or mental conditions that deviated from the professionally constructed image of “normal.” These same assumptions were found in the historical data for this study.

The knowledge, attitudes, and values of white, Anglo-Saxon culture and Christian values underpin the overt and implicit school curriculum that is more easily accessed by students in the white, middle-class culture. Students from other cultural or socioeconomic groups are usually unable to be successful in schooling that normalizes a Eurocentric perspective. In my dissertation, the discourses of reproducing Christian values in the Education web, and access, outcomes, and normalization in the Equality web reflect these same beliefs. The findings of this study show that Eurocentric beliefs underpin special education practices today and historically.

Ability streaming in special education today is a practice that attempts to create homogenous groups of students using the criteria of amount of difference from the educationally constructed image of a “normal” student. Ability streaming is supported by an organization of schooling that rests on the principles of the meritocracy. The students with the greatest ability are given the greatest educational rewards, such as enriched curricula, graduation, and access to higher education and greater social status. Students who have less success in mastering the prescribed “normal” curriculum or who are unable to conform to “normal” behaviours are taught different curricula with specialized instructional strategies, in settings removed from the regular education classroom. In the findings of this study, the assumptions of ability streaming are evident in the discourses of equal educational opportunity in the Equality web, and meritocracy
in the Management web reflect these beliefs. The assumptions that underpin ability streaming have continued unchanged over time in special education.
Chapter Three: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study of special education policy is viewed through a post-positivist lens. A positivist lens assumes a rational and orderly view of policy, frequently described using a typology of stages. Assuming a post-positivist lens accepts that policy is a field of activity, not delineated by stages, and multiple versions of policy reality exist (Joshee & Johnson, 2005; Ozga, 2000; Pak, 2002). From this perspective, meaning is never final nor is there a universal or absolute truth (Lather, 1992; Peters & Hume, 2003). I share the orientation that questions the univocal accounts of educational policies written from the positivist perspective. Following a post-positivist tradition, I situate this study within historiographic and critical policy sociological studies. These orientations show my belief that individuals or groups who have authority write policy texts that reproduce their particular values and beliefs. These values and beliefs are reflected in discourses. When the values and beliefs are situated within a historical policy context, the discourses reveal ideologies that explained and justified policy actions. Lastly, these approaches advocate for a study of the influence of power relationships. Power extends beyond having authority over others. Power is the opportunity to use discourses to reproduce and justify a view of how the social world should work.

This chapter will begin with a discussion of how historiographic and critical policy sociology approaches frame the study. Next, I present the conceptions of policy, discourse, ideology, power, and the policy web, that guide this study.

Historiography

History written from a positivist orientation articulates a singular narrative account of history based on a chronology of facts and events (Armstrong, 2003, p. 22; Igers, 1997; Radford, 2003). These accounts represent a dominant voice and ignore the conflicts, compromises, and lived experience within the historical event (Pak, 2002). Further, these accounts ignore the voices of marginalized policy actors who have no decision making authority (Armstrong, 2002).
Historiographic research accepts that there are multiple interpretations of the social world. Consequently, there are many narratives written about social events that foreground different perspectives. This dissertation adds to the understanding of the phenomenon of special education but does not claim that this perspective is more accurate than any other. Historiographic study tries to illuminate and make sense of the historical events by considering the taken-for-granted assumptions “within a historical, political, social, and economic context (Harvey & Myers, 1995; McCulloch & Watts, 2003, p. 6).

I take a critical historiographic approach because of implications of power in any “taken-for-granted” ideas, such as ideas about children with disabilities and their education (Gale, 2000; Harvey & Myers, 1995). A critical historiographic approach troubles traditional historical accounts of special education that describe an orderly, rational, and progressive pathway (Armstrong, 2002, p. 445) of continual progress (Franklin, 1989, p. 286) “ironing out the unevenness, discontinuities, and contradictions” (Armstrong, 2002, p. 447). This study will move away from consensus-like descriptions of policy events and will probe the meanings in policy language. This activity situates this study within a critical policy sociology perspective.

**Critical Policy Sociology**

The task of sociology is to describe, analyze, explain, and theorize about social interaction, social relationships, and values (Ball, 1997). In other words, sociology demystifies social processes in social situations (Tomlinson, 1982). Applying sociological approaches to policy study demystifies the policy process. Michael Young (2004) states that taking a sociological approach is a distinct way of thinking and considers the “cognitive values and theoretically based explanations” of policy (p. 4). Reflexivity about the relationship between values and theory is necessary (Ozga & Gewirtz, 1994). Policy sociology involves going beyond public pronouncements and looking for meanings and assumptions that are essential parts of the policy process (Raab, 1994, p. 23). Including the voices of non-state-based policy participants is central to critical policy sociology (Ozga, 2000).

A more traditional approach, sometimes known as a positivist orientation to policy, looks at the goals, outcomes, and efficiency of policy. Policy is text and policy making is a series of rational decisions or actions and can only be made by authorities like governments or institutions
(Osher & Quinn, 2003; Pal, 1992; Stein 2004). Within this perspective, policy development and implementation exist as discrete, clean, linear stages separate from the policy text. Dale (1994) would describe this approach as non-critical. A non-critical approach takes the world as it is found and tries to make these relationships and institutions work smoothly with each other. Critical theory, by contrast, calls into question social and power relationships (Dale, 1994).

A critical policy sociology approach examines power relationships as part of the policy process (Lingard, Rowell, & Taylor, 2005; Raab, 1994). Trevor Gale (2001) argues that the policy should be “taken apart” to see whose interests are served. Therefore, critical policy sociology considers policy effects and the workings of power rather than intentions (Lather, 1992; Taylor, 1997). Some of these effects are unequally distributed across policy recipients, providing advantage to some groups (usually the dominant group) and disadvantaging other groups. An examination of power can expose the ways in which agendas are framed in favor of dominant interests, or how beliefs about how the social world should work are reproduced. Power is also exercised in determining what constitutes a policy problem (Schurich, 1997; Stein, 2004). This approach considers the visible and invisible exercise of power relations (Ball, 1994; Dale, 1994; Tomlinson, 1982; Young, 2004), that maintain the status quo (Slee, 1997) that legitimate professional practice (Fulcher, 1989), contribute to power, and constitute identities (Priestly, 1999). Yvette Daniel (2005) argues that the set of socio-historical conditions limits the possibilities for thinking of alternatives to the present situation” (p. 766).

Critical policy sociology studies policy as embedded in the historical context (Dale, 1994; Daniel, 2005; Ozga, 2000). Dale (1994) argues it is important to make visible assumptions about specific national educational contexts and to take them into account (p. 34). Policy sociology may try to deal simultaneously with both policy and practice and to incorporate both macro and micro dimensions (Raab, 1994, p. 25).

I support Trevor Gale’s (2001) notion of storying policy (p. 384) which departs from a focus on the stages of policy development, decision making, or implementation, and tries to construct a policy narrative that includes the people and the context involved in policy (Gale, 2001; Ball, 1997). Stories have characters, plots, subplots, action, problem, and resolution of the problem. Creating a narrative of policy that includes the context and the people involved creates
a rich description of policy that departs from the simplified, overgeneralized, single-voice account. Kathy Charmaz (2005) adds that storying policy means attending to “whose story we tell, how we tell it, and how we represent those who tell us their stories” (p. 526). In addition, attending to silences can signify power in that only those with power dare to speak (p. 527). Sometimes silence is a choice and sometimes it is imposed. Both stories and silences must be considered “with a critical eye” (Charmaz, 2005, p. 527).

Policy sociology is concerned with social justice issues (Gewirtz & Cribb, 2002; Raab, 1994). Indeed, policy sociology also considers the relationship between structure and agency (Raab, 1994). Further, Gewirtz & Cribb (2002) argue that critical policy sociology needs to go beyond a critical perspective and include an action-oriented one. Human agency must be considered in the explanations of policy. In this dissertation, I interrogate the unquestioned reality and embedded beliefs and values in the policy language of special education in historical policy texts. These beliefs were taken-for-granted, unconscious views that were ideologically informed. Ideologies are stable, explanatory frameworks that explained and sustained the processes of special education. In addition to studying the process of policy, I examine the invisible workings of power that situated some policy actors in a position to use policy discourses in ways that would reproduce their beliefs and values.

Policy as Discourse

Some studies of policy define policy as text and a directive for action. Policy text as a guide for action is created by legitimate authority structures like governments, or other institutions of authority, i.e., municipal governments, schools, and school districts (Stein, 2004; Osher & Quinn, 2003; Berkhout & Wielemans, 1999; Pal, 1992). Other perspectives see policy documents as the official discourse of the state in which language serves a political purpose (Codd, 1988). Within this perspective, policy texts record policy decisions implying a consensus of universal truths and objective knowledge. John Codd (1988) elaborates on the implications of the implied consensus found in policy texts.

Thus policies produced by and for the state are obvious instances in which language serves a political purpose, constructing particular meanings and signs that work to mask social conflict and foster commitment to the notion of universal
public interest. In this way, policy documents produce real social effects through the production and maintenance of consent. (Codd, 1988, p. 237.)

Policy statements go beyond facts and “truths.” The language in policy texts allows the interests and values in a policy to be isolated and explored (Iannantuono & Eyles, 1997, p. 1612). Policy study needs to question whose values and whose interests are dominant (Taylor, Rizvi, Hafez, Lingard, & Henry, 1997, p. 15).

The perspective of policy endorsed in this dissertation is that policy is discourse. Consistent with other theorists who use this approach to study policy (Joshee, 2007; Goldberg, 2005; Bacchi, 2000; Ball, 1994; Bowe, Ball with Gold, 1992), I situate this approach within post-positivist theory that “emphasizes critique and deconstruction and draws attention to issues of power and discourse” (Joshee & Johnson, 2007, p. 4). Policy-as-discourse theorists focus on the language and meaning of policy (Lather, 1992; Taylor, 1997; Iannantuono & Eyles, 1997). Policy statements “go beyond facts and truths, beyond what is referred to in language analysis as the code or the meta narrative of a text” (Iannantuono & Eyles, 1997). Policy is embedded in a theoretical perspective which is representative of a set of values (Ozga & Gewirtz, 1994, p. 122). Policy discourse is a system of socially constructed ideas (Popkewitz & Fendler, 1999). Therefore policies are not value neutral. The language in documents allows the beliefs and practices (situated within ideologies) in a current or historical policy to be identified and explained.

Policy as discourse enables us to analyze and understand the relationship between layers of discourse in a policy text as well as the relationship between the text and the wider beliefs and practices within the social structure and political system. (Olssen et al., 2004, p. 71.)

Discourses in the economic, social, political, and cultural contexts shape the content and language of policy documents. Discourse theorists also explore the policy making process within a broad field within which policies are developed and implemented (Rizvi & Kemmis, 1989, p. 25). Examining the policy context “emphasizes the importance of culture as well as practice” (Taylor, 1997, p. 25). Cultural beliefs and world views inform how policy problems are constructed and defined and how policies come to be framed in certain ways (Brock, 2003; Olssen et al., 2004; Rizvi & Kemmis, 1989).
There are a multiplicity of perspectives represented in one policy (Agocs, 2007). Further, the language of policy contains divergent meanings, contradictions, and structured omissions (Berkhout & Wielemans, 1999, p. 413).

Studying policy effects is also part of a policy-as-discourse approach. Discourses have material effects that construct, and are constructed by, social reality and context (Goldberg, 2005; Olssen et al., 2004; Ball, 1994). The discourses in policy have different effects on policy actors and so discourses are implicated in power relations (Corson, 1995; Fulcher, 1989; Troyna, 1994). Michelle Goldberg (2005) found that discourses empower or disempower certain social groups (p. 63). Discourses are also used to create social identities (Gee, 2005) or to maintain or challenge the status quo (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fulcher, 1989, p. 51; MacLure, 2003) or to construct unconscious rules that limit thoughts, behaviours, and actions (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Daniel 2005; Goldberg, 2005, MacLure, 2003). Central to a policy-as-discourse position is that there is no single consensus reading of policy texts (Codd, 1998). There are a plurality of readers, readings, and meanings.

The struggle between competing objectives points to the invisible workings of power within institutions, between groups, and by individuals in a Foucauldian tradition. Stephen Ball (1990) states “Policies embody claims to speak with authority, they legitimate and initiate practices in the world, and they privilege certain visions and interests. They are power/knowledge configurations par excellence” (Ball, 1990, p. 22).

A study of power identifies the inequalities that are hidden in the meaning of the policy text, that are reproduced and become “taken for granted.” In this study, power is not authority over others but is the authority to use discourses to advance a perspective or create a social reality for others.
Conceptual Framework

In this section, I discuss discourses as representational systems of meaning. This discussion of discourses is informed by Reva Joshee’s (2007) assertion that discourses represent “larger patterns of reasoning found in the society,” and Michelle Goldberg’s (2005) statements that discourse and ideology do not exist independently of each other (p. 159). Next, I present my understanding of ideology and that ideologies are explanatory frameworks that are made visible in the discourses of the condensation symbols. The discourses are mutually reinforcing and create a web of meaning.

Discourses as representational systems

In contrast to the existing accounts of the history of special education that document major policy decisions and events, this study interprets the discourses in policy texts produced by state- and non-state-based policy actors. Discourse has been described as a spoken or sign language, symbols, sounds, gestures, or silences (Chimombo, & Roseberry, 1998, introduction) or visual images (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 42) intended to convey information, ideas, emotional states and attitudes, or as statements of values (Ball, 1990, p. 3). Sara Mills (2003) says it represents the way individuals think and express themselves (p. 8). Discourse is socially constructed and operates at all levels of social communication and social practice (Howarth, 2000; Lewis and Simon, 1986, p. 457, as cited in Gale, 1999, p. 395). A social reality is constructed by discourse. This reality becomes taken for granted and limits and restricts the possibilities for thought outside this reality. In this study, the study of discourse reveals that discourses created a certain way of thinking about and dealing with children with disabilities and their education. In sum, discourses are communication systems that represent what people think about abstract concepts. These ways of thinking become taken as common sense.

Stephen Ball (1990) states that discourses are “operational statements of values” (p. 3). He argues that discourses present a version of what is right, good, or desirable. I argue that discourses also reveal beliefs. Beliefs and values are closely related. Beliefs are convictions or basic assumptions that people hold about the world, while values represent positive or negative judgements about those beliefs. In this dissertation, I conclude that discourse is a coherent symbolic communication system used to represent beliefs and values. Representing values and
beliefs goes beyond word choice or using language in a single situation. Values and beliefs are complex and embedded in individual and culturally-shared language and practices. I focus on the level of discourse that represents these broader, shared, cultural values and beliefs.

Levels of Discourse

James Gee (2005) identifies two levels of discourse: small “d” and big “D.” Small “d” discourse is a situational system of communication representing an object, idea, or unit of meaning (p. 57). However, not all discourses are situationally specific nor refer to a single idea or concept. James Gee (2005) identifies a level of higher order discourses that inscribe the small “d” discourses. Stephen Ball (1994) states that larger, more complex discourses make visible the habits, concepts, and theories of the socially constructed world.

The focus in this dissertation is on the more complex discourses. James Gee (2005) uses the term cultural models or big “D” Discourses, to describe the “explanatory frameworks that people hold to make sense of the world and their experiences in it” (p. 61). I will use the term discourse to describe the complex representational systems that reveal ways of understanding the world. In taking this position, I align with Reva Joshee (2007) who states that these taken-for-granted meanings are grounded in a particular pattern of reasoning or logic. These larger patterns of logic are shared by groups within a culture and become a coherent, invisible, and taken-for-granted world view (Lakoff, 2002). I identify these explanatory frameworks as ideology.

Ideology

There are contradictory definitions of ideology (Blommaert, 2005). Traditional definitions of ideology imply a truth or falsehood or a value dimension of good and bad (Boudon, 1989). Many people think of ideologies as partisan political images and stereotypes like socialism, communism, (Blommaert, 2005) conservatism, and liberalism. These could be considered as “group schemata” that organize the way members think, speak, and act (Blommaert, 2005, p. 162).

Others argue that ideology is general, ideational, all pervasive, and accepted unconsciously by every member or actor in that society or culture. These are naturalized, normalized, unconscious patterns of thought and behaviour (Blommaert, 2005; Reid & Knight,
This view of ideology aligns with Reva Joshee’s (2007) use of the term “patterns of logic.” Michael Apple (2001) says that ideologies are listened to because they make sense and are connected to reality (p. 19).

George Lakoff (2002) uses the term worldview as a substitute for ideology. He adds that worldviews are shared understandings that are also explanatory frameworks for thoughts and behaviours. Lakoff states that shared understandings occur within cultural groups and are not necessarily held by all members of a culture. Specifically, he describes how the conservative and liberal worldviews differ and account for different understandings of the same idea or concept, and also different actions that result from these understandings.

Ideologies “sustain social relations and power structures and the patterns of power that reinforce common sense” (Blommaert, 2005, p. 159; Gee, 2005). Ideologies are statements of values because they “embed assumptions about what is ‘appropriate,’ ‘typical,’ and/or ‘normal’” (Gee, 2005, p. 84; Johnson, 1996).

I accept that ideologies are shared within cultural groups and there is no consensual set of beliefs about how the social world should operate. The ideologies of liberalism and conservatism, not as partisan politics, but as ways of explaining the social world, have a long tradition in North American culture (Smith, 1990). The next section will outline how ideologies are revealed in discourses that give meaning to complex ideas or concepts, which I define as condensation symbols.

**Condensation Symbols**

Murray Edelman (1964) argues that the language used in politics and in bureaucracies is used for political purposes. This language is vague and open to a variety of interpretations (Edelman, 1964, p. 6; Edelman, 1977, p. xviii).

Condensation symbols evoke the emotions associated with the situation. They condense into one symbolic event, sign, or act, patriotic pride, anxieties, remembrances of past glories or humiliations, promises of future greatness: some one of these or all of them. (Edelman, 1964, p. 6.)

Barry Troyna (1994) adds that condensations symbols have multiple meanings for political purposes, that is, to appeal to the concerns of multiple constituents (p. 73). Doris Graber
(1976, cited in Jaskinski, 2001) supports that condensation symbols are rhetorically important and that the multiple meanings have different functions for different audiences. These condensation symbols shape how audiences respond to situations and create societal solidarity around symbols to which the meaning is agreed (Graber, 1976, cited in Jaskinski, 2001, p. 294). A typology of condensation symbols used for political rhetoric include buzzwords, stereotypes, and emblems that evoke emotion and represent a web of meaning (Kaufer & Carley, 1993, p. 209).

I depart from the connection between condensation symbols and rhetoric. However, I accept that condensation symbols form the hub of a web of meaning (Kaufer & Carley, 1993, p. 209). This hub of meaning is a discursive web, but not necessarily a rhetorical one. Each web, taken in isolation, is a meaning system created by discourses. However, discourses don’t map solely into one web. Some of the discourses are found in other webs. For example, professional authority in the web of Professionalism is related to quantifying disability. The two webs of Measurement and Professionalism are now linked. As more and more of these cross-web discourses are mapped, it creates a strong and complex pattern of interconnected discourses. Taken together, these webs and their isolated and interrelated discourses form a complex, multi-dimensional, discursive construction of special education.

**Policy Web**

Reva Joshee and Lauri Johnson (2005) used the metaphor of the policy web to show how diversity policies are related to a range of other policies associated with multiculturalism (p. 6). The notion of the policy web recognizes policy as complex, non-linear, and non-state-centered. In their metaphor, the policy web has the physical characteristics of threads, nodes, and spaces. The points at which the threads cross the rings represent discrete policy texts. Individual policy texts are related to other policy texts addressing similar issues by threads (Joshee & Johnson, 2007, p. 55). The spaces in the web represent spaces for resisting or subverting policies.

Other interpretations of the policy web metaphor focus on different forms or functions of the policy web. Michelle Goldberg (2005) describes the web as one of power relations and constructed subjectivities, objects, and social reality (p. 6). The metaphor of the policy web describes a discursive web of power relations that work together to create an ideology that
disadvantages immigrants in their quest for access to professions and trades. Susan Winton (2007) built on Joshee and Johnson’s (2005) notion of the policy web to further an understanding of the policy spiral approach. Whereas Joshee and Johnson focus on the points where the rings and thread intersect as discrete policy texts. Susan Winton thinks of these points of intersection as individual policy spirals wherein policy is reinterpreted in the contexts of influence, text production, and practice (2007, p. 42).

When looking at the web, initially the threads and nodes are visible. The nodes represent discourses. The lines join discourses that relate to each other. Whereas traditional lace has many forms, but generally involves threads and openings, nodes and open spaces forming a symmetrical and predictable design, postmodern lace has no easily discernible pattern. In postmodern lace, the threads do not form a linear predictable pattern but form arches and valleys as they join nodes in other parts of the web. The open spaces may be large or small and vary in shape.

When looking at the web, initially the threads and nodes are visible. The nodes represent discourses. The lines join discourses that relate to each other. Whereas traditional lace has many forms, but generally involves threads and openings, nodes and open spaces forming a symmetrical and predictable design, postmodern lace has no easily discernible pattern. In postmodern lace, the threads do not form a linear predictable pattern but form arches and valleys as they join nodes in other parts of the web. The open spaces may be large or small and vary in shape.

Figure 1: Traditional Lace and Postmodern Lace

The policy web is more than a confusing configuration of lines and spaces. Discourses are related to other discourses. These related meanings refer to a larger, more abstract condensation symbol that can be visualized as a web or net that joins the related discourses of the web all together (See Figure 2). The special education policy web is composed of a collection of webs that define the meanings for abstract concepts related to children with disabilities and their education. However, the discourses do not map neatly onto a single web. Some discourses are found in more than one web. This creates a thread that reaches into another cluster of unified meanings. Now the two clusters are reinforcing each other. Many discourses that are found in multiple clusters join these clusters together and create unpredictable configurations of lines that
may be identified as postmodern lace. This dimension adds texture and strength to the policy web. Figure 2 shows each web in a different colour. Each web encompasses the condensation symbol and the related discourses. Some discourses relate to discourses in another web. This is shown as lines joining the discourses.

The special education policy web is composed of discourses that define webs of Disability, Professionalism, Measurement, Education, and Equality. The webs are shown in Figure 2. The nodes are discourses. Lines join the discourses within a web or across webs. In the interest of clarity, not all interconnecting lines between the webs are shown. The diagram would be too cluttered and confusing if all the interconnections were shown.
Figure 2: The Special Education Policy Web
I situate an understanding of power from within Pierre Bourdieu’s conceptions of social, economic, cultural, and symbolic forms of capital. Capital means the resources in the social world that have value and can be exchanged for monetary or non-monetary resources like status, upward mobility, or legitimacy (Bourdieu, 1986; Lamont & Laureau, 1988; Portes, 1998). What counts as value in one social world may not do so in another. Capital is used to legitimize the position of societal dominance and thereby retain the authority to use discourses in particular ways that reproduce dominant ideologies. These ideologies become taken for granted but are actually supporting the reproduction of the existing social structure. The dominant class has not achieved superior status through achievement but through the maintenance of an unequal social structure (Marsh, 2006).

Pierre Bourdieu identified economic, cultural, symbolic, and social capital as forms of power. Economic capital entails income and assets that have a monetary value. Money can be accumulated, stolen, given away, or invested. It can be exchanged for goods, services, and status. In Bourdieu’s early writing, cultural capital was denoted as the knowledge or competence with aesthetic culture like fine art and classical music (Laureau & Weininger, 2003). Cultural capital also consists of academic credentials or qualifications, high status attitudes, preferences, formal knowledge, behaviors, goods, or high status interests (Bourdieu, 1986; Lamont & Laureau, 1988). Bourdieu’s writings on capital broke with previous explanations situated in human capital theories, that academic success or failure was the result of a natural aptitude (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 47). Pierre Bourdieu posited that parents possessed and used cultural capital to influence school practices and decisions that favoured their children. He argued that the educational system reproduces the unequal distribution of cultural capital. The culture it transmits reflects that of the dominant culture. Bourdieu argued that this transmission of power and privileges is systematically hidden by the dominant classes. Theoretically, cultural wealth is available to everyone. Realistically, cultural wealth is bequeathed through the generations to members of the elite class or “educated families” (Brantlinger, 2001). In this dissertation, members of one advocacy association were professionals and decision makers in the health, legal, business, and education professions, who possessed cultural and social wealth.
Cultural capital also means participation in the decision-making bodies of influential organizations. Policy actors who were familiar with professional associations and government and other institutions with authority, such as parents, teachers, and senior administrators, combined and used their varying amounts of cultural capital to build legitimacy and recognition (symbolic capital) for their advocacy association and its members. This shared capital meant that these policy actors, as part of an advocacy group, were able to use policy discourses in particular ways to advance their values and beliefs. The authority to speak and to inscribe meaning into discourses (Chimombo & Roseberry, 1998) is powerful in that discourses shape social thought and practices.

Social capital is an aggregate, intangible resource consisting of a collectivity of social relationships (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 51). Parental networks are the most frequent examples of social capital in education (Horvat, Weininger, & Lareau, 2003). Bourdieu’s definition of social capital includes two elements: first the social relationship itself that allows individuals to claim access to resources possessed by others in their network and, secondly, the amount and quality of those resources (Portes, 1998, p. 4). Social capital refers to the assets gained through membership in various social networks. Alejandro Portes (1998) reviewed the literature and found that social capital is used as a predictor of academic performance, as a source of employment and immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurship (p. 9). Social capital is often used as an explanation of upward mobility and access to status and power positions. In this dissertation, social capital is evident in that some policy actors were well connected to others with decision-making authority or the ability to influence public opinion. Members of particular advocacy associations were part of broad social networks both within and beyond their professional connections. These networks were instrumental in advancing the goals of the advocacy association.

Cultural and social capital can be used to build up symbolic capital. Symbolic capital is social recognition, legitimacy, and prestige (1989 p. 21; Lamont & Laureau, 1998, p. 159). Although Bourdieu (1989) does not use the term discourse, the following quotes illustrate that persons with symbolic capital have the power to use language in ways that create a particular meaning. He states that symbolic capital is used to reproduce power relations, “impos[e] a new construction of social reality by jettisoning the old political vocabulary” (p. 21) and is used to “create a monopoly over legitimate naming” (p. 21). In this dissertation, symbolic capital was
held by members of advocacy groups in positions of prestige or social status. This included doctors, nurses, teachers, superintendent, executives of business, and those who held executive positions in various advocacy associations. Symbolic capital was accumulated through participation in high status positions of professional employment groups.

I build on Bourdieu’s conceptions of capital as a resource held by individuals. I extend Bourdieu’s descriptions of cultural capital to include knowledge of decision makers, how decisions are made, and how to influence the political processes of institutions. Social capital is the network of relationships and connections held by an individual. I submit that these forms of capital are possessed by individuals and then are collectively shared with an advocacy association to build the symbolic capital of the association. Discourses used by this particular association with high symbolic capital were given high value in the social, educational, and political world of special education in Ontario during the period under study (1965-1980).

Some advocacy associations were silent in the policy process. This silence may be because the combined capital of the members of this association was not great enough for sustained participation in the decision-making organizations. Alternately, their silence might be a sign of tacit agreement with the policy discourse or a deliberate choice not to use accumulated cultural capital to influence decision making and public opinion.

In this dissertation, I submit that those who possess cultural, social, economic, or symbolic capital forms of capital have the authority to use policy discourses in particular ways. These special education policy actors used their individual cultural, social, and economic capital to build shared and cumulative symbolic capital for their Association, to be used in the acquisition and maintenance of relations of power. This power enabled their voices to be heard in the creation of policy texts. Further, this power maintained a position of prestige and high status for the members of the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities.

The next chapter outlines a methodology for analysis of the data. Policy archaeology is used to locate policy texts related to special education and to interpret the discourses in these texts.
Chapter Four: METHODOLOGY

The methodology of archaeology is the most appropriate for this dissertation because of its association with historical study and critical policy sociology (Gale, 2001; Ozga, 2000). Policy archaeology locates policy artifacts. These artifacts are interpreted in relation to the historical context. These artifacts are represented by particular policy discourses. The interpretation offered here is not presented as a definitive truth, but as one interpretation that supports traditional chronologies of events in the history of special education. This narrative includes the people involved, the changes in policy discourses, and the interrelationships among discourses. In addition, this study interprets policy discourses in relationship to the ideologies and events of the historical context. I align with Olssen et al. (2004) who state:

The role of policy analyst is to understand the historical nature of the a-priori through a detailed examination of the social and historical practices (customs, language, habits, discourses, institutions, disciplines) from which a particular style of institutional reasoning emerges and develops. (p. 40.)

The methodology developed in this chapter is analogous to that used by the archaeologist in conducting the excavation of a site, in the interpretation of artifacts retrieved from the site, and the creation of an explanation of the meaning of these artifacts in their social and historical context. Common metaphors of the work of archaeology are “digging” and “interpreting” and these figurative processes will be evident in the methodology used in this study. The chapter will begin with a discussion of previous scholarly archaeological methodologies used in policy analysis described by Michel Foucault (1972 in Olssen et al., 2004), Trevor Gale (2001) and James Scheurich (1997). This will be followed by a brief description of archaeological field work and then will outline a framework for the new methodology used for locating and interpreting the artifacts in policy texts. Next, I will outline the methods used to identify in-text discourses. This will be followed by an explanation of the process used to identify the condensation symbols. The process was informed by grounded theory in the tradition of Kathy Charmaz (1994).
**Current Understandings of Policy Archaeology**

Current understandings of policy archaeology are complex and exhibit limited points of consensus. Michel Foucault first used the term archaeology to describe a method to analyze traditional accounts of history (Foucault, 1972, in Olssen et al., 2004). Foucault argued that the traditional account of history describes a linear, sequential series of events written from the dominant societal perspective (Olssen et al., 2004). He stated that the traditional historical account is a discourse and that hidden practices and rules account for the formation of a discourse. In Foucault’s view, archaeology attempts to probe the invisible rules that privilege the dominant account. Archaeology asks “how is it that one particular statement appeared rather than another?” (Foucault, 1972, cited in Olssen et al., 2004, p. 46). According to Foucault, archaeology attempts to describe the circumstances that account for the way discourses, as language and social practices, are selected and controlled (Ferguson, 1995, p. 11).

Foucault’s description of archaeology has been criticized for its inability to account for the “historical emergence and transformation of discourses” (Olssen et al., 2004, p. 47). Another criticism is that Foucault’s description is not interpretive, thereby limiting its usefulness as an analytical tool (Kendall & Wickham, 2003; Stevenson & Cutcliffe, 2006, p. 715). Foucault’s work is also criticized for the confluence of the processes of archaeology and genealogy (Kendall & Wickham, 2003). Initially, Foucault separated these two processes, arguing that “genealogical analysis aims to explain the existence and transformation of [policies] by situating them within power structures and by tracing their descent and emergence in the context of history” (Kendall & Wickham, 2003, p. 47). Genealogy is concerned with how a practice was brought into being or developed (Stevenson & Cutcliffe, 2006). Thus, genealogy is concerned with the power/knowledge nexus. While Foucault’s earlier work maintained a distinction between archaeology and genealogy, Olssen et al. (2004) submit that after 1968, genealogy became inseparable from archaeology in Foucault’s work (p. 56).

Foucault’s discussion of archaeology contributes two important concepts to this dissertation. His method of archaeology was used to counter the dominant single voice of descriptive, historical narratives. Second, Foucault contributes the importance of identifying the practices of power that privilege the dominant discourses. This dissertation applies archaeology to the study of special education policy, thereby troubling the traditional accounts of special
education as a consensual, sequential, linear advance of progress. Further, my dissertation builds on the work of Pierre Bourdieu and argues that forms of capital were used as power by some non-state-based policy actors.

Another scholar who has developed a different understanding and methodology of policy archaeology is James Scheurich. He described the purpose of policy archaeology as investigating the broader social function of policy. His methodology tried to capture the complexities of identifying social “problems” as well as the complexities of developing policy solutions. Scheurich (1997) provides an extensive application of Foucault’s archaeological analysis and offers a systematic methodology for examining the activities of constituents involved in the policy process. Scheurich describes four arenas of investigation. In Arena 1, the focus is on the study of the social constructions of the policy problem. He argues that the emergence of social problems are not “natural” and he offers a series of critical questions to determine the reasons why one particular problem emerged. In Arena II, the focus is on identifying the networks of social regularities. He describes the regularities as historical, unconscious, continuously reproductive, constitutive of ways of thinking that may “change or disappear with the rise and fall of identified periods within a particular society or civilization” (Scheurich, 1997, p. 101). The social regularities are unconscious and constitute a set of conditions that accord with the emergence of the social problem. The third Arena is a study of the social construction of the range of acceptable policy solutions that are shaped by the “regularities” (p. 102). Finally, the fourth Arena studies the social functions of post-positivist policy studies that are “constituted by social regularities” historically (p. 102). He argues that the social regularities interact in a “grid-like intersection” and relate to a dominant ideology.

James Scheurich’s view of policy archaeology is useful to my work because it “promotes the investigation of groups and issues that have traditionally been ignored or taken for granted by policy researchers” (Ferguson 1995, p. 4). Non-state-based policy participants, such as advocacy groups, have often been assigned a peripheral role in traditional accounts of special education policy. These accounts typically credit advocacy associations with lobbying or exerting political pressure on governments that resulted in legislative changes that were of benefit to children with disabilities (Winzer, 1993). Informed by Scheurich’s (1997) work, I locate the texts and interpret the policy discourses in the texts of non-state-based policy participants. These policy texts
illuminate the multiple discourses that defined special education. Scheurich (1997) identifies the significance of studying the policy context and the interrelatedness of policies. He defines “social regularities” in Arena II as unconscious, reproductive, and constitutive ways of thinking that are culturally constructed. This parallels my conception of policy discourses as inscribed in historical ideologies. Ideologies were coherent, logical, unconscious, common sense explanations (Apple, 2001) for thinking about children with disabilities and their education.

My work differs from Scheurich’s in three ways. Scheurich’s analysis is at the macro level, considering the development of a social problem at the level of society and considering broad societal structures. The investigation that I conducted is situated at a more local level, specifically, the activities of multiple policy actors related to special education in Ontario. Secondly, Scheurich presumes that the only policy actor to be studied is the government. A focus on the government as the sole or most important policy actor marginalizes the voices of other policy actors (Joshee, 2007; Joshee & Johnson, 2005; Ozga, 2000; Taylor, 1997). I align with Reva Joshee’s (2007) differentiation between state-based or non-state-based policy actors. Lastly, Scheurich’s one published account fails to articulate how to conduct policy archaeology. While he identifies the importance of “social regularities” he fails to articulate how to determine these “constitutive ways of thinking.” Scheurich does not differentiate among different levels and, therefore, different complexities of discourses and their relationships. I describe a methodology that identifies a complex level of policy discourse that is inscribed in ideology.

Trevor Gale (2001) advocates for the application of archaeology as a method of critical policy analysis. He attempts to make a distinction between historiography, archaeology, and genealogy within the tradition of critical policy sociology. He states that these three approaches to policy research are different ways of storying policy (2001, p. 384). He supports Foucault’s (1972) definition of policy archaeology as the analysis of the “conditions that regulate policy formation.” Gale favours the questions that are part of Scheurich’s explanation of policy archaeology, but extends Scheurich’s questioning to include a critical element, asking about inclusion and exclusion of the voices of some policy actors and why some items are on the policy agenda and not others (2001, p. 387). Similar to Scheurich, Gale (2001) uses archaeology to map macro level strategies and how they are used by policy actors who occupied formal positions of authority in hierarchical bureaucratic systems. I agree with the importance of
examining the inclusion and exclusion of voices of policy actors. In this study, I analyzed the policy actors who have no formal decision-making power in special education. These are advocacy associations and authors of various committees and study groups related to special education.

**Archaeological Field Work**

Archaeology is a systematic inquiry of past human activity involving the interpretation of documentary evidence and material artifacts to understand and explain past human experience in narrative form (Black, 2001; Drewett, 1999; Lucas, 2001). According to Lucas (2001) archaeology must concern itself with an explanation and not be merely descriptive.

Artifacts are the documentary evidence that gives clues about social life in a past society. Archaeologists believe that artifacts hold meaning about the cultural and social events of the historical period under study (Drewett, 1999; Lucas, 2001, p. 1). The artifacts do not speak for themselves but rely on the interpretation of the artifacts by archaeologists (Drewett, 1999; Jeske & Charles, 2003; Lucas, 2001). Archaeologists examine the symbolic nature of the material culture, rather than attempting to create descriptions or develop laws and generalities (Drewett, 1999, p. 10).

The traditional view of archaeology is the excavation of sites to unearth artifacts. This is known as field archaeology. However, archaeology does not always involve the excavation of sites and the time spent in the field is only a small part of archaeology. There is a considerable pre-field element and a more lengthy post-field element. The pre-field work involves locating potential field site relying on knowledge of geology and physics. In the post-field activities, the archaeologist interprets the artifacts excavated individually and in similar clusters through a particular theoretical perspective. The artifacts and the documentary evidence of the site are used to reconstruct understandings about historical people and social systems (Ember, Ember, Peregrine, & Hoppa, 2006; Lucas, 2001). Understanding past life from the archaeological records requires a multidisciplinary approach. The archaeologist conducts a careful analysis of the context in which the artifacts are found (Ember et al., 2006) and draws on knowledge of history, cultural anthropology, and any previous work of other archaeologists to guide the interpretation of the meaning of the artifacts (Drewett, 1999). The archaeologist interprets...
artifacts by considering information about their particular location in the site, the proximity and type of other artifacts, and the archaeologist’s knowledge and experience with similar sites. The interpretation of the artifacts is an iterative process that considers the historical context, events, and relationships with other artifacts. Reconstructing the past is a complex task similar to building a three dimensional puzzle (Ember et al., 2006). Consensus associated with the interpretation of artifacts is not always possible.

Field archaeology may involve total excavation of the entire site or only partial excavation using systematic removal of layers of debris, labeling, identification, and removal of artifacts. The context of each artifact must be described and is critical to the final conclusions about the historical date and the creation of the historical narrative. Field work is based on the principle of superposition or stratification. This means that (if undisturbed) each layer represents a historical time period with the upper layers being closest to the present time. Artifacts found at a similar level can be inferred to be from the same time period. A typical field site shows excavations of varying depths. Archaeologists use vertical excavations to view the strata and establish dates and sequences of human occupation. Horizontal excavations cover large areas and might be used to uncover an entire village. Modern excavations try to reduce the damage to the site and would typically use more vertical excavations.

Ember et al., (2006) provide a detailed description of field archaeology. The general process for vertical excavation is summarized as follows:

1. Construct the boundaries of the site.
2. Select a fixed reference point that will be used to spatially define the location of all information and specimens collected from the site.
3. Create and map a grid within the boundaries. Label each parcel in the grid.
4. For each parcel in the grid, document a description of the typography of the area, the parcel’s relationship to the overall typography, the methods and tools used in the excavation.
5. Systematically and carefully remove debris from one parcel in the grid.
6. Use the reference point to locate all artifacts in each parcel in the grid. Identify and record the location and description of the individual artifacts of the same horizontal level in each section of the grid.
7. Continue to record, label and remove each horizontal stratum in the parcel.
8. Follow steps 4-7 for the entire site.
9. Interpret the meaning of the artifacts individually, or in cluster groups from each horizontal level of each parcel in the grid.
10. Engage in a process of integrating the information and artifacts from the individual parcels in the grid to develop a composite of the entire site and an overall understanding of the human activity.

In this dissertation, policy archaeology is a methodology that is modeled on archaeological field work in that it involves a systematic process of tracing both backwards through time and laterally into different topic areas to locate related policy texts. Discourses are the artifacts located and interpreted. The explanation of the meaning of policy discourses takes into account the events and ideologies in the historical context.

A constellation of related discourses gives meaning to a more complex and more abstract concept that I identify as a condensation symbol. The way condensation symbols are represented through discourses illuminates a particular way of thinking about how the world should work. These ways of thinking are pervasive, unconscious, taken-for-granted ideologies. Policy archaeology supports the analysis of the underlying ideologies and taken-for-granted ways of thinking that legitimize certain policy beliefs and practices.

**Doing Policy Archaeology**

The application of a policy archaeology process in this dissertation mirrors the process of field archaeology. The first step is to create a boundary for the study. I have selected a time period in Ontario’s history between 1965 and 1980 because in those years the provincial government was preparing special education legislation and the activity of various policy actors was at its peak.

In the national policy arena, 1965 marked the second Canadian Conference on Children. The conference examined topics such as health, welfare, and education. This conference followed a 1964 joint Federal and Provincial conference on Mental Retardation held in Ottawa to consider practical steps to improve the treatment, training, and employment of persons with “mental retardation.” These events indicate that in the early and mid 1960s, children, and children with disabilities, became a higher priority for study and subsequent policy statements. The other boundary, 1980, marks the enactment of formal, mandatory provincial legislation in special education, commonly known as Bill 82 and formally known as the *Amendments to the Education Act* in Ontario, in December, 1980. This legislation mandated all school districts to
identify and provide special education programs and services for any children with disabilities within their jurisdiction. This time period is situated within the context of the politicization of equality rights for minorities and the expansion of disability advocacy.

The second step in the archaeological process is to create a grid within the overall boundaries to enable systematic categorization of the findings. The grid also serves as a method to mark the location of artifacts. In my study, this step began with the reading of general descriptive historical accounts of this period to identify an initial list of policy actors and to become more familiar with related historical events. I consulted Robert Gidney’s (2002) *From Hope to Harris* and William Fleming’s (1971-1972) *Ontario’s Educative Society*. Next, I read chronological accounts of the history of special education (Hutchinson, 2007; Schlifer, 2005; Winzer, 1993). This overview identified a list of state-based and non-state-based policy actors related to special education and children with disabilities. I chose to identify each policy actor and their texts as a section. The archival records for all non-state-based policy actors were not available, thereby keeping the number of sections to a manageable number. Policy participants included national and provincial teachers’ associations, advocacy groups such as The Ontario Association for Mental Retardation (OAMR), The Association for Bright Children (ABC), The Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (OACLĐ), The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) (provincial and national), The Autism Society, The Ontario Association for Emotionally Disturbed Children (OAEDC), The Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC), and The Ontario Advisory Council on Physically Handicapped (OACPH). Commissioned reports written in that time period were also studied. These were *The Report of the Provincial Committee on the Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario*, titled *Living and Learning*, commonly known as the Hall-Dennis Report (1968), *The Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children*, also known as CELDIC (Roberts & Lazure, 1970), and the *Provincial report of The Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children* (Ontario Committee, 1970). The CELDIC report was the national report.

Next is the “digging” to identify relevant policy texts in the sections of the grid. Policy archaeology is not linear and sequential. A policy text in one section of the grid may lead to a text in another section of the grid or may signal the end of that line of inquiry.
I began with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) documents written in 1980. These documents were carefully archived by Edith Binns and easy to access. I located related documents from those referenced in each policy text. After the CEC, I examined texts produced by the Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (OACL), currently known as the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO), the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), the Ontario Association for Children with Physical Handicaps, and teachers’ federations. The documents from the Ontario Association for the Mentally Retarded (OAMR) were unavailable due to a flood that destroyed the records. The archival documents of the LDAO were available at their offices in Toronto and consisted of newsletters and briefs. The CBC had a few television programs available from this period. However, some programs had not been archived and were unavailable. The Autism society had few newsletters prior to 1980.

As each policy text was read, I noted other texts that were referenced and I retrieved those texts. Sometimes the texts were written by the same policy actor, but not always. This meant that I was going into another topic area or another section of the grid. Other texts were found in related areas such as general education, disability, teachers and advocacy associations, and special education in the United States. The identification of policy texts proceeded, for the most part, in a reverse order from 1980 until the temporal boundary of 1965 had been reached or until no new documents were available. The same systematic process was followed with other policy actors. This step reflects the archaeologist’s work of systematic and careful excavation of each parcel in the grid.

Each policy participant was not necessarily involved in writing policy texts throughout the entire fifteen year period under study. At times, the search would end with no further texts written by this particular group. A new line of search would be initiated based on policy texts referenced in other texts. This resembles the archaeological field work pattern of uneven excavation of certain areas in the grid. Archaeologists may not find any new artifacts in a particular section of the grid and therefore may begin in a new area.

For each policy document, I engaged in repeated readings, with each reading serving a different purpose. In the first reading of the text, the guiding question was: What information does this text provide about the author and the topic? This first reading was for information.
From this first reading, a summary of the information, and other texts that were cited or used as background was compiled. The first column of a chart recorded the topic, the policy actor, and the date. The second column contained a bullet point summary and the third column listed related texts that I would retrieve to analyze.

For subsequent readings of the text, I applied the principles of grounded theory. Working within this theory, the “researcher needs to move beyond the text meaning as given to interpret and theorize beyond the text” (Charmaz, 1994, p. 511). Therefore I engaged in an analytic reading of the texts. The purpose of the second reading was the identification of condensation symbols. These abstract concepts are often repeated across and within policy texts that hold different meanings (Kaufer & Carley, 1993). I used a 4’ by 8’ white board with coloured markers for this step. I created a large matrix. Across the top was a timeline with a series of points for each year from 1965-1980. Under each year I listed the names of each policy text, the date, and the text producer. Under these identifiers, I listed all the concepts in the text. The focusing question was: What concept is being described? This was completed for all texts in the study. I identified concepts or ideas that were repeated across policy texts and these were joined with coloured markers. These repeated concepts were the condensation symbols (Kaufer & Carley, 1993). Each colour represented a condensation symbol. Twelve condensation symbols were identified through this second reading. These were: Normal/Abnormal, Disability, Vocational Education, Rights, Giftedness, Professional/Teacher Expertise, The Special Education Teacher, Learning Disabilities, Purpose of Education, Advocacy, Organization and Management of Special Education, and Equal Educational Opportunity.

In turn, each condensation symbol was traced across policy texts. Another chart was created. A horizontal line for each condensation symbol was created. For each policy text the discourses were noted horizontally in chronological order, also noting the policy actor that used the discourse. This chart traced the changes in meaning of each condensation symbol. The focusing question was: how is this concept represented? Discourses were identified by specific vocabulary and imagery (Hastings, 1999), metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), the repetitions and the positioning of words for emphasis (Fairclough, 1992), words that created an emotive tone, synonyms, keywords (MacLure, 2003), or statements that refer to one and the same object (Joshee, 2007). Discourses were identified holistically from reading a single sentence or a
paragraph, rather than line-by-line coding used in linguistic discourse analysis (van Dijk 1997; Charmaz, 1994, p. 97).

Clusters of related discourses were identified. Renaming of some condensation symbols occurred at this point. For example, the condensation symbol of Organization and Management of Special Education was renamed to the Bureaucracy, and then as Management. Next the discourses in these clusters of condensation symbols were reexamined. I interrogated the discourses asking: What are the underlying assumptions and values? I determined that many of the discourses represented a more abstract and more complex concept that had multiple meanings. For example: Normal/Abnormal and Learning Disabilities represented Disability. The Special Education Teacher and Professional/Teacher Expertise represented Professionalism. From this reconsideration, the final list of condensation symbols and the discourses was developed. The list was confirmed by working backwards and again identifying the condensation symbols. For example, the condensation symbol of Professionalism was related to the discourses of professional authority, specialized knowledge, and benevolent humanitarianism. The final list of condensation symbols was developed. These are Disability, Professionalism, Management, Education, and Equality.

I then returned to the discourses questioning how the participants understood the taken-for-granted social world, truth, or reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Ortony, 1993). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) inspired these questions. They state that our “taken-for-granted” conceptual systems structure the way we understand the world, and the actions that are sanctioned are a result of our own world view. These implicit conceptual systems may describe a “more or less consistent set of beliefs” (Johnson, 1997) or a larger pattern of reasoning (Joshee, 2007) about how the political, economic, educational, or other social reality is, or ought to be, structured (Olssen et al., 2004, p. 71). These common sense explanations are ideologies. For further information related to the ideologies that shaped societal beliefs at the time of this study, I returned to the work of Ronald Manzer (1985, 1994) and other scholars (Dobbin, 1994; Ernst, 2006). The descriptions of liberalism and conservatism led to the consideration of other ideologies related to capitalism. The ideologies of scientific rationalism and behaviourism were also evident during this time period. The supremacy of scientific rationality was instrumental in positioning the current practices of special education as “normative” (Olneck, 1993). I believe
behaviourism is part of scientific rationalism and I conceptualize capitalism as an economic model supported by the ideologies of conservatism and liberalism.

The explanation of the cultural context involves a consideration of power. In this study, I questioned how it was that some non-state-based policy actors had the power to be heard and to use discourses in particular ways. This led to a consideration of how individuals and groups accumulated and used forms of capital. I returned to the policy texts to identify key individuals that were active in policy work. I listed all people whose names appeared frequently. For each person, I identified their profession, any social or professional connections that were mentioned, their activities related to special education, and what was said about them by other policy participants. Using Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of power as related to capital, I applied the criteria of the different forms of capital to these descriptions. The results showed that policy participants with many forms of capital shared their capital within an advocacy association to advance the status and political position of this association. These advocacy associations had members who were connected to individuals with authority or influence in society and so the advocacy association had symbolic capital and was granted the authority of “expert” in the field of special education. Discourses reflected the voices, values, and beliefs of these dominant policy participants, i.e., those with forms of capital.

Lastly, I considered whose voices weren’t heard. I returned to the initial matrix that identified condensation symbols and policy actors. Guiding questions were which advocacy associations did not appear in the data. Advocacy groups who had no archival records were not heard. This included The Ontario Association for Emotionally Disturbed Children, The Autism Society, and the Association for Bright Children. The archival records of the Ontario Association for the Mentally Retarded had been destroyed but a few annual reports were available at the University of Toronto library.

The next chapter outlines the analysis and findings from the data. The discourses in five condensation symbol webs will be presented. In addition, the ideologies that are reflected in the discourses will be presented and discussed.
Chapter Five: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Chapter Five outlined the methodology of policy archaeology. A higher, more abstract level of discourse will be the level of analysis in this study because the ideas and concepts represented are complex. The condensation symbols are represented by discourses. The discourses work together to create a web of meaning about the condensation symbol. The condensation symbol web is represented by discourses that are ideologically infused.

This chapter analyzes and interprets the discourses of the five condensation symbol webs in the special education policy web. Each condensation symbol exists within a web of relationships of discursive meaning. The meanings of the discourses are explained by the ideologies of liberalism, conservatism, and scientific rationalism, that existed in the social context during the period of study. Condensation symbols are points where discourses can be contested, replaced, or supported.

First, the data will be briefly described. Then each of the condensation symbol webs will be described and interpreted in a separate section of the chapter. For each condensation symbol in turn, I will describe the discourses in the web and the connections to other discourses within the same web or in a different condensation symbol web. I will then interpret the influence of ideologies in supporting the “truth” created in each web. The five condensation symbols are Disability, Education, Management, Professionalism, and Equality. A brief summary will end each section.

This chapter enables me to answer the first three research questions:

1. What are the discourses within Ontario’s special education policy web between 1965-1980?

2. How were these discourses taken up and reconstituted in the texts of non-government policy participants over time?

3. How were the discourses related to ideologies in the broader society?
This chapter is based on the examination of over one hundred and twenty documents. These briefs, position papers, and research studies, were written by provincial and national advocacy groups and teachers’ federations. Some were state sanctioned documents and included reports commissioned by authoritative bodies like the government or a group of advocacy associations. These committees were convened to study a specific aspect of education. The Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children (1970) was a national study of the social services available to children, including special education. A national and a provincial report were released by that committee. I consider this report to be within the category of non-government policy texts because the Commission was formally established in 1966, consisting of national advocacy associations. The government of Canada and the provincial Departments of Education provided financial support for the scope of the study and for the release of reports (CELDIC, 1970, p. 12). The six advocacy associations were in a leadership position: “The commission was sponsored initially by a number of Canadian organizations with an interest in the field” (Fleming, 1972a, p. 168). The Report of the Provincial Commission on the Aims of Education in Ontario (1968), also known as the Hall-Dennis Report, was commissioned by Premier William Davis to study the province’s education. I also consider this report to be a non-government document. In the Foreword, one of the purposes of the study is that the “Committee be empowered to require the assistance of the officials of the department of Education, in particular, members of the staff of the Curriculum Division” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 4). This committee did not work under the guidance or direction of the government. Further, the report states that “This Report has been designed to communicate the Committee’s viewpoints, findings, and recommendations” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 5). These statements lead me to conclude that the Committee acted at arm’s length from the government.

Another type of data came from the archived records of advocacy groups. These groups were usually composed of teachers and parents representing a specific disability group, with the exception of the Council for Exceptional Children that was an umbrella organization for all children with disabilities. This group had a membership drawn mainly from educators working in school districts advocating for programs and services for multiple categories of disability. Single disability advocacy groups included the Ontario Association for Children with Learning
Disabilities, Ontario Association for Children with Mental Retardation, and the Ontario Association for the Physically Handicapped.

**The Web of Disability**

In this section, I discuss the discourses in the web of Disability. The discourses of disability can be broadly grouped as discourses that identify disability as a permanent characteristic and those discourses that define disability as socially constructed. The discourses that identify disability as permanent are evident at the beginning of the period of study. These are deficit and deviance. The discourses changed during the period of study. Disability was subsequently defined as socially constructed. These discourses were difference, a dimension of diversity and ability. The discourses of learning disabilities serve as an example of how the discourses of disability played out in the school setting. First, I will outline each of these discourses that defined Disability and how these discourses changed. Following the description of each discourse, I will outline how the ideologies of liberalism, conservatism, or scientific rationalism, were reflected in these discourses. The chapter closes with a summary of the changing discourses in the web of Disability.

**Deficit**

In the 1960s, abnormality was identified as a “handicap” or “disability” (Ontario Advisory Council on the Physically Handicapped, 1976). Abnormality (disability) was a comparative term related to normal. Normal meant consensus and adherence to a limited set of socially defined characteristics (Hartley, 2006, p. 101). At the beginning of the period of study, psychologists were instrumental in defining normal mothers, fathers, families, and children (Gleason, 2003). Waltraud Ernst (2006) defined the norm as a standard, or rule, or principle, or a set of implicit social rules to be complied with (p. 2). In the early years of the study, the norm was taken for granted and the emphasis was on the abnormal because it was different (Brock, 2003). Abnormality or disability referred to any behavior or appearance that violated social norms, rules, or laws (Brock, 2003). Persons with disabilities did not conform to the idealized body or mind. These idealized social constructions of normal were “equated with the idealized and more socially acceptable, healthy, Anglo-Celtic, middle-class child” (Ernst, 2006, p. 6;
Gleason, 2003, p. 104; Hartley, 2006, p. 101). The idealized mind held high ability and was generally believed to hold Anglo-Saxon values.

Disability was also captured within scientific-medical-psychological descriptors that focussed on the individual’s deficit (Reid & Valle, 2004, p. 470). “Handicap” or “disability” was seen as an individual, permanent illness or impairment that required prevention or amelioration through medical, biological, or genetic intervention, or through therapy, rehabilitation services, and technical support (Dejong, 1979). This deficit discourse focused on sickness, treatment, and rehabilitation. Disability was a pervasive and permanent pathological impairment or deficit (Derksen, 1980, p. 4; Frattura & Topinka, 2006, p. 334), or an illness to be measured and labeled according to the variance from the “normal state.”

**Deviance**

Persons who were different from the dominant, white, Anglo image in the dimensions of race, gender, culture, language, religion, or disability were not accepted by society and were discriminated against in access to citizenship rights, employment equity, legal status, etc. The identity of disability was used to justify inequality and discrimination by associating disability with deficiency and deviance (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004).

Exclusion and ghettoization of disability has its roots in the association between external appearance and the internal character (Hartley, 2006). Idealized body types were paralleled with the idea of good citizens. The person who was disabled was also believed to be a criminal (Hartley, 2006, p. 102). This idea provided fuel for the eugenics movement in the 1920s and 1930s. Eugenicists believed they were social engineers and that it was a civic responsibility to separate the fit from the unfit (Hartley, 2006, p. 111; p. 2; Rioux, 1994; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Waltraub Ernst (2006) states that the eugenics movement rested on a belief that it was a civic responsibility to separate out the unfit members of society and to prevent the propagation of individuals that society deemed to be undesirable and unproductive (Winzer, 1993, p. 293). Consequently, during the time of eugenics, many persons with disabilities were sterilized or put to death.
Disability was linked to conceptions of deviance and criminality and social menace (Wolfensberger, 1972). Wolfensberger identified the historical archetype of “The Deviant Individual” as one of several archetypes or social identities applied to persons with a disability. Archetype identities are characterized by a lack of respect for the person. The “Deviant Individual” archetype preyed on society’s fear of becoming abnormal or the fear that deviant persons were criminals. Deviant persons were believed to be threats to the personal safety or property of others and were characterized as devoid of human emotions. Discourses represented children with disabilities as deviant. For example, “the child is not capable of loving, not capable of understanding” (Editor, 1965a, May). During the period of study (1965-1980), deviant persons were controlled in institutions or, in the case of special education, in segregated settings (Manzer, 1985, p. 67).

These beliefs in the segregation of children identified as disabled were sanctioned in the Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario (1950), commonly known as the Hope Commission. This Commission studied education in Ontario and affirmed the continued organization of special education outside of regular education. Children with visible handicaps, as in physical disabilities, blindness, or deafness, had special schools and programs apart from the regular education classroom. In 1965, special education classes were identified as Auxiliary classes. This designation meant an educational program that was separate from the regular education program. The Hope Commission further supported the importance of medical and psychological diagnoses to determine eligibility for special education. This meant that children identified as abnormal would not have access to the regular curriculum, but would have access to a different education.

Social inequalities were ignored or justified based on the ideologies of liberalism and conservatism. Ethical liberalism favoured the ethic of charity that existed for those who were deserving, such as persons whose body or mind placed them outside the boundaries of normal (Manzer, 1985, p. 49).

The conservative ideology justified social inequality within a community. Persons belong to communities of family, ethnicity, race, and class (Manzer, 1994, p. 15). These communities transmit the ideals of good citizenship. Persons who hold conservative beliefs have a reverence
for tradition and accept the hierarchical organization of society as natural (Johnston, 1997). Each individual, whatever their rank, performs the duties and responsibilities associated with that situation, because each individual is part of the whole and serves a larger, nobler purpose (Johnston, 1996, p. 53).

Both the liberal and conservative ideologies held beliefs that persons with disabilities needed to be controlled. Within the liberal ideology, the deviance of individuals must be controlled in order to maintain domestic public order (Manzer, 1985, p. 67). From the conservative position, deviant individuals must be controlled because of the perceived threats to the personal safety or property rights of others (Manzer, 1985). One method of social control was institutionalization. In Ontario, regional residential hospitals were often isolated from the community and residents lived there for life. For children with “mental retardation” or emotional disturbance, these hospitals offered lifetime residency with minimal educational programs. These programs trained girls in domestic tasks and boys in agricultural tasks with rudimentary reading and mathematics completing the program (Hackett, 1966). Segregation created by the institution replicated the segregation of special education and vocational programs from regular education programs in publicly funded schooling.

In the 1960s, disability was represented as a permanent intrinsic deficit that was a burden to society. Society was stratified and persons with disabilities were at the bottom of the social and educational strata. Disability was constructed by discourses of deficit, deviance, and charity. These discourses worked together to construct disability as a permanent biological characteristic of the person. The regular education system constructed an environment whereby failure was assured for those who did not learn through conventional methods or who could not meet the expectations of the regular classroom. Students with learning disabilities were identified as disabled and were marginalized because they could not meet these demands. The discourses worked together to reinforce a belief that learning disabilities were abnormal and to be feared and rejected. Rick, a highly intelligent and very articulate twenty-year-old with learning disabilities, described the alienation and rejection he experienced both socially and in school: “I have felt sorry for myself, bewildered and helpless that I couldn’t fit in” (Kronick, 1973, Summer).
**Difference**

Between 1968 and 1970, the discourses of disability changed. The stigmatizing, perjorative language of inferiority changed. Disability was constructed in discourses that reflected the belief that disability was socially constructed.

In *The Report of the Provincial Committee on the Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario*, titled *Living and Learning*, known as the Hall-Dennis Report (Hall & Dennis, 1968), disability was identified as being socially constructed. The person was disabled as a result of limitations created by the environment or the situation, not an intrinsic deficit within the person. The Hall-Dennis Report was commissioned in the mid-1960s by Premier William Davis of the Ontario government and therefore had significant authority. “William Davis, who succeeded [Premier] Robarts in 1971, proved to be a right-wing progressive” (White, 1985, p. 282). He was noted for his interest in various technological developments that promised to make education more efficient, the creation of new universities such as Trent University and Brock University and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (Brehaut, 1984; Fleming, 1971a, p. 33). The committee Co-Chairs were Lloyd Dennis and Justice Emmett Hall. Lloyd Dennis began his career as a teacher in Toronto, became a social studies consultant, then a principal. After the release of the report, he spent many years advocating for the recommendations in the report. Justice Emmett Hall was described as an “establishment radical” (Gruending, 2005). Dennis Gruending (2005) characterized him as a libertarian judge who “was a justice seeker who opposed bigotry, hatred, and ignorance with all of his impressive strength and persuasion.”

Previously, the normal condition was identified as conformity to white, middle class, able-bodied characteristics. Persons who did not demonstrate these characteristics were not valued by society. The term “special education” had previously meant “not normal education.” In the Hall-Dennis Report, “special” meant unique and was not a stigmatizing term. Disability was constructed as difference and difference was valued.

This policy text contained a section on Special Learning Situations instead of the more common title of Special Education. The title moved the focus from the individual child’s deficits to the deficiencies of the learning environment. Further, the focus moved from the majority of students in the regular classroom to the marginalized minority in special education. Elise Frattura and
Carol Topinka (2006) identify that focusing on the majority of students leaves the marginalized student unexamined. The Hall-Dennis Report shifted the lens to the minority and the unequal practices directed at the students with the disability identity. The separation of students with “mental retardation” or learning disabilities from other students resulted in a “stigma of failure” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 13) or a belief that failure was a moral deficiency like an “unforgivable sin” (p. 101). The Hall-Dennis Report troubled the previous beliefs that disability was a devalued deviance. This report focused on student outcomes, not the structures and procedures of special education. Through visual imagery, the isolating effects of an abnormal identity was effectively presented in a picture of two boys, approximately six years old, in a classroom.

Figure 3: Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 100.

In the foreground, is an aboriginal boy sitting at his wooden desk. On his lap is a black and white dog. The dog’s front paws are on the desk. The little boy has his hands around the dog’s paws. The message is that the boy and his dog are close friends. The boy isn’t interacting
with any other children, although there is another boy slightly behind and off to the side in the photo. Both boys have their eyes on a point (or person) in front and slightly to the right of them. I infer they are looking at the teacher. Using this photo in the special education section of the report shows that gender (boys) and culture (aboriginal) were most frequently represented in special education classes and would, therefore, be labeled as disabled by the school system. The two boys do not appear to be “abnormal” and this reinforces the subjectivity of identifying children as disabled.

In addition to describing the isolation associated with the socially constructed identity of disability, images of fear, misery, and loneliness reinforced the feelings associated with exclusion: “On the fringes of the happy classroom crowd sits a lonely little boy confronted with the almost impossible task of finding his way through a bewildering world. He is frightened. He is miserable. He is made to feel different” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p.101). Other descriptors were that children with special needs were “misfits, rejects, and losers in our educational system” (p. 101). Further, this text identified the serious negative outcomes for children who were unsuccessful in school. Disability was caused by the “rigid” and “insensitive” general education system in which “many children must fall by the wayside, with some acceptable up–to-the-minute label attached to explain their unforgivable sin of failure” (p. 101). Disability as socially constructed stood in contrast to the previous discourse which held that disability was a permanent biological characteristic of the student that was devalued both in social and school status. In the Hall-Dennis Report, disability was now a valued difference. To be different was to be a “normal” child and to be “special” (as in special education) meant to be “unique” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 101).

Difference as a unique and valued attribute was a metaphor for the layout of the Hall-Dennis Report that departed from a “normal” committee report. The report was oversized and presented in “landscape” orientation, whereas most policy texts were printed in portrait orientation. The front and back covers are in colour and showed six children, all white, approximately 6-10 years old, running through a grassy area near some shrubs and trees. The area appears to be a wooded area. They are different in size, age, and gender but appear to be playing and running together as a group. The picture gives an impression that they are running
toward something. Based on the other imagery in the report, they may be running toward their future. See Figure 4.

![Image of children running](image_url)

**Figure 3: Hall & Dennis, 1968, Cover**

Black and white photos evoke the image of austereness and feelings of sadness. The children on the covers are laughing while they are running suggesting they are carefree. They might be a group of friends. In contrast, the little boy with his dog appears frightened and isolated. The imagery is that to be disabled is to be isolated and sad.

When comparing the two photos, the representation of difference as interesting and joyful is clear. The first picture is in black and white while the pictures on the cover were in colour. Colour approximates natural life and also evokes feelings of happiness. Among the children on the front cover there were differences in gender, age, physical characteristics. But the children were more alike than different. This discourse meant that similarities and differences among children was normal.
Differences in children were also evident in the black and white collage of children’s faces. This collection of pictures served as a reminder that the focus of the report was on children from many different races that populated Ontario schools. Children do not conform to the stereotypical ideal. The following pictures were used in the report to show children’s diversity.

![Collage of children's faces]

Figure 4: Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 47

Photos of children in and out of school, and primary children’s colourful art and diagrams were extensive in the Hall-Dennis Report (1968). Bright colours and smiling faces represent difference as celebratory.
A Dimension of Diversity

The Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children (CELDIC) report (Roberts & Lazure, 1970) noted that “[c]urrently in schools difference is regarded as deficiency” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 116). This report emphasized the shared characteristics of children, e.g., “all children are exceptional and each is a unique individual. All children have certain strengths and certain weaknesses” (p. 2). Disability was a dimension of childhood diversity just as gender, race, or age.

The CELDIC report (Roberts & Lazure, 1970) was sponsored by the federal government, advocacy associations, and a private clinic in London England. Contributions from the Departments of Education in the various provinces were also made, and this was enabled because the Honorable William Davis was the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of
Education in Canada. The Council of Ministers is a national organization, founded in 1967, to represent the interests of Canadian education. The breadth of sponsoring organizations illustrates a broad shared belief that the learning needs of children were situated in a constellation of social service needs including health care, protection, justice, and financial and mental health. Further, the sponsoring organizations supported the belief that the identity of disability resulted in marginalization. The report estimated that approximately one million Canadian children needed social services, education, treatment, and care (approximately 12% of the population up to 19 years of age. Hence the report is often known as: One Million Children. The cover continued to repeat the words “one million children” in white, orange, blue, and green letters on a black background across the entire page. One million is considered to be a very large number and repetition and the use of colour in the words “one” and “million” is a powerful strategy for emphasis. (See Figure 6).

The design and layout of the text exemplified difference. Departing from the typical format of a report, the book uses eight inch square pages. In each section, the pages are bold, primary colors like red, yellow, blue, and green. Pictures of children as individuals or in small groups begin each section. At the end of one section, a page in yellow hue shows two young children walking with lunch pails down a long well worn path, perhaps walking to school (Figure 8). Line drawings of children are abundant. On this green coloured paper is a sketch of young boys intently staring at something not visible to the reader (Figure 9). Nothing about these children would suggest whether they were normal or abnormal children making the point that “normal” and “abnormal” are not easily defined because they are subjective and socially constructed categories.
Figure 6: Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children Report, 1970, Front Cover
Figure 7: Roberts & Lazure, 1970 p. 152

Figure 8: Roberts & Lazure, 1970 p. 312
Disability was redefined as socially constructed. It was not a biological, medical, or psychological definition” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 89). This meant that the focus shifted to the environmental or attitudinal limitations that caused a person to be disabled in some situations. For example, two children with exactly the same characteristics and age “might be regarded as a slow learner in one middle-class, professional neighbourhood and might pass unnoticed in an inner-city school” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 89). Disability was a socially constructed problem caused by “an imbalance between the child and his environment” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 21) in one or two areas of development, or a “fail[ure] to develop a required skill at the appropriate time” (p. 21), or caused by gaps in social services that could have ameliorated the problem earlier (The Ontario Committee, 1970, p. 102).

The social construction of disability also meant that society was responsible for providing services. Significant gaps in service provision were evident in a case study of boys who were identified with emotional and learning disorders and were residents of a training school (The Ontario Committee, 1970, p. 102). Their disabilities were the result of the community environment and its lack of services rather than a deficit within the individual child. Agencies and institutions operated in a reactive mode waiting until the child had experienced school failure and was in trouble with the law. Preventative services were not available.
The shift in discourses links to an evolution in the ideology of liberalism. Economic liberalism evolved to a more humane version called ethical liberalism because the unfettered competition in the marketplace sometimes left citizens vulnerable to poverty and destitution (Manzer, 1994; 1985). The growth in the policies of the welfare state in the 1960s marked this shift in ideology. Society became responsible for its vulnerable citizens, whereas in economic liberalism, individuals were responsible for their own success and welfare. Ethical liberalism is characterized by a focus on the development of the individual.

As the decade continued, the discourse of difference was evident in pictures of an adult with two children used by The Ontario Association for the Mentally Retarded in 1976. In this picture, the adult and children appear to be interacting and behaving in ways which appear to be “normal.” The differences in gender, age, and physical characteristics of the children, appear to be normal in society. One child was being held by the adult who is talking to the child and holding the child's arm. The other child is holding a large stuffed toy. This visual represents that differences in children are normal.

**Differing Abilities**

From 1975-1980, the discourses of disability changed to a discourse of differing abilities. In 1978, the needs of students with giftedness were identified as an educational problem that could be disabling in certain situations and, therefore, these students also required specialized programming. This construction sought to debunk the myth that students with giftedness would be successful in regular education without special attention. “Like other handicaps (e.g., perceptual difficulties) giftedness is a problem which can best be treated through early identification and appropriate preventative measures in order to counteract negative habits and experiences that can result from lack of attention” (ABC, 1978, p. 5).

These differing abilities included students with advanced abilities and talents that could be thought of as superiority. Children were described as leaders, innovators, scientists, and artists “who will release us from the cycle of wars and human savagery” (Editor, 1979a). The imagery is of a hero or saviour to society who is unique, dynamic, and charismatic. The careers described for students with giftedness were prestigious and valued in the current society. Students with giftedness were believed to have better health and physical superiority, to be more perceptive
and emotionally intense than the average child, in contrast to the myth that they were unhealthy (Editor, 1979a).

Audrey King (1979) a psycho-educational consultant with the psychology department at the Ontario Crippled Children’s Center in Toronto, argued for a focus on “ability.” This challenged earlier beliefs that disability meant inability, passivity, and helplessness.

The existence of an elite class is supported by the conservative ideology that believed a class of leaders and authorities were necessary for a balanced society. The economic liberal ideology believed that leaders would emerge from competition. These leaders would be those with the highest level of skills and abilities.

**Learning Disabilities**

Learning disabilities served as the example of how the discourses of disability played out in the school setting. Beliefs in schools about students with learning disabilities paralleled the beliefs about disability in society. The culture of the school was based on middle-class values, sanctioned behaviours, and textbook language which identified what was considered “normal.” Teachers were from middle-class backgrounds and had middle-class aspirations. In school, a normal student was one who could master the behavioural, linguistic, and academic expectations of the regular classroom. Children who looked or behaved differently experienced school failure in the “normal” classroom. “The children who “fail[ed] to meet the standard demanded by the education system” were given medicalized diagnoses” (Editor, 1965, March). Diagnoses were made based on measures of intelligence and/or achievement and the student was given a medicalized label. These labels really meant a form of disability and came with consequences (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 34). Labelling a student as abnormal or deviant meant shame, ridicule, and exclusion (Brock, 2003). Students with a label of learning disabilities were unsuccessful with the instructional methods and curriculum in the general education classroom and were thought to be permanently deficient people. They were believed to be inferior in intelligence and suited only for the workplace, not higher education. Parents of children with learning disabilities reacted against this narrow delimitation of success and value. [We] “gauge their success in terms of human value” [not academic success] (Editor, February, 1966, p. 4).
The identity of abnormal stigmatized students. Parents “yearn[ed] to have their children lead a life of acceptance and understanding” (Editor, February, 1966, p. 4).

Students who were labeled as abnormal were segregated from the higher achieving students or were excluded from regular education altogether. This practice reflected the historical practice of preserving a highly challenging, regular classroom free of distractions for students without disabilities (Christenson & Dorn, 1997). These segregated programs had less value than the regular program. The main criteria for returning to the regular class [from special education] “was improved self control, improved relationships with peers, and enhanced self-concept [not academic improvement]” (Gill & Silverman, 1973, p. 105).

Students with learning disabilities were transferred to a special education class or vocational school and encouraged to leave school at the age of sixteen, instead of having access to the college entrance stream in secondary school (Editor, 1967, October). Some could apply for vocational assistance from the Ministry of Community and Social Services after the age of sixteen. Parents of children with learning disabilities could send their children to a private school, often in the United States, with the costs sometimes reimbursed by the Ontario government. Denying students access to regular and higher education had serious life long consequences. The stratification of students with learning disabilities into a different program resulted in their unemployability, reduced life chances for economic success, and virtually ensured their position in a lower socioeconomic class. These students would continue to struggle to achieve literacy, numeracy, and gainful employment.

In-school stratification reproduced the stratification of society by class, race, and socioeconomic characteristics. “It has become readily apparent that many children, who, for one reason or another, may be somewhat different from the so-called norm are treated by our service system as second class citizens” (Henteleff, 1974, September). Parents recognized the inequalities experienced by students with learning disabilities. The discourse of inequality links to the discourse of equal access in the web of Equality. By 1967, a new secondary school curriculum stated that children with learning disabilities were allowed to continue in the college entrance stream, opening up the opportunity to higher education (Editor, 1967, October).
Learning disability was also constructed within a discourse of deviance. This discourse resulted in the lack of support to keep students with learning disabilities in the regular classroom. The inability or unwillingness of teachers to enable success for students with learning differences was reflected in the newsletter articles of the Perceptual Post, the newsletter of the Ontario Association of Children with Learning Disabilities (OACLD) in 1966. One example is an article NH: From One Parent to Another. The author identified that “some children’s neurological handicaps are mild enough for them to remain and achieve success in regular classrooms. This is rarely possible unless the teacher is unusually capable and sensitive to the neurologically handicapped child’s needs” (Editor, February, 1966, p. 3). Further, the belief in disability as deviant meant that schools adopted a “gate keeping” role to guard and protect access to regular education classrooms or specialized special education programs. Special education programs were developed by some local school districts and were limited in availability. Compulsory education notwithstanding, students with disabilities could not be guaranteed admission to regular or special education, nor to a program that addressed their learning differences. Students could be subjected to institutionalized exclusion. Students with a disability had to appear before an “admissions committee.” The student could be denied access to school if, in the opinion of a specially appointed panel of local education and medical authorities, that the student was “unable by reason of mental or physical handicap to profit by instruction in an elementary school” (Hayward, 2004). These students might also be expelled from school and end up with home tutoring. “The child’s school experience is marked with expulsion from public school, several trials in private school, and home tutoring with mother” (Editor, 1966 February, p. 3).

Sally Tomlinson (1982) stated that categorizing students out of normal education denies them “the opportunities for occupational success, social mobility, privilege, and advancement. The rationale for exclusion has been that these children were defective, handicapped, or have special needs” (p. 6).

Learning disabilities reflected the changing discourses of disability. The meaning of learning disabilities moved from an intrinsic deficit to being socially constructed and disadvantaged by the learning environment. Dr. Samuel Kirk, in 1963, legitimized this invisible condition as a problem with learning and not a biological, neurological, permanent deficit. This invisible disability was often labeled as neurological impairment or perceptual handicap, or brain
damage (Editor, 1966, February, p. 1). This diagnosis differentiated this condition from “mental retardation” that was believed to be a permanent, biological deficit. For example, “It is now recognized that many of these children [who] have suffered neurological impairment, cannot function in a regular classroom situation. This damage has left them with a learning disability.” Brain damage suggested that the rest of the student was not disabled. Only a small portion of their brain was not functioning as it should.

Kirk’s diagnosis fueled advocacy for students with learning disabilities. In 1963, the same year as the diagnosis, four Toronto parents of children with learning disabilities, Doreen Kronick, Harry Wineberg, Robert Shannon, and Alan Howarth, decided to form the Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities. This was the beginning of the Learning Disabilities Association (LDA) in Canada, and paralleled the branch of LDA in the United States. This group claimed that the predominant instructional methods and the emphasis on reading and writing were causing significant challenges to their children. Their learning difficulties were not an intrinsic deficit and caused them to be labeled as abnormal. Learning disability was described as a hidden handicap, mainly evident in school, resulting in frustration levels and sometimes aggression and withdrawal (Editor, February, 1966, p. 3). Learning disability was not a permanent, totalizing deficit as a characteristic of the student.

In the mid to late 1970s, the OACLD invoked an earlier image of disability as deviance and used the discourse of fear of deviance to draw attention to learning disabilities. The discourse of disability as a social burden was also resurrected to predict that students with untreated learning disabilities would have a lifetime of medical and social problems, e.g., “[that] forty percent of persons with untreated learning disabilities would be in mental health clinics, learning disabilities was a precursor to schizophrenia, and that many persons would become law breakers, alcoholics, delinquents, or are maladjusted” (Bailey, 1973). The predicted societal costs included the inability to pay taxes, additional health problems, links to motor vehicle accidents, the inability to adjust emotionally at home or in business and industry, or the potential for becoming a resident of the prison system (OACLD, 1978). Using an early deficit discourse for learning disabilities was in contrast to the prevailing discourses about disability. At this time, disability was a social construction and a marker of difference among students.
The discourse of learning disabilities as a permanent deficit was tempered by the discourse of rehabilitation that opened up after the Second World War (Rioux & Bach, 1994). This discourse was applied to children with disabilities and remedial programs in schools. The stated intent of special education was to remediate students’ learning needs in a special class and then return the student to the regular class (Editor, 1967, January). For example, a guest speaker to the OACLD meeting in May 1965 identified the topic as “Music — a link in the rehabilitation of handicapped or exceptional children” (Editor, 1965, May). Therefore the intent was that remedial programs would rehabilitate the student with the goal of return to the general education classroom. The idea of rehabilitation was intended to soften the discourse of disability as a permanent condition and a social burden. If persons with disabilities could be rehabilitated and returned to the productive mainstream classroom, their intrinsic deficit would be cured. However, in reality, the return to the regular education classroom rarely occurred for students with disabilities.

The school’s special education classes were often identified as “remedial classes, protected classes, transitional classes, and [or] terminal classes” (Roberts & Lazare, 1970, p. 94). These labels created an image of serious illness, hopelessness, and deviance from the normal or regular education classes.

In 1978, the OACLD challenged beliefs that students with learning disabilities could be remediated or cured of a learning disability (OACLD, 1978, p. 8). The Association pointed out that repeated failure and frustration results in poor self image which is a life-long problem. Learning disability was identified as a gendered disability because ninety percent of all children with learning disabilities were boys (OACLD, 1978).

In 1978, the government released draft special education legislation that included definitions of the exceptionalities. The discourses of learning disabilities became reflective of the discourses of measurement linking the webs of disability and management. This connection will be discussed more fully in the section on the web of management.

In the web of Disability, the early discourses (up to about 1968) represented disability as a permanent deficit intrinsic to the individual who was viewed as deviant and a social burden to be excluded or be treated as an object of charity. In the early years of the period under study,
discourses reflected the beliefs that persons with disabilities were less valued. These discourses were replaced by discourses that identified disability as socially constructed (about 1968-1970). This was followed by defining disability as equal participation [?] followed by a discourse of abilities (mid to late 1970s). The connection of learning disabilities with equal outcomes signaled a new meaning of equality for children with disabilities, moving from equality of inputs as in equal educational opportunity discourses, and focusing on the attainment of outcomes that are the same as for students in the regular classroom. The discourse of learning disabilities provides a glimpse of how the discourses of disabilities played out in the school setting. Initially, learning disability was represented as an intrinsic problem. Then, as a problem with the learning environment (classroom, instruction). The discourses of learning disabilities changed from the web of Disability to the web of Management about 1978. A separate definition for learning disabilities clearly separated this type of disability from mental retardation.

However, the idea of deficit from the ideal of “normal” and the idea that disabilities need control remained central. These discourses were supported by the ideologies of conservatism, liberalism, and scientific rationalism.

Conservative thinkers characterized normal as conformity to the body image of White, Anglo, males. These persons were from the middle or upper class and had similar values. Further, compliant behavior was normal behavior (Holmes, 1998, p. 121). Liberal thinkers identified a normal person as one who was a rational individual (Olssen et al., 2004, p. 75) with the ability and motivation to be competitive in the marketplace. Scientific rationalist thinkers believed normality was measurable and quantifiable using scientifically valid instruments. These instruments also measured the amount of difference from the “normal” state.

Not only was disability a measure of difference from the normal state, but was also represented as deviant. Ideological positions on reasons for controlling deviance varied. Thinkers within the conservative ideology placed a high value on personal property and personal safety. Persons with disabilities were feared and thought to be criminals who threatened safety and, therefore, needed to be controlled in institutions or at least away from general society (Manzer, 1985). Liberal thinkers on the other hand, believed in control of criminals and deviants to maintain public order (Olssen et al., 2004, p. 76).
### IDEOLOGICAL AGREEMENTS ABOUT DISABILITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourses &amp; Meaning</th>
<th>conservatist reasoning</th>
<th>liberal reasoning</th>
<th>Scientific rationalism reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability as Deficit–difference from Normal</td>
<td>normal is conformity values, middle- or upper-class status and a fit, white, Anglo, male body compliance, in behavior. compliance with traditional values physical and mental ability</td>
<td>normal is a rational individual who is able to complete and be successful in the marketplace</td>
<td>normal can be scientifically measured and quantified assessment instruments measure the amount of difference from normality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability as Deviance and needs to be controlled</td>
<td>control to protect the safety and property of others</td>
<td>Control to maintain public order</td>
<td>deviance is hereditary and reproduction needs to be controlled links to eugenics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10: Ideological Agreements About Disability

**The Web of Management**

The web of Management is defined by discourses of measurement, legislation, standardization, and efficiency. Measurement of a student’s ability and intelligence and citing incidence rates formed a central part of defining disability. Standardization was evident in the movement towards defining categories of exceptionality, teacher competencies, and instructional strategies. Legislation permitting school districts to provide special education became more compelling until mandatory legislation was introduced in 1980. Institutions such as school districts expanded and refined their bureaucratic organizational structures and procedures related to special education during the period under study.
Measurement

The discourses of measurement were evident in the collection and reporting of data on incidence rates of disabilities, in the criteria used to define disability, in the formulas used to provide funding to special education classes, and in the testing of students using standardized assessment instruments.

The collection of statistics on incidence rates of disabilities was common. As early as “1908, Dr. McMurchy conducted a census of the feeble minded children in Ontario” (Anglin & Braaten, 1978, p. 2). R. H. Shannon, President of the OACLID, declared that there was an estimated 100,000 children in Ontario with learning disabilities (Editor, 1965, March).

Statistics were kept by school districts on the number of students, teachers, and classes dedicated to students with disabilities. There were four classes for children who were hard of hearing, nine classes for students with cardiac and asthmatic problems, four classes for students with limited vision, and twenty classes for students with crippling conditions who required wheelchairs (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 103). Incidence rates were generally accepted in the health and educational systems.

There is fairly general agreement that approximately 3% of the school-aged population might be considered mentally retarded as defined by IQ and educational needs. Of these, 2.5% fall into the educable range. 0.04% have IQs below 50 and are regarded as trainable. One in a thousand retarded children are completely dependent. (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 57.)

However, measurement of incidence rates was a contested discourse. There was a lack of agreement about defining criteria. The criteria used by professionals varied. “The incidence of emotional disorders ranges from 2.2% to 4.9% because of the divergence in definitions of emotional disturbances. Figures suggest that 10% of the school aged population have a specific learning disorder. Some estimates run to 25%” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 57).

The CELDIC report (1970) calculated special education need. Data from the 1966 census formed the basis for calculations which extrapolated that between 840,000 and 1,260,000 children were in need of services. The average number of one million, suggested an extremely
high number of neglected children under the present administrative organization of school districts.

The inconsistency of defining incidence rates continued to be a problem as late as 1980. The authors of a study into learning disabilities concluded that there was “a lack of consensus in a [consistent] definition, etiology, diagnostic procedure, measures, treatments and prognosis” (MacIntyre, Keeton, & Agard, 1980, p. 8). Further, these authors stated that “the definition of learning disability is as much social and political as it is clinical” (p. 13). “There is no empirical evidence that learning disability exists as a clinical entity” (p. 15). These comments clearly showed the contested nature of the construct of learning disabilities.

Instructional time was also measured. For example, according to Ontario Regulation 191, 1974, 46 (1) (c), a special education teacher was employed to provide 180 minutes of instruction in a student’s home if the principal “is satisfied that home instruction is required” (Ontario Department of Education, 1974).

Measurement was evident in the financing of special education programs and services. School districts that provided special education programs and services were provided with additional funding calculated by formula. The system of “weighting factors” was announced in 1973, as an incentive for boards to expand or open special education programs (Editor, 1974, March). The formula placed a numerical value on each type of program and service and the school district received these additional grants.

The most predominant measurement discourse was evident in the quantifying of student achievement. Student achievement was quantified by years and months:

To make this somewhat clearer, take a boy age 7 years 10 months who is assessed in 1972 and achieves a grade level of 1.7 in reading. He is reassessed at the age of 8 years 10 months and at that time his grade level has risen to 2.2. (Hawke, 1975b, September.)

These numbers were based on a presumption of a quantifiable amount of knowledge and skills gained by “normal” students during a twelve-month year. Using this scale defined the achievement gap between the child with disabilities and the presumed “normal” child.
The defining of student ability using standardized assessments was also a very strong part of the measurement discourse. The most widely used assessment instruments quantified intelligence, achievement, and student potential. “To diagnose a learning disability, a proper neurological examination, psychological testing, language evaluation, educational diagnosis, and a psychiatric examination is necessary” (Wayne, 1978, p. 22).

Children with intelligence quotients below fifty were not permitted in public schools until the 1960s (Anglin & Braaten, 1978, p. 21). Children with exceptional ability were identified with giftedness (Canadian Committee, 1971). The reverence of psychometrics whereby science could “objectively establish through testing the limits of each student's potential and then provide the appropriate curriculum” resulted in a large-scale testing regime based, to a large part, on the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) test (Stevens & Wood, 1987, p. 162). The IQ test was a standardized method for identifying knowledge and ability. It was believed to be an accurate and unbiased measurement of potential ability even if students were not achieving at that level.

This discourse of measurement links to the web of professionalism because professionals had the authority to quantify and interpret measures of ability and achievement. The importance of these tests for quantification and categorization is evident in the following comment “If achievement tests were eliminated, there would be no other objective way of discriminating the abilities of people” (Johansen, 1974).

Medical and psychological experts used the authority of numbers and statistics gained through measurement to justify diagnoses of disability and the subsequent treatment of those with disabilities (Ernst, 2006, p. 124; Rioux, 1994, p. 70). This authority is informed by scientific rationality. Within this ideology were the assumptions of order and predictability based on the natural sciences, especially physics (Astman, 1984).

Scientific rationalism claimed to be able to use empirical scientific methods to understand and solve the problems of life and predict human behavior (Armstrong, 2003; Astman, 1984). The authority and prominence of science was energized in the United States with the Cold War in the 1950s and the race to surpass the Soviet Union (Stevens & Wood, 1987). Therefore, this ideology was strong during the 1960s and early 1970s. Research used experimental methods that favoured objective, observable, dispassionate observations and controlled interventions (Fuentes,
This reflected wide-spread beliefs that the natural sciences could solve all of society’s problems, including social engineering to create a more perfect social class (Tomlinson 1982; Tyack and Cuban, 1995).

**Legislation**

The legislative discourse was evident from the beginning of the period of study. The legislative discourse was about compliance. Mandatory legislation was intended to remove the opportunity for individual [school district] decision making otherwise known as voluntary compliance.

Ontario Regulation 339 provided for thirteen types of classes that could be created for students with disabilities, including classes for students with perceptual handicaps (learning disabilities) (Ontario Department of Education, 1966). Students in each class would have been diagnosed, labeled, and sorted. The Regulation also stated the requirements for admission of students to classes, the teacher qualifications, equipment to be provided, and a financial framework for school districts that operated special education programs (Fleming, 1971a). However, school districts had the opportunity to decline from offering special education programs and be exempt from the regulatory framework of legislation. This voluntary compliance resulted in arbitrary and inconsistent practices in school districts in the 1960s and 1970s. Conformity was an important goal for the provincial government and advocacy groups (Gidney, 2002; Hall & Dennis, 1968; Roberts & Lazure, 1970).

In 1970, school districts were mandated to provide access to all but the most severe cases of mental retardation (Gidney, 2002 p. 153). Despite this regulatory framework, special education was still voluntary for many school districts.

Special education is seen as something tacked on to the basic school program by boards and therefore, real – or imagined – financial limitations, ignorance of the role of special education plays in relation to future national economy, and the priority of establishing new school facilities, constitute major road blocks in the establishment of appropriate services for children. (Ontario Division, 1971, p. 6.)

In the early 1970s, the Department of Education invited the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) into the formal policy-making process. The discourse of mandatory legislation
was strengthened. The Governance committee of the CEC worked very closely with the government throughout the 1970s. In 1972, the legislation discourse moved from voluntary compliance to mandatory compliance “Boards have [had] the opportunity to provide education for every child. Children with unusual learning needs have been neglected or excluded” (Council for Exceptional Children, 1972, p. 8).

In 1972, the CEC, Ontario Division, developed a number of policy statements related to the amalgamation of existing disparate regulations, the coordination of agencies and service programs, increased specialized training for teachers, and adequate funding to continue with the existing, categorically-based system that operated parallel to the regular education system (CEC, 1972). Recommendations for Special Education policy statements were submitted in 1973, by the Policy Statement Committee of the CEC and in 1974, by the Canadian CEC. Mandatory legislation was about consistency and compliance.

A draft of the proposed mandatory legislation was circulated to stakeholders in 1978. The legislation legitimized the existing practices of special education, including definitions for four categories of exceptionality (Editor, 1979b, April). The number of policy texts that focused on mandatory legislation meant that this discourse grew in importance during the 1970s and became the dominant discourse about special education.

The discourse of legislation was another point of agreement among two of the three ideologies. Adherents to the conservative ideology would favour the strong authority and the stability provided by legislation (Johnston, 1997, p. 53). Liberalism is concerned with order and control and would therefore support laws that would strengthen the individual’s autonomy while defining societal order (Olssen et al., 2004, p. 77). Figure 12 identifies the ideological agreements about the discourse of legislation. Science claimed to take a neutral position to questions of morality, religion or secular values because the focus was on extending scientific knowledge. Theories were developed through experimentation and unbiased observation “free from tradition or authorities” (Kirschenmann, 1991, p. 61).
IDEIOLOGICAL AGREEMENTS ABOUT LEGISLATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse</th>
<th>conservativist reasoning</th>
<th>liberal reasoning</th>
<th>Scientific rationalism reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td>for compliance, consistency and stability</td>
<td>societal order and strengthening individual autonomy</td>
<td>legislation is orderly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11: Ideological Agreements About Legislation

**Standardization**

The discourse of standardization related to creating uniformity in bureaucratic roles, responsibilities, and procedures. The discourse was first evident in 1965, in the Ontario Provincial report to the Second Canadian Conference on Children, held in Quebec City. The discussion about educational services for children with disabilities recommended that there should be more sheltered workshops needed to train the educable mentally retarded to be useful citizens, and that schools and school systems should provide increased services for the gifted, the mentally retarded, and some classes within the public school system for emotionally disturbed children (Jones, 1967, p. 5). Special education was described as a set of highly specialized areas of education (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 182).

Throughout the period under study, there was continuous effort toward standardizing the criteria for each of the categories of exceptionality. A session from the CEC conference in 1964 outlined five classifications of learning disability and referred to the “educational management of special learning disabilities” (Deno, 1965). *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* provided medical and psychological criteria used to make a diagnosis. However, in the school setting, each diagnosis did not create a separate category. There were only five categories of exceptionality.

The discourse of standardization next appeared in documents related to quantifying and standardizing teacher competencies. The focus on measurement and quantification of observable behaviours was also evident in the classroom. Behaviour management techniques were
recommended for use with students with disabilities (Huang, 1979; Research Department, 1978). In the 1960s, most programs for children with “mental retardation” were taught using behavior modification techniques (Research Department, 1978, p. 25). The discourses of teaching meant “training behavior” using classical conditioning principles based on the work of Thorndike and the scientific rationalism movement of the 1930s and 1950s.Behaviour management and training was based on operant learning principles. Behaviour was shaped through reinforcement (O’Donnell, D’Amico, Schmid, Reeve, & Smith, 2006, p. 189). Learning was demonstrated by observing desirable behaviours in response to a stimulus. Behaviours that have positive rewards or reinforcement will occur more frequently than those that have negative rewards (O’Donnell et al., 2006, p. 189). These standardized, science-based techniques were designed for classroom control more than academic learning. The discourse of standardizing teaching methods as training behavior links to the discourse of specialized knowledge in the Professionalism web. Only teachers and behavioural scientists would possess the specialized knowledge to teach in this manner.

Part of the professionalism discourse was identifying and quantifying teacher competencies. For example, the idea of national consistency and standards for all teachers and non-teachers appeared in reports by Canadian Committee of the CEC (1974) and the Standards for the Education of Exceptional Children in Canada (SEECC) (Canadian Committee, 1971). The idea of competency reflects the world of business and industry where competency models were very popular during the early 1970s (Competency Model Clearinghouse, 2009). Detailing and describing the specialized knowledge and skills required by the school district standardized professional expertise. Establishing consistent credentialing for professionals and educators was another attempt to standardize credentials and was evidence of the specialized knowledge and skills that professionals possessed. Credentialing means degrees or certificates earned after study in institutions of higher learning and implies specialized knowledge and skills. The focus on credentialing not only supported professionalization but the expanding bureaucracies in school districts were developing consistent quantifiable standards for its skilled professionals. The focus on quantification of credentials presented an image of the school district as rational and fair in its rules, hiring, and promotion practices. But Mouzelis (1967) argued that the requirement for credentials sorts out those with higher levels of education. Those with higher levels of education are typically over-represented in the higher or dominant social classes.
Efficiency

The discourse of efficiency had its roots in beliefs about the factory model of production. The structures, specializations, and routinized procedures of manufacturing became a model for schools and school districts. “[S]chools [run] on the model of efficient factories, with a passive role for learners and management by experts and with cost reduction placed ahead of learning” (Callahan, 1962, cited in Rogoff, Matusov & White, 1999, p. 391).

“Managerial and organizational knowledge for most of the 20th century centered on the structures and the universalism of bureaucracy” (Colado, 2002, p. 165). School districts were examples of a bureaucracy that was organized and functioned according to formalized and prescriptive operational procedures. Bureaucracies are universally “rule-governed, hierarchical and specialized” (Weber, cited in Dobbin, 1994, p. 118). Further, bureaucracies are believed to be rational organizations (Dobbin, 1994, p. 119). This represented the belief in “the one best way, codified, professionalized, and bureaucratized” (Rioux, 1994, p. 23). The replication of the existing patterns of special education provision focused on mainly administrative and bureaucratic functions (Vincent et al., 1996, p. 484).

The school district was often described as a system, suggesting a coherent, well managed, efficient entity that achieved its economic and program goals. “The educational system makes for social cohesiveness, economic efficiency, political stability, and scientific and cultural advancement” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 71) and “the school forms a micro community with its own laws, customs, characteristics, and expectations” (p. 126). These comments suggest that the bureaucracy of the school district operated with a high degree of autonomy.

School districts required more professional and ancillary services as the demand for assessments services grew (Editor, 1965b, January). In education, there was a growth in ancillary professional groups like social workers, psychiatrists, speech therapists, counselors, career officers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, rehabilitation counselors, education welfare officers, and probation officers (Rioux, 1994; Tomlinson, 1982). The fact that the Toronto Board of Education was losing five diagnostic psychologists because of decreased financial resources was a concern for the OACLD in May, 1967. Psychological professionals
were essential to the testing, diagnosis, and categorization cycle that drove special education and provided programs for their children.

The school district was perceived as more than a collection of individuals and programs; it was believed to be a unified entity that was goal directed. The organizational structure, hierarchy of authority, and formalized procedures contributed to bureaucratic efficiency. Efficiency was linked to the maximum amount of work completed with the least amount of materials and expenditures. Bureaucratic efficiency was believed to be rational and legitimate (Alford & Friedland, 1985, p. 180). The bureaucratic structure was replicated in the growing economy of Ontario. Further, the replication of the bureaucratic organization of special education in the United States was a model for Ontario (The Canadian Committee, 1974).

In the 1960s, rural education was conducted in one-room school houses, each administered by a small committee of community members. There was substantial lack of consistency in curriculum, learning materials, teacher salaries, and administrative rules. Increasing demand for schools because of immigration, the baby boom, and the movement of workers to urban centers to work in factories, was the catalyst for expansion of the bureaucracy of the school district. In 1969, the administration of one-room schools was transferred to larger jurisdictional areas like counties and many individual rural schools were amalgamated into larger schools (Gidney, 2002, p. 49). “The total number of administrative units in Ontario [was reduced] from something like 3500 to 230” (Gidney, 2002, p. 39).

This growth was also identified in the Hall-Dennis Report: “[a] massive and still growing bureaucratic structure had settled [in Ontario]” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 26). The expansion of regular education also meant an expansion in the structures and processes of special education because more children required these services. These larger administrative units offered administrative consistency.

Another feature of the bureaucratic organizational model is specialization. School districts provided a class for each category of disability. There was a separate class for students who had cardiac or asthmatic problems, as well as a separate class for students identified as educable mentally retarded (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 103), and for those with emotional or neurological challenges. This appeared to be a very efficient model because those with similar
disabilities were grouped together with the idea that specialized instruction could be provided by specialist teachers. Thomas Skrtic describes the framework for identifying, classifying, and assessing children with special needs, as a “rational-technical initiative designed to make the bureaucracy function more efficiently and distribute resources more effectively” (Skrtic cited in Vincent et al, 1996, p. 480).

The discourse of efficiency was replaced with a discourse of inefficiency in the Hall-Dennis Report, exposing inefficiencies and irregularities within the bureaucracy. The school district was unable to meet demands for service. “Special Education, as it is carried on today in the Ontario educational system, is a welter of complexity, divided authority, blurred responsibility, and a broad spectrum of services unevenly distributed through the province and too frequently inadequate” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 102).

The discourse of inefficiency was continued in the CELDIC report (Roberts & Lazure, 1970). The authors of the report argued that the inability to meet the service needs of children with emotional and learning needs was inefficient. Further, the report argued that classification systems are for “administrative ease and tell little about the child” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 45). The CELDIC report didn’t focus solely on education but looked at the child service systems of health, justice, welfare, and the education system.

The discourse of inefficiency was also found in The Report of the Ontario Committee of the Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children (1970), hereafter known as the Ontario Committee Report. This report focused on a case study of the training school population which was a subset (typically male) of children identified with emotional and learning disorders. Training schools were operated by the Ministry of Community and Social Services and served students labeled as delinquent, drug abusers, rebellious, withdrawn, or school dropouts (Ontario Committee Report, p. 4). The report provided evidence that the current bureaucratic system of services was inadequate and harmful. The report argued that numbers of students needing special education “snowballed” and “both education and the [other] helping services became swamped by the magnitude of the problem” (Ontario Committee Report, 1970, p. 4).
The growth of capitalism was linked to the expansion of the bureaucracy. Theories of rational management predominated educational governance in the late 1960s and 1970s (Manzer, 1994, p. 190). Weber described rationality as methodical and systematic, which exhibited value neutrality based on the objective fact-based discipline of science (Weber, cited in Mouzelis, 1967, p. 19). Science was a guiding principle of efficient organizations and their administration (Dahl, 1947). Bureaucratic efficiency was based on beliefs about scientific rationalism (Welch, 1998; Dobbin, 1994; Mouzelis, 1967).

Both the liberal and conservative perspectives held that the capitalist system was the way to national prosperity, despite the inequalities that it produced. Conservative thinkers accepted the inequalities that resulted from capitalism as the natural organization of society. Liberal thinkers focused on the individual and ignored wider and more fundamental questions of inequality (Vincent et al., 1996, p. 487). In an unregulated marketplace, there is competition and inequalities result. Liberal thinkers believed this was an expected result. These ideologies supported the expansion of the bureaucracy. Bureaucracy was thought to serve the people. Therefore ethical liberalism also supported the growth of the bureaucracy. The discourses of standardization, efficiency, and measurement are part of bureaucratic rationalization that “depends on scientific knowledge, technical capacity, and administrative expertise” (Alford & Friedland, 1985, p. 164). Scientific rationalist thinkers supported the bureaucratic organization because it was believed to be rational and objective. Discourses about quantification would be supported because of the belief in the supremacy of numerical facts. The following Figure charts the ideological agreements about management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse</th>
<th>conservatist reasoning</th>
<th>liberal reasoning</th>
<th>Scientific rationalism reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standardization, efficiency, measurement as part of bureaucracy and</td>
<td>capitalism as a way to prosperity-supported social hierarchy</td>
<td>capitalism as a way to prosperity: unregulated marketplace, competition, and free</td>
<td>bureaucracy is rational authority of pure sciences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The web of Professionalism was defined by discourses of professional authority, specialized knowledge, hierarchy of authority, and benevolent humanitarianism. The discourse of professional authority conferred the power to sort and classify students and determine treatment or school placement. Specialized knowledge was a characteristic of the professional identity. A hierarchy of status existed among professionals, meaning that certain groups of professionals were viewed as more “expert” than others. Benevolent humanitarianism was a discourse of patronizing children with disabilities while appearing to care for and respond to their needs.

**Professional authority**

The authority of the medical or psychological professionals in health care and education became accepted and considered as common sense in the early twentieth century. Educational and health care professionals, in effect, had the authority to interpret normality, and to define and classify others as abnormal (Skrtic, 2006, p. 41; Vincent et al., 1996, p. 483). Medical and psychological professionals diagnosed and categorized disabilities in students. Students were characterized in terms of the attributes that inhibited learning (Ainscow, 1994, p. 19). However these medicalized labels were “of little use to the teacher in planning a suitable program for the individual child” (Gill & Silverman, 1973, p. 3). Further, students were divided into types of students that should be taught in different ways by different teachers (Ainscow, 1994, p. 19). In the same way that doctors had authority over their patients and controlled all aspects of patient diagnosis, care, and decision making, educational professionals determined which students were educable and where that education would take place.
In a similar manner, teachers had control over the classroom and could deem certain ways of learning or some types of behavior as abnormal. A child with a learning or behavior problem would be “labeled a cut-and-dried ‘emotionally disturbed,’ ‘mentally retarded,’ or ‘defective case’” (Editor, February, 1966, p.2). The larger the gap between idealized constructions of normality and the behavior or cognitive ability of the student, the further away from the regular, normal classroom was their placement. In other words, these students were placed in a differentiated program (Tyack, 1974) that removed them from the regular classroom.

Psychological professionals had the authority to create or remove the label of disability with the stroke of a pen. In 1972, “mental retardation” was redefined from 1 Standard Deviation (SD) below the mean (an average of 85 IQ points) to 2 SDs below the mean (average of 70 IQ points), thus excluding 80% of the population previously identified as “mentally retarded” (Winzer, 1993, p. 376). This also meant that this 80% were now considered “normal” and would be attending regular schools.

Professionals became gatekeepers for access to services and resources, exercising authority over relatively powerless groups like students with special needs and their parents (Tomlinson, 1982; Vincent et al., 1996, p. 477). School districts had the “legal right to exclude children unable by reason of mental or physical handicap to profit by instruction in an elementary school” (Gidney, 2002, p. 152). Professionals constructed disability labels and made decisions about exclusion, thereby linking the webs of Disability and Professionalism. The gatekeeping and exclusionary practices of professionals were highlighted in newsletters from the OACLDD pointing out that professional judgment was rarely questioned. The OACLDD advised parents that assessment professionals intimidated parents by their secrecy over [assessment] results and that educators deliberately kept parents out of school talks about their child (Editor, 1974b, September, p. 1).

Teachers likewise laid claim to professional authority. In 1976, The Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation (OSSTF), under the leadership of Margaret Wilson, published the results of a study of teacher attitudes. Margaret Wilson would later go on to be the registrar at the Ontario College of Teachers. The discourse in this report clearly showed that teachers sought to retain authority to make decisions about curriculum, instructional methods, and classroom
management because of their expertise. Secondary school teachers stressed that the pace of the educational reforms of the 1960s and 1970s were too fast. The survey results showed other beliefs that were situated in the conservative ideology. Teachers believed the secondary school reforms had “gone too far” (OSSTF, 1976, p. 31), signaling a desire to return to the status quo prior to the reforms. For example, “90% of teachers surveyed believed that there should be certain courses that students must take and demonstrate competence in to ensure a broad and adequate education if they’re to be prepared for adulthood” (OSSTF, 1976, p. 17).

Conservatives resist change and believe that stability, tradition, and slow change is necessary to maintain order (Sargent, 2006, p. 124). Teachers did not embrace the new system wherein courses had a credit value and students made choices. This meant that teachers had to “sell” their courses to students, for their own survival. They preferred the system of mandatory courses that were primarily history, literature, and classical language studies.

Teachers used the discourse of professional authority to claim that they (and, by inference, not the Ministry of Education nor the authors of the Hall-Dennis Report) have the specialized knowledge to make educational decisions.

In the case of educators, because of their training, they have an obligation to state clearly what society needs and demands at the basic secondary education for adolescents. To do less, to allow the present laissez-faire attitude to continue, is clearly to court disaster. (OSSTF, 1976, p. 47.)

The OSSTF report was very dismissive of the Hall-Dennis Report, suggesting that it was particularly irrelevant and naïve: “In the cold light of classroom experience, this language seems naïve, reflecting the ill-founded hopes of a committee out of touch with the real problems of school and society” (OSSTF, 1976, p. 33). The discourse of maintaining the status quo is a discourse of traditionalism in the web of Education. Those who supported the traditional educational purpose did not support change.

These excerpts show that teachers believed they should be in control of making decisions for students and should decide on the sequence and content of the curriculum. The conservative beliefs in the mastery of specific skills and knowledge, and the maintenance of high standards of achievement, is evident in the following excerpt:
This lopsided view of education cannot continue…workload[for teachers] becomes crushing …the strong emphasis on individualization and the happy school has overshadowed the development of basic skills and knowledge and vocational training. It is difficult for educational standards to survive in this climate. (OSSTF, 1976, p. 34.)

**Hierarchy of Authority**

Even within the group of professionals, there was a hierarchy of authority, with psychologists ranked above teachers. Knowledge advancement about disabilities came through scientific, not educational, research. For example, “Research into the problems of the perceptually handicapped child has started at the University of Waterloo. This work is expected to involve experimental psychologists, physical education specialists, and optometrists” (Editor, 1967, January). The presumptions about the educational potential of students held by teachers and psychologists, was challenged by discourses in a television documentary “Contact,” aired January 21, 1979 on *The Nature of Things* by the Canadian Broadcasting Company. The discourse challenged the common practice in public schools and in other institutions of grouping children with autism and children with retardation together. Dr. Edward Blackstock was a psychologist from York University who dispelled the myth that children with autism were unable to learn. Common wisdom of the time questioned whether children with retardation or autism were capable of learning. Blackstock stated that children with autism were different from children with mental retardation and could respond to a controversial and successful treatment program conducted by Fern Levitt. Dr. Mary Konstantareas from the Clark Institute of Psychology (where many children with autism received treatment) was also highlighted. Her work focused on communication with children with autism. Using professional credentials and “scientific” evidence, the authority of psychological diagnosis was presented as superior to the knowledge of teachers and existing common practices of schools.

A film about Children With Autism was aired on *Take 30* on September 22, 1978. *Take 30* was a Canadian television series that aired news stories and documentaries. This thirty-minute film showcased Adventure Place, a treatment center for children with emotional disturbance, autism, and retardation. Dr. Blackstock was interviewed by one of the show’s hosts. The interview was conducted in the studio with the two men seated across from each other on soft comfortable-looking chairs. This arrangement reinforced the perception that Dr. Blackstock was
an “expert” about to share his knowledge. He articulated his theory that autism is neurologically based and not a psychiatric disorder. Describing and narrating a series of photos of the human brain, he explained his research that showed the dysfunction is in the left hemisphere of the brain and suggested that the brain’s structure is responsible for the behavioural characteristics that are often present in children with autism. This reliance on scientific data and visual evidence solidified his position as an “expert.”

Medical/psychological superiority was supported in an article by Philip Vernon in 1979. In order to be identified as gifted, “children must be seen individually by a trained psychologist” who is “expensive” and “expert personnel.” A teacher’s report will be considered (Vernon, 1979, p. 29). This comment diminishes the teacher as an educational expert but elevates the psychologist as the one with specialized knowledge and authority.

Specialized Knowledge

Special education was described as a specialized area of education (Robarts & Lazure, 1970, p. 182). Special educators had “a collection of techniques and skills… a body of knowledge, methods, and philosophical tenets that are the earmark of the professions” (Canadian Committee, 1971, p. 181). Special education stood apart from regular education. Because it was not well understood by regular education teachers it was likened to cultism or mysticism (Fisher, 1967). The special education teacher became identified as specialized and essential. “Special programs that are delivered by special education could not be included in regular classrooms by teachers without assistance” (Canadian Committee, 1971, p.183). The special education teacher’s skills and abilities were identified as beyond the abilities of regular teachers. An editorial in the journal Special Education stated that “We believe that teachers in special education are more aware as to how learning is acquired because we spend much of our time in attempting to understand why learning has broken down, and in discovering what to do about it” (Editorial, 1970, January p. 5). Statements such as these served to mystify special education teachers and to deepen the separation between regular classroom teachers and special education teachers. Mel Ainscow (1994) states that labeling divides the school population into types of students that need specialized, one-to-one instruction and those that are able to be successful in the regular classroom.
In the late 1960s, elementary teachers were attempting to be viewed as professionals by developing specialized knowledge. Secondary teachers were already held in higher esteem than elementary teachers, possibly because they required a degree as part of their teacher preparation program. A six-week summer course and a year of teaching enabled some teachers to become qualified elementary teachers in the late 1960s. This path of teacher credentialing did little to enhance the professional image of the elementary teacher or provide adequate teacher training. The inadequacies of teacher training were well known (Ontario Division, 1971). However, in the 1970s, moving elementary teacher preparation into the Faculties of Education at the universities greatly enhanced the image of teachers as professional experts (Smyth, 2006).

The shifting of responsibility for children with disabilities from various other ministries to the Department of Education, in the late 1960s, meant that school districts would need to take responsibility for more children with disabilities. Increased enrollment put pressure on the education bureaucracy for more teachers with specialized knowledge that would be more responsive to the diversity in student population. Special education advocacy groups believed the answer lay in providing teachers with instruction in how children learn and “the processes that go awry when they have learning difficulties” (OACLD, 1978b, November, p. 10). To that end, the Ontario Federation of the CEC presented a Brief to the Minister’s Committee on Elementary Teacher Training in Ontario (1964) advocating for special instruction for teachers in the area of students with individual differences. Changes to teacher preparation programs needed to enable [classroom] teachers to deal with “primary learning disorders” and “problems in communication, learning, and social disorders.” In other words, the regular classroom teacher would need the specialized knowledge and training, currently the domain of special education teachers (The Ontario Federation of Chapters of the Council for Exceptional Children, 1978). This recommendation met with resistance. Isabel Ward, the President of the Ontario Teachers Federation (OTF), a province wide organization that represented the interests of teachers, supported integration of students with disabilities into the regular classroom wherever possible “but not where it places a burden on the classroom teacher” (MacDonald, 1975c, September, p.3). Teachers were claiming the professional authority to maintain a gatekeeping and control function (Tomlinson, 1982).
Teaching increasingly relied on techniques that claimed to be based in science. Behavioural psychology had developed management techniques to manage and modify behaviours (Fuentes, 2005). These techniques found their way into education. The teaching techniques used in special education were grounded in the sciences of psychology and biology. A diagnostic, prescriptive, and behaviourist teaching approach was widely used with children with disabilities (Skrteč, 2006, p. 74). The specialized knowledge of teaching reflected the beliefs of behaviourism that evolved from the research of B. F. Skinner and Edward Thorndike. Learning was believed to be an observable response to a stimulus. A teacher’s role was to administer the correct stimulus and use appropriate behavior modification techniques (Research Department, 1978). These techniques leaned heavily on training through operant conditioning strategies employed to obtain the desired response from the student. A strong focus was on behavior management, especially using the token economy of rewards. The preoccupation with compliance, training, seat work, and learning life skills, meant there was an absence of challenging academic curriculum. Teaching was described as apolitical and technical (Grundy & Hatton, 1995, p. 10), focusing on the techniques and methods of teaching. A preoccupation with technical concerns displaced the possibility for political and ethical debates about teaching because this form of rationality is limited to technical questions regarding efficiency and effectiveness in meeting the stated goals (Grundy & Hatton, 1995, p. 10). Performance criteria for teachers and behavioural objectives for students were all situated in observable actions, supporting theories grounded in scientific rationalism.

This theory of specialized knowledge underpins professionals’ claims to authority and autonomy (Skrteč, 2006). A formal program of professional education for teachers gives the inductee access to the profession’s specialized knowledge and skills (Skrteč, 2006, p. 10). Specialized knowledge is situated in the ideology of scientific rationalism. Rigorous professional practice depends on applying scientific models, practices, and tools that are assumed to be objective (Skrteč, 2006). The professional practices associated with special education are premised on the assumption of objectivity and scientific knowledge (Skrteč, 2006, p. 38).

*Benevolent Humanitarianism*

Society gives professionals greater autonomy and reverence than other social groups, with the expectation that these professionals serve the public good (Skrteč, 2006). However
unbridled professional authority was tempered by the belief in benevolent humanitarianism (Vincent et al., 1996; Tomlinson, 1982). Benevolent humanitarianism is related to the conservative ideas about morality and authority. Charity is related to the accumulation of moral credit and altruism (Lakoff, 2002, p. 50). “For someone to be a good person he has to have a lot of moral credit,” which is related to the ways one amasses moral credit (Lakoff, 2002, p. 50). One way is by displaying altruism whereby one cancels a debt owed. Another way is by charitable works. Conservatism is concerned with morality and preserving a moral order and professional authority (Lakoff, 2002, p. 70). Persons in authority have a duty to protect those under their authority (Lakoff, 2002, p. 70).

Disability was represented as an anomaly, a costly social burden or unthinkable tragedy. The person with a disability was often portrayed according to another archetypal identity articulated by Wolfensberger (1972) which was the perpetual child, the holy innocent, or the object of pity. This archetype evoked feelings of benevolence, compassion, and charity. The person was blameless for, and very apt to be viewed as “suffering from” the condition. Using pitiful images of disability, charity drives canvassed for funds to support programs for persons with disabilities (Derksen, 1980, p. 4). Children were described as particularly vulnerable and professionals were expected to respond to their needs. Further, students with disabilities should be protected. This discourse is evident in the description of the purposes of vocational schools: “[Vocational ] schools are not sufficiently related to the real world and can become a shelter house, protecting students from the complexities, difficulties, and reality outside the school” (Work Group on Vocational Schools, 1973, p. 7).

The discourse of benevolent humanitarianism was characterized by “benign and altruistic beliefs and actions that justified inhumane treatment” (Tomlinson, 1982). For example, the OSSTF report (1976) stated that students with special needs “present a challenge to the secondary school system” (p. 44) and that a “better learning situation” is placement in separate programs taught by “specially trained teachers” (p. 45). These statements appear to have the students’ interests in mind when, in actuality, the comfort of the teachers is at the root of the suggestion. Benevolent humanitarianism creates an image of professionals as caring, patient, and loving, making it difficult to raise questions about low expectations, patronizing and overprotective practices, and stigmatizing labels and service for students with special education
(Barton & Oliver, 1997). The benevolence and humanitarianism of special education also supports views of the person with disabilities as “in need of help, as an object of pity, as personally tragic, as dependent and eternal children” (Fulcher, 1989, p. 28; Wolfensberger, 1972). The helpers expect the recipients to be grateful (Tomlinson, 1982). Rebecca Blomgren (1998) states that special educators who are driven by an impulse for care and compassion often perform inhumane deeds, ranging from forms of violence inherent in discipline plans, to subtle abuses in the use of assessment and labeling as prerequisites for placement and intervention (p. 241). The pressure for conformity and becoming as normal as possible is disguised as a desire to help (Blomgren, 1998, p. 242).

There was significant ideological agreement about some of the discourses in the web of Professionalism. Professionals were society’s elites with privileges and responsibilities. Liberal thinkers believed that while individuals were equal, differences in prosperity were the result of the unequal outcomes of competition (Manzer, 1994, p. 13). The rules of the marketplace created and enforced a social hierarchy (Simon, 1985, p. 566). Professionals were more productive than persons in the lower economic strata and so were more valued. Conservative thinkers believed in a social hierarchy as essential to the survival of the society (Johnston, 1996, p. 53; Simon, 1985, p. 566). As society’s elites, professionals had a responsibility to preserve society’s traditions, morality, and to provide stability (Johnston, 1996, p. 61). Scientific rationalist thinking supported professionals like doctors and psychologists who could objectively identify normality and were able to develop a treatment plan to return the individual to the normal state.

The ideologies of liberalism and conservatism both supported the idea of charity for persons with disability. Benevolent humanitarianism was situated in conservative ideas about morality and professional responsibility. The conservative ideology acknowledged the reality of different individual capacities as essential to the community’s survival (Johnston, 1996, p. 51). Therefore, there are mutual obligations between those considered superior and those considered to be inferior (Johnston, 1996, p. 53). A person with a disability would naturally be considered inferior but would have the benefit of charity and a role to fulfill within the community as a grateful recipient of charity. They were unable to attain independence through educational achievement or consistent employment.
Some conservative thinkers “believe that people with disabilities have done something morally wrong and deserve their predicament and that they should be assisted only through charity” (Batavia, 1997 p. 17). Lakoff (2002) states that “conservatives are opposed to welfare and to government funds for the needy” (p. 25). Generally, conservative thinkers believe that “natural inequality [in society] establishes mutual obligations between the superior and inferior. [Professionals] while holding a privileged position as the head of the society [have] a responsibility for the welfare of the less fortunate” (Johnston, 1997, p. 53). An important tenet of conservative thinking is the importance of the “traditional nuclear family with the father having primary responsibility for supporting and protecting the family” (Lakoff, 2002, p. 33). The basic needs of persons with disabilities were the responsibility of families, friends, and charitable donations. Liberal thinkers had a different view of the family and, therefore, the provision of charity to the needy. The family should be physically, emotionally, and morally nurturing and should develop empathy for others (Lakoff, 2002, p. 35). This empathy would lead to the provision of state-funded charity.

### IDEOLOGICAL AGREEMENTS ABOUT PROFESSIONALISM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourses</th>
<th>conservatist reasoning</th>
<th>liberal reasoning</th>
<th>Scientific rationalism reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professionals role in society</td>
<td>make wise decisions for society</td>
<td>societal value linked to productivity</td>
<td>ability to identify normality objectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>preserve traditions and morality</td>
<td></td>
<td>science is superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>provide stability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>authority figures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benevolent</td>
<td>professional responsibility and</td>
<td>individuals responsible for self</td>
<td>No commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Humanitarianism | moral duty to perform charitable works | realization charity for truly needy
--- | --- | ---
metaphor of benevolent father towards his children

Figure 13: Ideological Agreements About Professionalism

In summary the discourses in the web of Professionalism changed very little during the period under study. The web was constructed by discourses of professional authority, specialized knowledge, hierarchy of professional authority, and benevolent humanitarianism. These discourses worked together to create and maintain a high status position for professionals in education. Professionals used their specialized knowledge and professional authority to make educational decisions that were authoritative and unchallengeable (Simon, 1985, p. 568). These discourses were found in other webs. Professionals were characterized as helping children with disabilities, thereby linking the web of Professionalism to the web of Disability through the discourse of benevolent humanitarianism. The discourse of specialized knowledge was linked to the standardization discourse in the web of Management because there was an increasing need for professionals with specialized, standardized credentials.

The Web of Education

Within this web are the discourses of reproducing Christian values, stratification, and meritocracy. These discourses are related to a traditionalist educational philosophy. In contrast, progressivism is defined by discourses of individual growth and child-centeredness. Vocational education’s discourses are opportunity and lack of employment. These discourses articulate beliefs about the role of education in the development of the individual and the value of education to society. The chapter will begin by outlining the discourses of traditionalism, stratification, and meritocracy. This will be followed by a discussion of the discourses of progressivism and vocational education. The ideologies that underpin these discourses will complete the chapter.
Reproducing Christian Values

The traditionalist philosophy is evident in the description of education found in *The Royal Commission on Education*, commonly known as the Hope Commission (Hope Commission, 1950). Curriculum content that was related to the fundamental disciplines was part of a traditionalist perspective because students needed to learn a foundation of knowledge, wisdom, and virtue (Holmes, 1984, p. 45). Schooling existed to produce good citizens who would conform to society (Holmes, 1984, p. 35). The student was expected to be docile and obedient (Fleming, 1972a, p. 6). “Throughout the long history of schooling, obedience has been the byword of behavior” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 94). Misbehaviour would be corrected by a range of punishments including writing lines or the use of the strap as a way to improve the student (Fleming, 1972a, p. 95). See Figure 11 for an example of writing lines. The school’s role was the transmission of Christianity’s values of honesty and love which were to be inculcated by example (Fleming, 1971a, p. 1; Holmes, 1984). Mark Holmes (1998) stated that “Conservatives believe in God, transcendent truth, the good, virtue, beauty, community, punishment, and the intrinsic value of [school] subjects” (p. 119). Schools existed to reproduce society. “Every society must provide means for educating its members to ensure that social life will persist as sanctioned by that society” (Fleming, 1972a, p. 3).
Teachers were expected to transmit knowledge to students who would memorize and retell. School work was predominately about reading, calculating, and recitation (Brehaut, 1984). The classroom was characterized by “silence, hierarchical positions of pupil and teacher, and [a] punitive approach” (Fleming, 1971a, p. 506). Traditional schooling was characterized by a “uniform curriculum, the undifferentiated structure, the recitation methods, and the skimpy training of teachers” (Tyack, 1974, p. 188).
The school community existed as an “authoritarian social structure that reflected the unequal status of adults and children and the overriding administrative power of the principal” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 122).

The discourses of traditionalism supported the clearly defined role of the teacher as the transmitter of knowledge (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 57). The discourse of progressivism suggested in the Hall-Dennis Report challenged the expanded role of teachers. The OSSTF report (1976) argued against the increased school responsibilities that extended into what was previously parental jurisdiction. “Schools are expected to handle discipline and social adjustment problems and to educate children regarding sex, morals, and values” (OSSTF, 1976, p. 24). “Teachers feel unqualified to use the techniques of values education and are uneasy about assuming this parental responsibility” (p. 24). The report disparages the emphasis on individual students and claims that educational standards were threatened. Teachers stated that the reforms created a huge workload for teachers and resulted in falling standards for students (OSSTF, 1976),

Stratification

Stratification in the secondary school was an accepted and unquestioned reality for many decades prior to World War II, according to the Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation (OSSTF), (1971). Schools were primarily for preparing students of high ability for the professions.

For several decades, the system of secondary education in Ontario and other Canadian provinces was characterized by simplicity and stability. …the secondary school system was instituted primarily to provide candidates for the professions, the business world, government service, and teaching. …The high dropout rate, characteristic of high schools until recently, was not considered a serious problem. (OSSTF, 1971.)

Typically students were sorted and classified according to three broadly based types of programs. There would be a program for students destined for higher education, another program for students destined for the skilled labour force (vocational education), and another stream for those who may never be independent (special education programs). The same instruction and curriculum would be provided to all students in each stream (Tyack, 1974). This type of equality
was defined as equal educational opportunity which meant that all students in each stream would receive the same resources, namely, teachers, curriculum, and facilities (Stevens & Wood, 1987, p. 160). For example, “different types of students bound for different occupational classes” (Manzer, 1994, p. 270). The Hall-Dennis Report characterized the existing regular education classroom as rigid, prescriptive, structured, insensitive, and organized by fixed intervals of time (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 101). The current stratified organization of schooling was unable and unwilling to be flexible to respond to the diversity of children’s learning abilities. The report identified, and argued against, the stigma associated with programs not destined for higher education:

With regard to practical education, this Committee deplores the persistent notion that anything related to manual and technical skills is necessarily second-rate as compared with purely intellectual studies….Pupils must be able, regardless of social or financial position, to choose studies or courses in accordance with their interests and aptitudes. Some pupils feel more at home in practical courses where they are taught limited skills to increase their capability. But students with excellent academic ability may reasonably prefer to engage largely in general courses with technical or other vocational orientation, and to get specific training for skilled work later. (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 170.)

The stratification of students into different programs has its roots in the differentiated education phenomenon popular at the beginning of the twentieth century. Schools and programs were differentiated for “diverse groups in the population” (Tyack, 1974, p. 186). Stratification was based on the results of intelligence and standardized achievement tests, reflecting the beliefs in the ability of science to accurately measure ability and predict potential (Stevens & Wood, 1987). Sorting and classifying students based on ability and effort fails to acknowledge the unfair competitive practices that exist within a meritocratic structure of schooling (Christenson & Dorn, 1997, p. 182). This perspective leaves the mainstream educational system and curriculum unexamined. Equality of treatment does not produce equality of results. (Varpalotai, 1995, p. 249). The discourse of stratification links to the webs of Equality and Management.

The discourse of stratification was used by OSSTF in 1976. This group further supported the continuation and expansion of segregated classes and separate schools for exceptional students because “those with learning difficulties present a challenge to the secondary school system” (p. 44) because these students don’t fit the program that is offered.
The traditionalist philosophy was supported by the conservative belief that the reproduction of the traditional values of obedience to authority, deference to power elites, acceptance of social inequalities, and preservation of community (Manzer, 1985, p. 46). Traditionalists argued for the same instruction for the vast majority (Holmes, 1984).

**Meritocracy**

Canadian society, during the time under study, was structured so that the greatest rewards went to the elites who were white, Anglo males of European descent. Schools generally operated on the principles of the meritocracy which has its roots in the economic liberal views of competition and entrepreneurship (Boudon, 1977, p. 191). Students with the highest abilities and effort received the greatest rewards, such as leadership positions, financial rewards, and higher education, which led to higher class status (Manzer, 1994; White, 2007). The opportunity for advancing to higher education was related to social class. Students from higher socioeconomic status groups had higher rates of attendance at institutions of higher education. This exemplifies beliefs of elitism (Dahl, 1958, p. 463). Elitism holds that in a social system there exists groups of people who have power and influence over others in the system. These groups will become the intellectual and cultural leaders of the next generation and will ensure that elitist preferences prevail (Dahl, 1958, p. 464).

Bright kids are the leaders, the innovators, the scientists, the artists of the next generation. … Perhaps among them is the man or woman who will find a cure for cancer, for retardation, who will release us from the cycle of wars and human savagery. (Seager, 1977.)

Frank Jones stated that “schools sort out people in relation to the labour force and they serve to keep young people occupied until the community is ready for them to assume adult responsibilities” (1965, p. 84). Under the ideology of economic liberalism, students in the academic stream were prepared for higher education and higher status employment. The expanding capitalist industrial economy of the 1950s and 1960s needed labourers. Workers for the labour market would come from the non-academic or vocational education programs (St. John, 1967).
In an organization that values competition, it follows that there will be winners and losers because effort and ability are not equally distributed. Both liberalism and conservatism supported a meritocratic organizational structure in society and in schooling. Economic liberalism (sometimes known as classical liberalism) puts the focus on the individual and emphasizes human reason and the freedom of the individual to pursue wealth through a market economy, free from the constraints of government (Vandyke, 1995, p. 9).

In the economic liberal tradition, rewards for individuals are distributed in direct proportion to the efforts, abilities, or sacrifices each individual has made (Kamolnick, 2005, p. 88; Stevens & Wood, 1987, p. 162). Within the meritocracy, success is the result of individual efforts, ability, or talent (Kamolnick, 2005). Those with the highest achievement have the highest intelligence and so are more valued. Within a meritocratic view of the world, an individual’s value was linked to their productivity and social status. Ostensibly, within capitalism, an individual of any class has an equal opportunity to become economically successful and achieve social mobility (Lipset & Bendix, 1992, p. 78). The belief existed that through hard work and talent, an individual could advance to a higher social class. However, in reality, the capitalist economy reproduced social inequalities. Those with lesser ability received less societal rewards and were less valued, and were placed in learning environments outside the regular classroom which was considered normal.

Economic liberal thinkers believed that competition would sort individuals according to merit and worth and the state should not interfere. Hierarchical stratification, supported by conservatism, rested on the belief that competition is valuable because of the self discipline that is developed (Lakoff, 2002, p. 69). The hierarchical organization of society is natural and leadership and authority are earned through technical and practical knowledge expertise (Vandyke, 1995, p. 145). Individuals who subscribed to the ideology of conservatism also supported a meritocratic social structure because the aristocracy or elite class were the ruling class and would provide order and stability (Dunn & Woodard, 1996, p. 59).

**Child-Centeredness**

Progressivism represented the other major educational philosophy in Ontario during this period (Holmes, 1984). This philosophy was also advocated by the Hope Commission (1950).
Learning by doing, child-centered schools, activity programs, and respect for the child’s individuality, and developmental growth were part of the Hope Commission’s report (Fleming, 1972a; Holmes, 1984, p. 36). Progressivism was about the ideal of “person regarding education, which aimed at achieving an educative society and the individual self-development in a broadly humanistic sense” (Manzer, 1994, p. 161). According to Robert Gidney (2002), progressivism had became the philosophy of the educational establishment, including the Ministry of Education and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (Gidney, 2002, p. 66). These views were supported by the Department of Education and more liberal views were being accepted in society at large (Paquette, 1991, p. 3).

John Dewey, who is credited with the origin of progressivism in education, challenged ideals of traditional education (Stevens & Wood, 1987, p. 162). In the 1920s and 1930s, Dewey’s educational philosophy was very influential in the United States (Gidney, 2002, p. 31), but then waned in popularity. The discourse of child-centeredness challenged traditional forms of education that relied on rote, routine, widespread testing, and obedience. The metaphor of the “assembly line” in manufacturing was used to describe traditional forms of schooling. This became known as the “factory model of education” (Rogoff, Matusov & White, 1999, p. 391). Originally identified in the work of Elwood Cubberley in 1916, this model has been linked to the “scientific” efficiency movement in education because scientific efficiency was a purpose of the bureaucratic organization of school districts. Cubberley said that

[O]ur schools are, in a sense, factories in which the raw products (children) are to be shaped and fashioned into products to meet the various demands of life. The specifications for manufacturing come from the demands of twentieth-century civilization, and it is the business of the school to build its pupils according to the specifications laid down. This demands good tools, specialized machinery, continuous measurement of production to see if it is according to specifications, the elimination of waste in manufacturing. (Cubberly, cited in Rogoff et al., 1999, p. 392.)

The discourse of child-centeredness was evident in the Hall-Dennis Report (1968). Growth metaphors were used with a poetic writing style in the introduction. For example “bury our talents in the soils of satisfaction “germinate the seeds of a more fruitful way of life,” “the harvest will make its contribution to all mankind.” Such metaphors of growth created an image of hope and development (p. 9). The discourses of individualism included an emphasis on
learning by experience and learning based on each student’s interest. This included the development of independent thinking, good health, recreation, happy family relations, good citizenship, and learning beyond the school years (Fleming, 1972a). Instruction should be differentiated not according to homogeneous groups of students but according to individuals (Holmes, 1984, p. 33). Despite its decline in the United States, this philosophy continued to influence Ontario education during the 1960s (Fleming, 1972a; Holmes, 1984).

Undirected individual growth was replaced by a child-centeredness discourse that focused on skill development and citizenship. The purpose of education for all students was “to develop the individual as a skilful, free and purposeful person able to plan and manage his [or her] own life and to reach the highest potential as an individual and as a member of society” (Council for Exceptional Children, 1971, p. 182). Next, the discourse meant freedom of the individual within society. The reference to freedom reflected the national discourses of freedom from oppression related to the minority rights movement in Canada and the civil rights movement in the United States. This meaning suggested that without education, children become oppressed adults because of unemployment and poverty.

In 1971, the OSSTF devoted an entire section on the child as a learner in its report on non-graded schools. The authors appeared to embrace the philosophy of focus on the individual learner and progressivism.

We believe that a narrow scholastic view of the learning process, continued teacher dominance of the learning situation on the sole justification of subject matter expertise, and reliance on the lecture as the un-varied method of presenting material may well fail to produce a type of individual described above. (OSSTF, 1971, p. 4.)

The OSSTF (1976) echoed the principles of “personal growth and development” and the “uniqueness of the individual” (p. 24) that were evident in the secondary school reforms of the 1960s and 1970s. However, the rest of this report demonstrates that secondary school teachers believed progressivism in general, and the Hall-Dennis Report in particular, was “naive, reflecting the ill founded hopes of a committee out of touch with the real problems of school and society” (p. 33). The OSSTF (1976) argued against “rampant individualism” (p. 24) and that these “liberal ideas of American education infiltrated” Ontario education (p. 12). The tone in this
report expressed a bias for the traditional structures and curriculum that existed before the expansive reforms.

The discourse of child-centeredness was evident in the many pictures of children and their art throughout the report. Further child-centeredness meant “continuous progress by the pupil, progress at his own rate” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 169).

The focus on the child was also exemplified in the CELDIC report (Roberts & Lazure, 1970). The chapter titles placed the child first and in relationship to the social systems that served the child, for example, the child as patient, the child as ward, the child as offender, the child in residential care, the child as student (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, Table of Contents). The CEC stated that education was about providing the “opportunity for every child to develop his/her full potential educationally (CEC, 1973, p. 10). The discourse of “full potential” is a focus on individual child development. A report on teacher preparation programs by the Canadian CEC advocated for programs that assisted teachers to “understand the learner in the learning process” (Canadian Committee, 1971, p. 29). This orientation is a departure from earlier teacher preparation programs that focused on specialization in subject matter with limited practical experience (Canadian Committee, 1971, p. 32). Further, this report states that “teachers should have some knowledge of the problems and needs of children with learning difficulties” (Canadian Committee, 1971, p. 78).

Ethical liberalism promoted the development of the individual. This was supported by the progressivist educational philosophy advocated in the Hall-Denis Report (1968). Progressivism advocated for content that was interdisciplinary, intrinsically interesting, and relevant to daily life (Holmes, 1984, p. 32) Child-centeredness is a distinguishing characteristic. The teacher becomes an organizer and facilitator of children’s learning, not the source of knowledge to be transmitted to students, as in the traditionalist philosophy (Stevens & Wood, 1987).

**Opportunity**

The discourse of opportunity defined vocational education in the early years of the study. Vocational education was an example of a differentiated program intended for students who would not have access to higher education.
These schools were not designed to train skilled workers but to provide slow learners with technical education. Students with a reading level below grade five who had not passed grade eight had to go to a vocational school or remain one more year in elementary school. (Work Group on Vocational Education, 1973, p. 25.)

Vocational education referred to programs in business or commercial studies and industrial technology skills designed to prepare students for early entry into the labour force. Vocational education was promoted as a way to keep students interested and enrolled in high school while learning a marketable skill (Arum, 1998; Smaller, 2000).

Vocational education grew in Ontario because of the expansion of manufacturing but also because of a federal financial incentive, in the 1960s, that enabled the construction of many schools dedicated to vocational education (Smaller, 2000). Vocational education was tied to beliefs about schooling. From the end of World War II until the early 1970s, the mass marketing of consumer goods required two kinds of workers. One type of worker was expected to work at “mindless, repetitive and meaningless pieces of tasks, the wholes of which they did not need to understand and certainly had no control over” (Gee, Hull & Lankshear, 1996, p. 17). The second type of worker was the supervisor of the first type of worker. These workers participated in, and supposedly understood, the hierarchical, bureaucratic structures of organizations (Gee et al., 1996, p. 17).

Vocational education rested in human capital theory which became very popular in the late 1950s and early 1960s (Taylor, 1997, p. 94, 95). “The original model [of vocational education] was clearly to improve economic efficiency” (Work Group on Vocational Education, 1973, p. 45). The skill and education of a nation’s workforce was defined as human capital. Existing economic theory argued that school dropouts were a waste of human capital (Gidney, 2002, p. 39). During the early years of this study, there was a growth in vocational and technical education in Ontario. “During the late 1960s, the public acceptance of vocational schools was at its maximum” (Work Group on Vocational Education, 1973, p. 26).

The discourse of opportunity defined vocational education (St. John, 1967). This discourse was also used by the Council for Exceptional Children. “Youth and adults should
receive a vocational education, employment services, and job counseling” (Canadian Committee, 1971, p. 182).

**Unemployment**

In 1968, the discourse of opportunity was replaced by a discourse of unemployment. The Hall-Dennis Report (1968) stated that students streamed into vocational education have unequal opportunities for future employment: “[Students] have many years of unemployment, several part-time or short-term, low-paying jobs, unskilled and semi-skilled positions, and are battered by shifts in the economy” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 108). Further, the report states that these students require “on-the-job-training following a sound learning program” (p. 108) rather than the idea that “the less competent the student is, the more quickly he should be rushed into the labour force (p. 108). Although it appeared that schooling was assisting these students to become economically independent from an earlier age and, therefore, to have increased opportunities for advancement, the CELDIC report (Roberts & Lazure, 1970) also noted that there was a subtle bias conveyed by the school system against manual labour, and that students with learning disorders could not hope to achieve “high academic achievements that will be granted status and dignity by society” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 73). In actuality, vocational education programs served to reproduce social class positioning, not advance social mobility (Arum, 1998). In a CBC film about special education, a voice-over mentions the Trefann Court mothers who were parents and advocates of children attending vocational schools in inner-city Toronto schools (Canadian Broadcasting Company, 1971). These parents made a presentation to the school district administrators complaining that opportunity and vocational classes limited their children’s opportunities for employment and social mobility. Removal from the regular classroom meant these students were denied the higher education opportunities that “normal” students could access and so were positioned for a future of manual labour or unemployment (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 73), thereby perpetuating the cycle of dependency typical of persons with disabilities.

Disability was linked to vocational education and to unemployment. Students streamed into vocational education were identified with disabilities and these students received unequal opportunities for future employment.
Some argue that special vocational schools are the answer for the slow learner. Many slow learners, culturally deprived pupils, and others, find the move from school to full-time employment a difficult experience. These pupils passed through a typical cycle of a few years of unemployment, several part-time or short-term low paid jobs, and, finally, a succession of full-time unskilled and semi-skilled positions. (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p.108.)

There were serious future consequences for students who were unable to achieve an education. They were destined to be part of the unskilled labour force with frequent periods of unemployment. “The achievement of education has become the essential ticket for any and every employment situation. Failure to achieve is tantamount to a catastrophe in life affecting future income and status” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 4).

The Ontario Committee of CELDIC (1970) used a discourse that linked unemployment to years spent in school. The report recommended that students should be selected for work experience and placed at a much earlier age and kept in school until the age of 21 in a four- or five-year vocational program, suggesting that more years in school might be an improvement (p. 114).

The discourse of unemployment was picked up and used by the Canadian Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, Ontario Division (1971). This report linked unemployment to low literacy rates. Students left the vocational program in secondary school with an attendance certificate but, because of very low literacy and numeracy levels, were unable to qualify for apprenticeship or Ministry of Labour equivalency to access skilled employment. Many graduates of these secondary school programs were unemployable and became welfare recipients.

Ken Weber, a high school teacher and researcher, linked the unemployment discourse of vocational education to a failed educational system. Students who were not from the middle or upper classes, or had disabilities, were failed by vocational programs. Vocational education was overrepresented by students from a lower socioeconomic status and was failing to provide students with employment opportunities. “Eighty-two percent of graduates of special and vocational high schools were not working in jobs related to their training course work” (Weber, 1974, p. 27).
The discourse pointed to systemic problems in education that resulted in a need for remedial or vocational programs (Weber, 1974, p. 20). The failure of the education system created a cycle of failure for slower adolescent learners who experienced repeated failures related to schooling. These students expected to fail and developed an attitude of defeat (Weber, 1974, p. 4). Students in vocational education programs were overrepresented by disability (learning disabilities, slow learners, graduates from schools for the trainable retarded, physically handicapped children) and low socioeconomic status (Weber, 1974). Typically, students who entered vocational schools were identified as “educable retarded students, slow learners, and remedial students” (Dilling & Guthrie, 1979, p. 6). These students typically had very low achievement in reading and mathematics. “For example, at the time of admission to a vocational school, reading grade levels for present remedial students alone spanned six grade levels (Grade 2 to Grade 7)” (Dilling & Guthrie, 1979, p. 6). Students who left school for the workforce after the two-year vocational program were typically not employed in their area of vocational training and were unable to access opportunities for high-skilled employment (Curtis et al., 1992). The same was true for students with behavior, emotional, and social problems, cultural and language problems, and students of low socioeconomic status. “The predominant occupation of the fathers of the students has been skilled or semi-skilled workers. The majority of mothers were housewives. Twenty-five percent of the students are living in subsidized housing corporation dwellings” (Dilling & Guthrie, 1979, p. 7).

Males in the lower socioeconomic class were overrepresented in vocational education. Classes also consisted of students identified as slow learners, “educable retarded,” and remedial.

Two-thirds of the population is male. On average, students were thirteen years of age at the time of admission. Scores indicate the students have a much below average score. Reading levels spanned from Grade 2 to Grade 7 and this was similar with mathematics. Many of the students were identified as having significant social, behavioural, or emotional problems. The next largest problem was cultural/educational/language deficit. Some were identified as having health problems or learning disabilities. Eighty-three percent of students in special and vocational high schools are from lower socioeconomic status groups. (Dilling & Guthrie, 1979, p. 8.)

Vocational education was applauded in the early years of this study (early- to mid-1960s), but increasingly came under attack for the limitations placed on students and the social inequalities that were perpetuated.
The discourses of unemployment are linked to equal educational opportunity because students streamed into vocational education were believed to have the same opportunity to achieve an economically successful future and possible social class advancement as any other student (Lipset & Bendix, 1992, p. 76).

In summary, education was stratified. Students from a high social status with ability and talent were prepared for high status occupations, while those from a low socioeconomic status were destined for low-level employment or unemployment. Prior to secondary school reform in the early 1960s, secondary school was organized as single programs that were designed to prepare students for their future occupation in the professions, the business world, government service, or teaching (OSSTF, 1971). Students who were unsuccessful in these programs were streamed into vocational schools and, eventually, into the workforce, at an early age. Secondary school reform, in the mid 1960s, offered students more choice. Students could select their own courses rather than be forced to take a predetermined slate of courses. The credit system placed the learner at the center and was part of the educational philosophy of progressivism.

The stratified education system was supported by both conservative and liberal ideologies. The conservative ideology supported a stratified society and therefore a stratified school system because of the belief that “some people are better than other people and therefore should be honored more” (Sargent, 2006, p. 127). Persons and, by extension, students, know their place in the hierarchy and must be content with their role. Authority is also hierarchically organized in a school (Holmes, 1998, p. 110). Therefore, stability was provided. Economic liberalism supported a stratified education system wherein those with the most motivation, ability, and talent would gain access to the greatest rewards such as higher level educational opportunities and social status. The meritocratic organization of school and society was also supported by conservative thinkers because this organization supported a hierarchy of authority and of roles and responsibilities that would ensure societal stability. Scientific rationalist thinkers would support the meritocratic organization of society if the science professionals were the elites. Educators appealed to science to support “testing the limits of each student’s potential” (Stevens & Wood, 1987, p. 162). Schools were expected produce the scientists needed for the United States to surpass its rival, the Soviet Union (Stevens & Wood, 1987, p. 162).
Vocational education was seen, initially, as an opportunity for those in the lowest social and educational strata. Both conservative and liberal thinkers supported vocational education. Preparation for employment for students who lacked the ability or motivation of the educational elites was an important role for education, specifically, “for all to receive an education that will prepare them equally well for their particular life work” (Stevens & Wood, 1987, p.162). Productivity was an important focus for liberal thinkers so participation in the workforce was supported. However, later discourses pointed out the inequalities of stratification in education. Those with least ability in the regular classroom and who had the least potential for success were candidates for vocational education. Conservative thinkers would support unemployment because of the need to sustain a stratified society. Some individuals were needed in this social class. Liberal thinkers would argue that persons were unemployed as a result of the unequal outcomes of competition (Manzer, 1994, p. 13).

Figure 16 illustrates the ideological agreements with the discourses in the web of Education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDEOLOGICAL AGREEMENTS ABOUT EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stratification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hierarchy is natural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hierarchy is a result of competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>science professionals are at top of hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meritocracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elites provide stability and authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rewards go to those with most ability and effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schools need to produce scientists who were educational and societal elites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational education as opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job preparation is essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presumed skilled workforce positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>societal value related to productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational education as unemployment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reproducing society’s natural hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not rewarded because of laziness or inability to compete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 15: Ideological Agreements About Education
However there were ideological points of disagreement about the philosophies of education as Figure 16 identifies.

**IDEOLOGICAL DISAGREEMENTS ABOUT EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourses</th>
<th>conservatist reasoning</th>
<th>liberal reasoning</th>
<th>Scientific rationalism reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>to reproduce Christian values, memorize the “truth” obedience learning should be difficult because it builds character and good citizenship</td>
<td>child-centered should be relevant results in individual growth and development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 16: Ideological Disagreements About Education

*The Web of Equality*

Special education is implicated in discussions of equality. The discourses that defined the web of Equality were equal access, normalization, equal educational opportunity, equality of outcomes, and rights.

*Equality as Access*

Policy texts in the early years of the study identified that children with “mental retardation,” autism, or emotional disturbance, were often placed in institutions. Until the mid-1960s parents of children with severe mental retardation created, managed, and financed their own schools (Anglin & Braaten, 1978). The admissions committees of school districts frequently denied admission to children with these disabilities. Advocacy groups and parents recognized the importance of free access to public schooling. The Hall-Dennis Report stated that “no avoidable barrier should block any young person’s access to higher reaches of education, including college
and university. First, this means that virtually all pupils should complete twelve years of schooling after kindergarten” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 170).

Universal access to education was described as equal educational opportunity by the Council for Exceptional Children.

The provision of universal education of children in a democratic society has been translated as a commitment to the providing of educational opportunities for every child, whatever may be his socioeconomic status; cultural or racial origins; physical, intellectual, emotional equipment, potential contribution to society; and whatever his educational needs might be (Council for Exceptional Children, 1971, p. 182).

Equality of access rests on the assumption that an education is the gateway to the social mobility system and, therefore, is critical to a person’s future (Varpalotai, 1995, p. 247). Students diagnosed with learning disabilities were denied access to secondary school programs until a new secondary school policy document, H.S. 1, demanded a retraction of this practice. “Youth who have completed elementary school, and who possess a normal or above IQ, and have had a clinical diagnosis of perceptual handicap (learning disability), will be allowed to continue in the college entrance stream” (Editor, 1967, October, p. 2).

Further, the Minister of Education planned to require the establishment of secondary school classes for students with perceptual handicaps (learning disabilities) (Editor, 1967, October, p. 2). While equal access reflects the universalist principles in the welfare state supported by ethical liberalism, access does not constitute an equitable education. The welfare state was part of Keynesian economic policies that sought to protect citizens from the harsh realities of the fluctuations of the marketplace (O’Connor, 1995). Despite the evolution to ethical liberalism and welfare state initiatives (O’Connor, 1998; White, 2007) social services for children with disabilities and their families were lacking (Roberts & Lazure, 1970). This could be linked to the conservative thinkers who did not like the concept of welfare, which was viewed as giving long-term support to able-bodied persons (Vandyke, 1995, p. 177). However, according to the conservative ideology, social assistance should be available for the truly needy (Vandyke, 1995, p. 156). The concept of “truly needy” helps in understanding why social services are available on a “means testing” basis in Canada (O’Connor, 1998). Applicants must demonstrate that they are truly needy.
The discourse of equality as granting the same access to education does not take into account the advantages to certain groups of students that are inherent in the traditional school structure and curriculum. Larry Krywaniuk (1974), an educational psychologist at the University of Alberta, said “Children often fail in public schools because their culture does not teach them to perceive the way schools require” (p. 3). The school system benefits students who are members of the middle and upper classes. Gaining access does not fully address the deeper issues of inequalities within the education system and of competition between students with and without disabilities (Christenson & Dorn, 1997, p. 189; Varpalotai, 1995, p. 248). Economic liberalism justified inequalities based on performance, but largely ignored social inequalities based on other characteristics like race, gender, socioeconomic status, or ability (Ghosh & Abdi, 2004, p. 29). Equality of treatment means that schools should treat all students alike (Varpalotai, 1995, p. 243). Reva Joshee identifies this way of thinking about equality as the “equality as sameness” discourse (2007, p. 179).

**Equality of Outcomes**

A discourse of equality of outcomes was also part of the web of Equality and was a contrast to equality as the same treatment. Dr. Phimister, Deputy Minister of Education in Ontario, gave the Opening Address to the 44th International Convention in 1966. He said “[M]ore and more we are coming to see in education — whether special or not — that we must concern ourselves with ends as well as with means” (Phimister, 1966, p. 7). The Hall-Dennis Report (1968) and the CELDIC report (1970) identified that the existing educational organization resulted in negative effects or outcomes for children with disabilities. Equality was contingent on an equality of outcomes. That is, that all students should leave school with the same level of education that would permit each student to access upward social mobility. “Equal education is NOT the same as equal opportunity – opportunity to receive the most appropriate education tailored to meet individual needs” (ABC, 1978).

This discourse of equality of outcomes is about social justice. Social justice is concerned with fairness (Christenson & Dorn, 1997, p. 184). Equality and social justice discourses challenge the tracking and sorting functions of school (Stevens & Wood, 1987). Equality of outcomes can be achieved by redistributing material and social goods in the economy (Christenson & Dorn, 1997; Gale, 2000, in Joshee, 2007, p. 172). Another way to achieve
equality of outcomes is to change the structures and processes of education (Young, 1990). A third way looks at recognizing, acknowledging, and supporting difference (Gale, 2000, in Joshee, 2007, p. 172) and argues that the construct of normality needs to be challenged and moved forward to being positively valued and celebrated. The Hall-Dennis Report (1968) and CELDIC report (Roberts & Lazure, 1970) argued against segregation because of the negative outcomes associated with that educational process. The CELDIC report (1970) firmly stated that “the segregation of children with learning disorders can no longer be tolerated” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 2). Likewise, the Hall-Dennis Report shifted the focus to the negative outcomes for the child. Segregation “makes the child feel he is a problem, a failure, a reject” (Hall & Dennis, 1968, p. 4). The Ontario Committee Report (1970) further identified a detrimental effect on children with emotional and learning disorders by characterizing them as “casualties” of the [educational] system (p. 4). This report identified that these children were seen as problem children in society but the problems were not the result of a student’s inherent deficit but rather of the social construction of normativity.

In 1978, the discourse of equality of outcomes identified that educational inequalities for children with learning disabilities led to negative life outcomes, such as “inability to adjust emotionally, poor attitude and work habits on the job and in business and industry” (Hurst, 1978). In 1979, the discourse of equality of outcomes was used to argue against the equality as the same treatment discourses. “Equality of opportunity does not mean equal treatment for all” (Banks, 1979). The outcomes of equal treatment for students with giftedness were dire. “They do drop out of school or may deliberately underachieve” (Banks, 1979).

Normalization

In the 1970s, the discourse of normalization became predominant. Normalization meant full participation in all aspects of society, in contrast to earlier discourses that marginalized persons with disabilities. These ideas came to North America from Sweden and Denmark where persons with disabilities lived within the community and participated in all aspects of society. In Canada, this concept was championed by Wolfensberger (1972), a researcher with the National Institute for Mental Retardation, located in Ontario. A Canadian example was Jean Vanier and his work with L’Arche, a community for persons with mental retardation. The concept of normalization meant integration into social and recreational activities, religious facilities,
hospitals and clinics, the post office, stores and restaurants, job placements, etc. The concept of normalization gained widespread attention and rested on the premise that persons with disabilities were entitled to some self-determination and freedom (Rioux. 1994, p. 98). The discourse of normalization became widespread in Ontario. The Ontario Association for the Mentally Retarded declared its support for the principle of normalization (Anglin & Braaten, 1978). A report commissioned by the Ontario Government, written by Walter Willistin (1971), recommended the phasing out of institutions as a method of accommodating persons with disabilities. In 1972, a task force on “mental retardation” articulated the belief that community services must be broadened for persons with retardation. This report was supported by a document released in 1973, by Robert Welch, the provincial Secretary, which articulated the goals of community living, employment, and the creation of a social guardianship program (Anglin & Braaten, 1978).

The discourse of normalization really meant equal access and equal participation. This discourse appeared to be significant in government and in associations related to “mental retardation.” However, the discourse of normalization only appeared twice in the data used for this study. In one report by the Council for Exceptional Children, the regular classroom was considered the “normal” situation and therefore personnel and services were to be available to retain children in this normal situation (Council for Exceptional Children, 1972). This idea was reinforced in 1973.

In Ontario, at present, in common with many other parts of the world, there exists a concern to retain exceptional children in as “normal” situations as possible, i.e., in their home communities and schools, with their own age groups; in short, in “integrated classes.” (Council for Exceptional Children, 1973, p. 22.)

The discourse of normalization did not appear elsewhere in the data. At this time, it would appear that this discourse was not taken up by policy actors.

**Equal Educational Opportunity**

The discourse of equal educational opportunity was predominant in Ontario education. Equality was achieved by fair sorting of students into occupational streams. This practice was believed to be equal and efficient (Pike, 1978-1979, p. 31). Schools and programs were differentiated for “diverse groups in the population” (Tyack, 1974, p. 186). Separating students
by perceived ability created homogeneous groups of students who could be instructed according to their abilities. The instructional focus, resources, and curriculum was targeted to the ability level and projected future employment of the students in the program. Equal opportunity was intended “for all to receive an education that will prepare them equally well for their particular life work” (Stevens & Wood, 1987, p. 160). Equal opportunity was achieved through differentiated educational programs. This essentially meant that equality existed within each educational stream, not across different streams. Equality existed if the sorting process was fair and if the resources and instructional strategies were the same for all students within an educational stream, class, or program (Stevens & Wood, 1987, p. 162). This discourse was “within group” equality, meaning that if all students within a particular group received the same instruction, resources etc., then equality was achieved. Others have used the term equality of treatment (Varpalotai, 1995). Both conservatives and liberals like the idea of equality of opportunity. “Those who champion the idea of equal opportunity generally accepted the concept of meritocracy” (Stevens & Wood, 1997, p. 348). Liberals want to promote this discourse and offer the hope that by hard work and ability one can change social class. Conservative thinkers supported this discourse because it reproduced the status quo social hierarchy. Science became the most valued educational stream in the United States, in the early 1960s. The desire to produce more scientists resulted in new curricula, texts, and resources (Stevens & Wood, 1987, p. 162). Scientific rationalist thinkers would support the elite position of science in the meritocratic organization of society.

**IDEOLOGICAL AGREEMENTS ABOUT EQUALITY**

| Discourses                                | conservatist reasoning                                      | liberal reasoning                                              | Scientific rationalism reasoning |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Equal Educational: within class equality, sorting into homogeneous groups | reproduce social class structure everyone knows their future life role | potential promise of changing social class by hard work and high ability |

Figure 17: Ideological Agreements About Equality
**Rights**

Equality was also defined by the discourse of rights. In the early years of the study, children with disabilities were dependent solely on their parents or charity for their care and development. Under the medical model of disability, the disease took precedence over the individual child. At this time, children were seen as property and subject to the good will of paternalism. The prevailing principle was *patriae potestas* which meant that a father had the power of life and death over a child and could quite literally murder the child without fear of legal sanctions. Over time, the value of children became acknowledged as children contributed labour on family farms and cared for parents in their old age (Covell & Howe, 2001, p. 17).

However, there was still the principle of social *laissez-faire* which meant that families were required to provide the necessities of life but had a free hand in child rearing practices. There were no laws against exploitation and abuse by employers either (Covell & Howe, 2001, p. 17). There was a gradual evolution in relation to the growth of humanitarianism to a stage where children were thought to be vulnerable persons and in need of special protection (Covell & Howe, 2001, p. 17). There was sanctioned state intervention when parents were not fulfilling their responsibilities to their children. This became known as the principle of *parens patriae*, i.e., the state as father. However, state intervention was only used as a last resort. Children were still under paternalistic control of the male parent and they were protected from abuse, but they had no independence or voice (Covell & Howe, 2001, p. 19).

The discourse of children as bearers of rights was first evident in the Hall-Dennis Report (1968) which noted that the child had “a right to be himself [or herself]” (p. 4). The discourse of rights was also evident in the CELDIC report, namely, to include “an equal right to a full life” (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 2). The idea of rights applied to all children and acknowledged individual differences (Roberts & Lazure, 1970, p. 71). The responsibility for the provision of these basic human rights was a public expense for society. However, having rights in law does not guarantee accessibility to those rights, especially for children with disabilities. Rights were becoming acknowledged in Canadian society for minority adult groups, but not yet for children or for children as students. Rights were believed to be only available to adults, despite the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child* in 1959. This document advocated for the child’s status as a person who is the bearer of rights.
The discourse of rights shifted to the rights to access an appropriate program (Council for Exceptional Children, 1971, October, p.182). This report argued for these rights for all children, not just children with disabilities. All children included a group of children with “outstanding abilities and talents” (Council for Exceptional Children, 1971, October, p.182). In effect, this report argued for the gifted population to be included within special education at the public expense. The Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation held that Ontario’s society was technological, sophisticated, and based on equal rights for all [teachers and students] (OSSTF, 1976, p. 8). This report was critical of the pace and scope of secondary school reform. The inference is that students have more rights than teachers. In this report, teachers asked for “humane change [and] humane treatment” (p. 8) to go through a change process.

The discourse of children’s rights was replaced by parents’ rights (Editor, 1974b, September). These rights concerned navigating the special education system with authority, e.g., the right to get by in the system, the right to know, the right to financing. Using clear, directive language, parents were given instructions on how to understand the school system, how to get the assessment, diagnostic services, and financing, from the Ministry of Community and Social Services Rehabilitation Bureau. Parents were informed that exclusions from discussions and decisions were an insult to parents’ human rights.

This discourse reaffirmed societal beliefs that aligned with conservative thinking that parent’s rights superseded children’s rights. The transfer of rights from children to parents would align with the conservative ideology that supports the preservation of the patriarchal family unit. Further, the concepts of parental power and control are hidden by the rhetoric of “in the best interests of the child.” This statement illustrates that children do not have rights separate from their parents. They essentially belong to their parents who will make decisions on their behalf (Canadian Council on Children & Youth, 1978, p. 8; Coltrane and Hickman, 1992, p. 412). The discourse of children’s rights reappeared in 1978 but was not evident after that time (OACL&D, 1978). Liberal thinkers believe that all individuals have equal human rights and rights to liberty. Liberty for individuals is enhanced by government enacted laws (Johnston, 1996, p. 43).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourses</th>
<th>conservatist reasoning</th>
<th>liberal reasoning</th>
<th>Scientific rationalism reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Rights</td>
<td>children should be obedient and serve the family and society rights to parents</td>
<td>everyone entitled to citizenship rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 18: Ideological Disagreements About Equality
Chapter Six: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, I will respond to the research questions that guided this study and consider the implications of this study for theory, for special education knowledge, for research methodology, and for education reform. The chapter will end with a discussion of the influence of this study on my current practice in the areas of pedagogy and course development for future teacher educators. The first three questions will be answered holistically. These questions are:

1. What were the discourses within Ontario’s special education policy between 1965 and 1980?
2. How were these discourses taken up and reconstituted in the texts of non-government policy participants over time?
3. How were the discourses related to ideologies in the broader society?

The discourses of special education were configured into five webs of related meanings. These webs represented how and what certain groups in education thought about complex and abstract concepts such as disability, education, professionalism, management, and equality. In these individual webs, the discourses were related and mutually reinforcing. In the entire special education web, similar discourses were found in different webs. By joining related discourses the entire web is given strength.

Responding to the First Three Research questions

This section enables me to respond holistically to the first three research questions:

1. What were the discourses within Ontario’s special education policy between 1965-1980?
2. How were these discourses taken up and reconstituted in the texts of non-government policy participants over time?
3. How were the discourses related to ideologies in the broader society?
Early 1960s

Discourses in each of the five condensation symbol webs of Disability, Professionalism, Management, Education, and Equality, worked together to construct, support, and reproduce a reality of inequality and exclusion for children with disabilities in schools. This reality mirrored Canadian society, in general, in the early 1960s. There was a common sense acceptance of inequalities and the resulting practices of discrimination and exclusion. These ideas were supported by the growth of the manufacturing sector that meant the expansion of the capitalist economy. Capitalism supports a meritocratic organization of society that results in social stratification. Capitalism was supported by both the conservative and liberal ideologies. The growth of capitalism brought the expansion of the bureaucratic organization of economic and educational institutions. The highest status and economic and social rewards went to those who were wealthy, educated, and privileged. The lowest status was attributed to persons with disabilities because they were unable to contribute to the economy. At this time, disability was seen by both liberal and conservative thinkers as a deficit and a deviance to be feared and controlled.

Equality in schooling was expressed in the organizational structure, grouping, and instructional strategies. The meritocratic structure supported sorting and homogeneous grouping of students based on perceived ability and academic achievement. These discourses of stratification, meritocracy, and reproducing Christian values, worked together to support the traditional practices of education. Students with ability, high social and economic status, and who were of the white, European race, were privileged. The traditional classroom structure meant the same curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessment, were given to all students, without exception, as an expression of equality. Children who did not conform to the behavioural or academic expectations were identified as deficient and deviant. Children with disabilities were rarely successful in the traditional classroom, meaning that the needs for an alternative setting like special education grew. The discourse of learning disabilities was identical to the discourses of disability and served as an example of the discourses of disability in the school setting. Children with learning disabilities failed to meet the expectations of the regular classroom and often dropped out of school as soon as possible. In special education classes, children with severe disabilities were instructed in personal hygiene, and domestic and labour skills.
Rudimentary literacy and numeracy skills were taught. The increasing demand for special education programs and services meant that urban boards were creating classes for each separate type of disability. The growth in demand for services increased the need for more educational and psychological professionals. The condensation web of Professionalism was linked to other webs by related discourses, adding strength to the ways of representing children with disabilities, schooling, and special education, in the web. Psychological professionals had the specialized knowledge, elite position, and professional authority, to determine normativity and, by extension, the disability that students possessed. This web joined with the web of Management through the discourse of measurement. Professionals used standardized measurement tools to quantify the achievement gap or the severity of the disability. Professionals were the highest authority and were expected to make decisions “in the best interests of the child,” which was an expression of paternalistic, benevolent humanitarianism. The policy web of beliefs and practices became a mutually reinforcing web representing what I call a status quo position of special education, supported by ideologies of conservatism, liberalism, and scientific rationalism.

The hierarchically organized bureaucratic institutions that developed standardized procedures based on qualification, measurement, and classification was supported by conservatism, and liberal and scientific rationalist thinking. This organization, linked to capitalism, provided hierarchies of authority and orderliness. Conservative thinkers would argue that everyone knows their role and responsibility. Economic liberalist thinkers believed that inequalities existed because of differences in skills and abilities, and that people chose not to be successful competitors in the marketplace. Economic rewards and higher status in the hierarchy would flow to those with the most ability and motivation. Liberal thinkers would support the meritocratic organization because of the inherent competition in this kind of organization. The discourse of efficiency of the bureaucratic organization would be supported by scientific rationalist thinkers.

Professionals in the disciplines of science and psychology were particularly esteemed during the period under study. Science was heralded as an objective discipline that dealt with facts and observable, measurable characteristics. Medical and psychological professionals held higher status than education professionals. Professionals were expected to exercise benevolent humanitarianism by making decisions “in the best interests of the child” showing the strength of
professional authority. Conservative thinkers would support the discourse of benevolent humanitarianism because of the analogy to the benevolent parent (father) image who is believed to be in the best position to make decisions for the child. The benevolent father image is part of the conservative beliefs about the primacy of the family over the individual (Lakoff, 2002). Discourses of professional authority and measurement worked together to create a belief that (ab)normality could be quantified. Health and education professionals used standardized tools for measuring the degree of disability and created classifications based on these measurements.

Conservatism supported the traditional education philosophy based on hierarchies of authority and within-stream equality. The vocational education stream was presented as an opportunity for students to gain access to the upward social mobility ladder through skilled employment. This discourse rationalized the exclusion of students who did not have the preferred, highly-valued abilities and behaviours from regular education. Children with severe disabilities would be in the lowest educational strata but their rudimentary literacy, numeracy, and domestic and labour skills meant they could be helpful in domestic or agricultural settings.

In sum, the web that I identified as the status quo perspective was created by the interaction of the discourses of the five condensation symbols. This web would experience a new configuration between 1968 and 1970, as new discourses entered the policy web.

1968-1970: Change

In the late 1960s, economic liberalism was giving way to ethical liberalism. This meant attention to reducing the inequality gaps in society. Nationally, the 1960s were noted for the Keynesian welfare state policies that resulted in the scope and universality of social programs to protect citizens from destitution. These practices aligned with beliefs that redistribution of resources was necessary to protect civil rights (Sargent, 2005, p. 137). On the national political scene, minorities became politically active in order to gain equal access to employment, higher education, social benefits, and rights of citizenship. Equality gains made at the federal level encouraged minority groups at the provincial level to demand the same access to education. French language parents began to exercise their right to education in their first language. Cultural groups wanted to preserve their traditions and languages and achieved the right to maintaining
their ancestral language at the public expense in schools. Roman Catholics began to demand government funding to the same level as their non-Catholic counterparts.

Between 1968 and 1970, the special education policy web changed as some discourses promoting social justice for children with disabilities became more prominent. Education reform in the 1960s, in both the elementary and secondary levels, in Ontario, was informed by a philosophy of progressivism. In education, the philosophy moved away from religious indoctrination to a focus on the individual and efforts to make learning relevant to the child. Discourses of individual growth and child-centeredness and a new discourse of equality became dominant in the special education policy web, in 1968, with the release of the Hall-Dennis Report. These discourses were supported by discourses of disability as difference. The stigma was removed and differences were normal and valued in the school community. The discourse of equal outcomes for students replaced the discourse of within-group equality. Equality of outcomes was a cross-group comparative measure. The discourses of learning disabilities changed from an individual deficit to a focus on the barriers created by societal attitudes and the barriers inherent in schooling, such as inflexible instruction and evaluation, an unyielding focus on behavioural conformity, and the primacy of writing, rote memorization, and reading print.

Two years later, these discourses were reinforced with the release of the CELDIC report (Roberts & Lazure, 1970). Disability was defined as socially constructed and, therefore, became the responsibility of society to adequately support persons with disabilities. The idea of public support was a direct contrast to the previous ideas that charity and family should be the means for supporting persons with disabilities. The discourses in this report replaced efficiency with inefficiency, pointing out that the current provisions of services for children with learning and emotional difficulties was inefficient management and perpetuated inequalities. The discourses of disability, equality, and education worked together to challenge and change the status quo beliefs about education. I identify this configuration as a social justice one because of the challenges to the exclusionary and discriminatory practices of the status quo configuration. However, despite the focus on the individual supported by the ideology of ethical liberalism and the acceptance of a progressivist educational philosophy, the condensation webs of Professionalism and Management continued to be strong. The practices of classification and placement into special education programs, based on assessments and professional judgment,
continued. These practices were centered in the sciences and were supported by the ideology of scientific rationalism. The increasing size of schools and school districts meant that the bureaucratic model of schooling continued to be replicated and became more firmly entrenched. The condensation symbol web of Management continued to be strong.

The Retrenchment

After a brief interlude with social justice, the special education policy web configuration changed again. Despite the growth and development of disability rights and the focus on developing a Charter of Rights and Freedoms to eliminate inequalities in the national arena, the discourses of Management became prominent. During the 1970s, the advocacy groups were invited into the legislative process and produced many drafts of recommendations for mandatory legislation based on the existing service delivery model. The discourse of legislation grew in intensity throughout the 1970s, culminating with the release of draft legislation in 1978, and then supported by the introduction of formal legislation (Bill 82) in 1980, by the government. These recommendations advocated for legitimizing the existing practices of assessment, categorization, and placement in educational streams based on projected ability and conformist behaviours, thereby strengthening the condensation web of Professionalism. The discourse of learning disabilities changed position from the condensation web of disability to the condensation web of management. The OACLDB achieved a definition of learning disabilities which separated this group of students from those with autism or with mental retardation. In addition, a resource guide for learning disabilities was produced and a demonstration school for teaching students with learning disabilities was introduced. Learning disabilities came to be thought about in terms of legislation and standardized measurement. The condensation webs of Professionalism and Management were legitimized with legislation and continued to become stronger.

This configuration was very similar to the status quo configuration. The ideologies of conservatism, liberalism, and scientific rationalism, would continue to support the meritocratic organization of schooling, the standardization of the bureaucratic model, special education practices, and the definitiveness of legislation. These discourses of the web of Management supported the ideas of conservative thinkers about hierarchies and stability. Liberal thinkers would support the idea of competition and stratification based on merit. Scientific rational thinkers would support the growth of the rational practices and organization of special education.
Ideological support would be extended to the principles of equal educational opportunity based on homogeneous grouping and equality as sameness. This form of equality was rational and would support stratification and hierarchy, therefore appealing to all ideologies.

Discourses in the web of Disability were about learning differences. The discourse of normalization and children’s rights appeared briefly. Vocational education discourses represented this educational option as unfavourable, resulting in long-term unemployment for students leaving this educational stream. These discourses were supportive of the social justice discourses but were unable to become very strong.

However, one discourse was an outlier and did not relate to any other discourses.

**The Discourse of Advocacy**

Despite the short lived appearance of this discourse, it does appear in policy texts. During the period of study, advocacy for persons with disabilities was shifting from disability-specific advocacy to advocacy that represented groups of persons with disabilities and concentrated on the acquisition and distribution of resources (Vincent et al., 1996, p. 482). In the mid-1970s, advocacy was becoming directed by the persons with disabilities and was becoming both a political issue and an issue of independent living and consumer choice. Disability advocacy had a national presence in Canada as the Council of Canadians with Disabilities evolved from the Coalition of Provincial Organizations of the Handicapped during the late 1970s (COPOH) (Neufeldt, 2003a, p. 51).

Advocacy groups related to special education in Ontario had differing views about their role. The OACLD offered three different advocacy purposes in three successive years. In 1974, Doreen Kronick, president of the OACLD, directed parents that when advocating for their child with school personnel, assertiveness was the appropriate strategy. The following year, another OACLD member reflected that a “persuasive and continuous appeal” (Hawke, 1975a, June, p. 5) was the preferred strategy to be used by the association. The discourse of children’s rights was next appropriated by parents’ rights (Editor, 1974b, September, p. 1). These rights were about navigating the special education system with authority, e.g., “the right to get by in the system, the right to know, the fight to financing.” Using clear, directive language, parents were given
instructions on how to understand the school system and how to get the assessments and diagnoses that were necessary to access services and financing. Parents were informed that exclusions from discussions and decisions were an insult to parents’ human rights. This discourse reaffirmed the societal beliefs that parents’ rights superseded children’s rights. In 1976, advocacy was described as “increasing public presence and publicity” (MacDonald, 1976a).

On the other hand, the Association for Bright Children (ABC) identified its advocacy work as influence of school personnel, rather than taking an aggressive stance, e.g., “work with and through trustees, principals and administrators. … [We] have chosen to influence rather than be aggressive with school boards” (Editor, 1977). The Chair of the Educational Affairs Committee described the advocacy work of the Ontario Association for Mental Retardation (OAMR) as consultative and co-operative, not political or aggressive. “[The] committee continues to act as an informal consultant, when requested. … There was some outreach and cooperative work with staff of local correctional services like probation officers, and staff” (OAMR, 1976).

The discourses in the condensation web of Advocacy were not mutually supportive within the web and did not share discourses with other webs. Therefore, I identified this web as outside the special education policy web of 1965-1980. The discourses of advocacy may be an integral part of the web if another time period is examined.

The Picture Today

More than a quarter of a century has elapsed since mandatory legislation was accepted in Ontario. Mandatory special education legislation legitimized the structures and procedures that were already in use by urban school districts from 1965-1980. These structures and procedures continue to the present day. Central to special education is the measurement of ability and measuring the gap from “normal” achievement. These measurements are conducted by medical and psychological professionals. Students are given medical or psychological labels and categorized into one of five global categories of Behaviour, Communication, Physical, Intellectual, and Multiple Exceptionalities. Within these global categories are eleven definitions of conditions that fall within these categories (Ministry of Education, 2001). The definitions
were revised slightly in the 1990s but closely resemble the criteria of the original categories of 1980.

Homogeneous grouping and streaming still exists. In Ontario secondary schools, programs are offered at four levels of ability. Three levels of ability will provide the student with credits towards a graduation diploma. One of the streams provides non-credit courses for students with disabilities. Non-credit courses have no exchange value for credentials or future employment. This system replicates the hierarchical sorting of students evident historically.

The educational program and the student’s placement flows from identification and categorization. These decisions are made by educational professionals. Many school districts provide separate classes for various types of disabilities. Other school districts group all students in the regular elementary classroom for varying amounts of time (up to 50% or exceeding 50%). The remaining time is in a special education resource classroom. Other school districts claim to have an inclusive approach and all students are placed in the regular classroom regardless of the label and category.

The procedures for identifying a student are highly formalized and resemble the initial Identification, Placement and Review Committee legislation of 1980. I believe that the Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a brief nod to the principles of individualism. The IEP was part of the initial mandatory legislation in 1980 and remains a central feature in providing educational programs and services to students identified as exceptional. Parents were given rights of appeal on behalf of their children with the original legislation and those rights of appeal continue. Despite age, students have no legal standing in special education (Milne, 1997). Special education continues to be highly legislated with more than twelve separate Regulations addressing areas of operations and management.

The exclusion of children with disabilities from the regular classroom has been reduced. The Ministry of Education states that approximately 79% of elementary students and 82% of secondary students are included in regular classrooms for over 50% of their day (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009). Terminology has changed. In Ontario, the terms “developmental disabilities” or “intellectual disabilities” replace the terms “trainable retardation” and “educable
retardation.” The current terms infer a developmental lag or different abilities rather than an intrinsic deficit.

Responding to the Fourth Research Question

The picture today suggests some changes have occurred in terminology and placement practices. However, the practices of measurement and categorization within a legislated framework, based on the principles of the meritocracy and bureaucratic rationalism, continue. Answers to the fourth question offers some insights into this disconnect:

4. What explanations can be offered for special education’s continued resistance to reform?

I argue that there are three reasons for the continued resistance to reform. These reasons are (1) agreement among the enduring ideologies of liberalism, conservatism, and scientific rationalism, (2) the pervasive beliefs about children and their rights, and (3) the strength of the webs of Professionalism and Management.

This study has shown a significant amount of agreement among the ideologies of conservatism, liberalism, and scientific rationalism, with respect to the discourses in the condensation webs of Disability, Management, Professionalism, Education, and Equality. Because there is no dis-equilibrium, there is no requirement for change. Further, the ideologies show strongest support for the status quo and the entrenchment of configurations that support stratification and meritocracy. A case can be made that the ideologies that informed the discourses historically are enduring. Conservatism and liberalism have evolved to the newer versions of neoconservatism and neoliberalism (Apple, 2001; Basu, 2004; Johnston, 1996; Joshee, 2007) but the basic tenets are still the same. Conservatives continue to believe in a hierarchy of authority and the centrality of the family unit (Lakoff, 2002). Liberal thinkers continue to support competition. Competition is now globalized and is evident under the maxims of choice, charter, vouchers, and privatization, making schools like the marketplace. Liberal thinkers continue to be concerned for the wellbeing of the individual. Both ideologies support capitalism and the inherent meritocratic organization of society and schooling.
The reverence for science exists in the current society which values empirical research more highly than qualitative research. Scientific rationalist thinking supports the elitism of psychological and medical professionals who identify normality and quantify the difference between abnormality and normality.

A second reason that I offer for the continued resistance of special education to reform efforts is the beliefs about children and their rights. One of the central themes in the historical context was the national expansion of disability advocacy. Cross-disability advocacy groups joined together and became politically influential, resulting in the inclusion of disability as a prohibited ground for discrimination in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Despite the national and political influence of disability advocacy, this was a short-lived, stand-alone discourse in the special education policy web and not related to other individual webs. I offer two thoughts about why this might be the case. First, the national advocacy presence focused on adults with disabilities while in special education, the focus is on children. As discussed in an earlier section on children’s rights, I believe the status of children as non-bearers of rights is significant. Special education legislation gives no rights or standing to children of any age within the formal decisions made about identification or placement, or in the development or acceptance of the individual education plan (IEP) developed to outline programs for students. Exceptional students are permitted to attend school until age 21, but all signatory and decision-making rights fall to the parent(s) (Grover, 2002). I believe this relates to the beliefs that children are “not yet citizens” (Covell & Howe, 2001) and non-bearers of rights. Children are not seen as having rights, although these rights are inferred in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (CRF) and were clearly articulated in 1959, in the Declaration of Rights of the Child (DRC). The DRC also identified that children are vulnerable and in need of protection by professionals and parents. Children are not seen as bearers of rights. Children are dependent on their parents and expected to be obedient and to subordinate their needs/wishes to those of the family unit. This belief is part of the conservative tradition that conceptualizes a family as a married, heterosexual couple with the male being the “head” of the family. Family members are subject to this patriarchal authority. The beliefs that children are vulnerable is related to one of Wolfensberger’s archetypes of disability. The perpetual child was innocent and in need of care and protection at any age. The conservative ideology held that parents and, by extension, professionals were expected to exercise benevolent humanitarianism toward adults and children with disabilities.
I argue a third reason that special education is resistant to reform is that the strength of the webs of Professionalism and Management, individually and working together, was too powerful for other discourses to change. The discourses in the web of Management worked together to support the replication, expansion, and legitimizing of a set of practices and an organizational structure that emphasized rational decision making and technocratic role-differentiation-situated principles of science. The bureaucracy supported the expansion of the capitalist system in manufacturing, especially in Ontario, from World War II until the time under study (1965-1980). The amalgamation of school boards from single school boards to county wide boards, in 1969, supported the replication of bureaucratic forms of governance. The web of Management was strengthened with the release of draft mandatory special education legislation, in 1978, that prescribed and standardized operating procedures, definitions, and services, into one model with a bureaucratic emphasis on sorting, classifications, incidence rates, and rational decision making.

The discourses in the web of Professionalism remained stable. I argue that the strengthening of the web of Management provided strength to the web of Professionalism. Both the CELDIC report (Roberts & Lazure, 1970) and the Hall-Dennis Report (1968) drew attention to an exponential growth in numbers of students waiting for diagnosis and special education services. The data in this study confirms that students couldn’t get access to special education services without a diagnosis from medical or psychological professionals. Teachers could not make a diagnosis. Psychologically-informed diagnostic centers grew in number in the 1970s and the number of psychologists and attendant professionals hired by school boards continued to increase. In 1978, the draft legislation made it essential to obtain a diagnosis and referral by professionals before receiving special education services. The need for psychological professionals and special education teachers with specialized knowledge and professional authority grew and the Professionalism web strengthened. The web of Professionalism and the web of Management worked together to support the elite position of psychological and special education professionals and their centrality to the practices of assessment, categorization, and placement in the highly legislated, bureaucratically-based organization that prioritized measurement, standardization, and efficiency. The webs around other condensation symbols were not strong enough to change this mutually supportive configuration.
In conclusion, this dissertation has identified that the special education policy web, between 1965 and 1980, was composed of five webs of meaning around the condensation symbols of Disability, Management, Professionalism, Education, and Equality. These webs were interconnected and provided strength to the beliefs about children with disabilities and their education, and the practices of special education, throughout the fifteen years under study. The relative strength of the condensation webs in the configuration of the special education policy web changed over time. However, the changes did not result in significant changes to the practices of special education into the present day. One reason is the influence of stable, invisible, unconscious ideologies of conservatism, liberalism, and scientific rationalism that continue to be present in slightly altered forms today. Another reason is the strength and stability of the mutually-reinforcing webs of Management and Professionalism that provide strength to the organization and practices of special education. Last, I suggest that the status of children within education, as non-bearers of rights and dependent on parents, contributes to the continued resistance to reform of special education. This research is also important for its contributions to theory, research methodology, special education knowledge, and to policy reform.

This dissertation contributes to theory in three ways. First, this work contributes to understandings of policy as discourse. Second, it extends the understandings of the policy web, and third, this dissertation offers an extension to the existing understandings of capital and power.

**Implications for Policy as Discourse Theory**

This work builds on earlier work of scholars who state that policy is discourse (Joshee, 2007; Gee, 2005; Goldberg, 2005; Ball, 1994). My work shows that policy discourse is ideologically informed and therefore policy expresses taken-for-granted, unconscious beliefs of society. This work progresses from ideas that discourses and ideologies coexist (Goldberg, 2005), to show that discourses are manifestations of ideology. Discourses are purposeful expressions of ideologies held by groups in society.

**Implications for Policy Web Theory**

This work extends the existing understandings of the policy web as a tool for conceptualizing the complexities of policy. My work extends the understandings of the
complexities of the policy web from other conceptions (Winton, 2007; Joshee & Johnson, 2005; Goldberg, 2005). The special education policy web may be visually represented as a collection of webs of discourses. However, discourses do not map neatly within a specific web. Some discourses relate to another web. These interrelationships add texture and strength to the entire special education policy web. The mapping of these interrelated discourses does not form predictable patterns and could be conceptualized by the metaphor of postmodern lace. The design of postmodern lace follows no predictable patterns. Spaces are of varying sizes and interconnecting discourses, represented by lines, are of varying lengths and directionality. The special education policy web from 1965-1980 was captured within a collection of discourses that formed stand-alone and interconnected webs of meaning.

**Implications for Theory of Power**

This study makes a significant contribution to understanding power as exercised through forms of capital. Specifically, I extend Pierre Bourdieu’s assertion that cultural capital is held by individuals in their interactions with the school. I use the example of the Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (OACLD) to illustrate that members of this association possessed cultural, economic, and social capital, and shared these forms of capital with the Association to increase the symbolic capital of the Association and its members. The symbolic capital enabled the Association and its members to be seen as experts and to use policy discourses in the special education web in ways that would advance their beliefs about children and adults with learning disabilities.

The OACLD was founded by individuals with cultural capital. These individuals were professionals in executive positions. The first president of the OACLD, Doreen Kronick, was co-founder of the Ontario and Canadian Associations and served as President and Treasurer of the Ontario ACLD, President of the Canadian Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (CACLD), and Director of the United States ACLD. She is described as widely travelled, lecturing and writing on behalf of children with learning disabilities. She published books, a guide for UNESCO, and was a regular contributor to the *Academic Therapy Quarterly* journal. Her husband, Joseph Kronick, was a social worker. He was the Director of the Integra Foundation, created to provide non-formal learning opportunities for children with learning disabilities. Joseph and Doreen operated Camp Towhee, in Haliburton, which was a special camp
for children with learning disabilities. Doreen and Joseph also created the Wellesley Remedial Program which offered remediation, music, and woodworking to children on Saturday mornings or afternoons. They conducted workshops at the United States ACLD Conference, the Ontario CEC Conference, and the Ontario Camping Association. These individuals would be considered experts and had wide social networks with medical and educational professionals.

By 1971, the OACLD had thirty chapters in Ontario with a membership of approximately 7000, one quarter of whom were professionals (OACLD, 1971, p. 6). This association’s president, in 1972, was Tom Leon, an alderman. Executive members included Dr. Wm. Hawke, a medical doctor with the Hospital for Sick Children. He was President in 1975. The Ontario Medical Association had a representative on the OACLD Board. A Juvenile Court Judge, Judge Holte, was a member of the OACLD, as were Michelle Landsberg and Stephen Lewis (Drake, 1976, p. 3). Stephen Lewis was an elected member of the Ontario Legislature from 1963 to 1978. Stephen Lewis self-identified as a socialist and was a speaker at an OACLD annual conference (Turtle Island Native Network’s Forums, 2009; OACLD, 1989). Michelle Landsberg, wife of Stephen Lewis, was a noted journalist with The Globe and Mail and The Toronto Star. Her columns often dealt with issues of social justice (National Speakers Bureau, n.d.). In 1978, she ran a series of articles in The Toronto Star about a young boy, Gordie, who had autism. This boy was denied transportation to a ground-breaking treatment program that was aired on CBC. The school district refused to pay for transportation. Following Michelle Landsberg’s articles, a large public outcry forced the school board to provide transportation for Gordie to go to his treatment program (The Toronto Star, 1979).

Persons in positions of authority are often persons of influence and may also be opinion leaders. Opinion leaders and the media also have the power to represent ideas and events in particular ways that can influence the knowledge, beliefs, and values of others (Fairclough, 1995, p.2). The OACLD was also supported by Sol Littman, a journalist with The Toronto Star. On November 22, 1978, The Toronto Star, influenced by Littman, brought attention to the neglect of children with learning disabilities with the headline “138,000 Forgotten Kids Need Help Study Says” (Nero, 1989). This journalistic article was based on a report compiled by the OACLD, in 1978, that was a condemnation of the status of special education in Ontario. The OACLD brought many experts from United States’ universities to speak to their members about new
research or new programs, e.g., Mrs. W. A. Chaney from Purdue University (Editor, 1965, May), and Dr. Carl Haywood from George Peabody College (Editor, 1966, April). These presentations were held at the Metro Toronto School Board Education Center on College Street, demonstrating a strong level of cooperation between the school district and the OACLD. In 1976, the OACLD appealed to the Ontario Ombudsman, Arthur Maloney. The Ontario Ombudsman spoke at the annual conference and “intimated that the Ombudsman’s Office was taking an interest in the problems of learning-disabled children in the Province and that there were some four cases before the Office at present” (Berry & Mayfield, 1976, June, p. 2).

Members of the OACLD possessed an understanding of the cultural norms of these professions, and understood the decision-making processes. Association members would use this understanding to gain institutional support for the goals of the Association. For example, the goals of the OACLD were supported by the institutional support of the Hospital for Sick Children. The Hospital for Sick Children supported the first national conference on Learning Disabilities, in 1977, and co-sponsored the first national Conference on Learning Disabilities in Ottawa. In addition, a research project in remedial reading was co-sponsored by the Hospital for Sick Children.

The Association was also able to access funding to support their advocacy work. The OACLD acquired grants from the Atkinson Foundation and The Hospital for Sick Children’s Foundation, as well as financial support from the government. In 1974, the Department of Education provided the OACLD with a cheque for $20,000, four times greater than the Department had provided in the past (Editor, 1974a, June). In 1973, the OACLD requested additional funding from the government, through the Ministry of Community and Social Services, for its continued and increasing advocacy work. The OACLD continued to highlight the persistent inequalities and limited opportunities for higher education or prosperous employment for persons with learning disabilities. The Association recognized that adequate funding and public awareness were essential aspects for advancing their advocacy work. Despite the economic crisis in the 1970s that resulted in reductions in funding for many programs, including special education, the Association’s membership, finances, and public visibility increased. They received funding from the Atkinson Charitable Foundation and grants from the Department of Education. They continued to access leading researchers and distribute current
research in the field of learning disabilities. The OACLD also decided to concentrate its efforts on persuading school boards and the government to focus on appropriate programs and improved teacher education. In 1974, the OACLD launched a public awareness campaign “to create greater awareness of the problems of learning disabilities within Teachers Colleges” (Henteleff, 1974b). The campaign involved distributing advertisements, disseminating information about learning disabilities, creating a Parents’ Rights pamphlet, and providing an information booth at the Canadian National Exhibition. The Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) is a large annual fall fair taking place in late August in Toronto. The CNE attracts approximately 1.3 million visitors each year (Canadian National Exhibition, n.d).

The Association was involved in the development of courses at York University, a learning center at the University of Guelph, and graduate study programs at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (Fleming 1972a, p. 167). The association also distributed television and radio commercials about children with learning disabilities. These productions were made possible by volunteers, and donations for marketing, production, and distribution. Vic Damone, a well known singer, narrated the scripts without charge (MacDonald, 1975b, September). The OACLD sponsored a TV Bingo episode resulting in widespread visibility across the province for the Association. “So we got on T.V. We got on Metro, Rogers, Global Cable, Canada A.M., Elwood Glover, and CHC exhibition TV, according to this memo. Altogether, it looks as if we have been on TV ten times lately” (Henteleff, 1974b, September).

The OACLD maintained representation on the Minister’s Advisory Committee for Special Education (MACSE). This committee was influential in setting the priorities and directions of the government regarding special education. Sally Sullivan, Executive Secretary from the Ontario ACLD, sat on this important committee (MacDonald, 1975a, September). The OACLD also maintained a close relationship with the Ontario government. In 1975, Premier Davis publicly supported Learning Disabilities Week. The OACLD also attracted the attention and support of the Ontario Ombudsman to investigate cases where parents were having difficulty obtaining special education services for their children with learning disabilities. The address of the Ombudsman was circulated to all parents in a newsletter. Subsequently, the Ontario Ombudsman addressed the provincial conference and Annual General Meeting and is shown in a photograph with the president of the Hamilton-Wentworth chapter. The OACLD was involved
with York University in setting up a Chair of Special Education, and with Seneca College in setting up programs for adults with learning disabilities. Local Chapters continued to grow and Chairs were often educators, e.g., Greta Blance, the president of the Mississauga Chapter, was a teacher with the Peel Board of Education (Blance, 1975, p. 5).

In the 1970s, the OACLD attracted many high profile individuals as members and as advocates for children and adults with learning disabilities. The OACLD had the ear of an influential politician, Stephen Lewis. Michelle Landsberg was a regular columnist in the national newspaper, *The Toronto Star*, known for representing liberal views in the tradition of its founder, Joseph Atkinson, who was the editor from 1899 to 1948 (Harkness, 1963). Under his leadership, *The Toronto Star* advocated for the interests of ordinary people (Nero, 1989).

In the late 1970s, Rosemary Underwood became President of the OACLD. Rosemary Underwood’s cultural capital and research soon attracted other persons of influence. According to Kit Nero (1989),

Underwood, a former nurse, had earned a degree in psychology with a thesis on the correlation between learning disabilities and delinquency. The thesis was published in *Canada’s Mental Health* magazine. It garnered the interest of Strong, who eventually became education critic for the Provincial Liberal party. It also attracted the attention of an independent group lobbying for services for learning disabled children. The group consisted of McLuhan, juvenile court judge William Little, and optometric therapist Arthur Hurst. McLuhan introduced Underwood to Sol Littman, a senior editor at *The Toronto Star*. A series of critical articles in one of the largest newspapers in the country helped sway the public and put pressure on the then minority government.

Members of the OACLD were individuals with cultural capital. Professionals from psychology, education, and the medical fields, contributed their expertise and their knowledge of the culture of these organizations and their social networks to the entire OACLD. These individuals created networks with professionals and authorities in many other areas. Lauri Johnson (2005) noted that advocates for diversity developed “interracial networks of school board members, principals, university scholars, teachers’ union activists, and broad-based community organizations” (Johnson, 2005, p. 37). Johnson states that the importance of these networks for successful organizing cannot be underestimated.
Persons with cultural capital are often representatives on committees that act as advisory bodies to decision makers. Rosemary Underwood was the OACLD representative to the Ministry of Education’s Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE). This was the forum where all important issues relating to special education were discussed prior to the legislation draft. The OACLD was in a position to have access to legislation drafts before their public release and to issue commentary to the government. Kit Nero was the founding President of the Toronto Chapter of the OACLD. The Toronto Chapter used its social networks to dispense information about LD to Toronto school board principals who were hosted at luncheons (OACLD, 1989). The Chapter prepared briefs and strategies, and delivered these briefs to the Minister of Education Tom Wells, his Deputy Ministers, and the six Metro Toronto School Board Chairmen. The OACLD had a representative on the Toronto Board of Education’s Advisory Committee on Special Education in the 1970s. This group was asked by the government to comment on the first draft of the Special Education legislation, and this draft was shared with the United States LD Association.

I have extended the understanding of forms of capital articulated by Pierre Bourdieu. I submit that cultural and social capital was shared between individuals and the Association creating symbolic capital that was used by the association and its members as the power and authority to use policy discourses in ways that supported their perspectives which rested within the ideology of ethical liberalism.

Many advocacy associations were involved in special education policy work during the period under study. Newsletters from the Ontario Society for Autistic Children (OSAC), formed in 1973, describe an extensive committee structure and local chapters formed by interested members. Corrine Gross was the Founder of this association but died suddenly in December 1973 (Editor, 1973, p. 1). Archival records during the period under study are limited. From analyzing the data, I infer that this advocacy group did not possess symbolic capital to the same extent as the Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities.

**Implications for Special Education Knowledge**

Traditionally, teachers focused on the technical aspects of ameliorating the learning difficulties of individual students, without examining the hegemonic practices in special
education. Practices of competition, streaming by ability, and the dominance of middle-class values reproduce inequalities (Astman, 1984).

The findings of this study present the possibility to “unmask” the embedded ideologies that reproduce inequalities (Luke, 1995-1996, p. 9; Troyna, 1994, p. 78). Teachers have the opportunity and the authority to introduce counter-discourses into the policy field. The exercise of agency means that policies are reinterpreted and mediated, continuously recontextualized, recreated, and reproduced (Ball, 1994; Bowe, Ball, with Gold, 1992, p. 120; Rizvi & Kemmis 1989, p. 15). Educators must be conscious of any ideology that is exploitive and that does not promote social justice. Educators have the opportunity to use metaphors, models, and analogies in order to resist, accommodate, or reconstruct these discourses (Bowe, Ball, with Gold, 1992, p. 13; Henriches, 1984, in Corker & French, 1999).

**Implications for Education Reform**

Education policy and, by extension, education policy reform, is shaped by the beliefs and values present in the policy context (Ungerleider, 2007). Currently, reform initiatives exist in a neoliberal and neoconservative context (Joshee, 2007; Hursch, 2007; Goldberg, 2005; Smith, 2003; Jordan, 2001; Olssen et al., 2004; Lloyd & Payne, 2003; Jordan, 2001, Apple, 2001; Ozga, 2000; Ball, 1998; Dyson, 1997; Manzer, 1994). The neoliberal focus is grounded in individualistic, meritocratic principles and the neoconservative emphasis is on tougher standards (Apple, 2001, p. 78) and on retaining traditional Christian and family values (Lakoff, 2002). These ideologies resemble the ideologies of liberalism and conservatism that historically informed special education in Ontario. These reforms are based on assumptions that favour white, middle-class students with high intelligence. These reforms reinforce stratification (Apple, 2001, p. 417), shift the blame for inequalities onto schools, parents, and children (Apple 2001, p. 416), and are moving away from a focus on the individual and towards preservation of the unequal system (Lieberman, 1992). The literature review identified that special education was implicated in discussions of equality and ability streaming, and these patterns are still evident in Ontario. Special education is resistant to substantive change. Ability streaming underpins the programs in secondary school. In Ontario, these programs are Academic (destined for university), Applied (destined for workplace), and Essential (non-credit programs with no destination). Students with disabilities are overrepresented in the Applied and Essential streams.
In elementary education, students continue to be removed from the regular classroom on a part-time or full-time basis. Neoliberalism and neoconservatism are still closely related to the original ideologies of liberalism and conservatism. These ideologies continue to reinforce the beliefs that children with disabilities are vulnerable and require the protection of a separate classroom because they are unable to compete in the regular classroom. These beliefs are premised on the acceptance of the meritocratic organization of schooling that privileges students that share white, middle-class values. Substantive reform is unlikely until the ideologically-informed beliefs about children with disabilities and their education undergo significant change.

*Continuing the Journey*

A critical analysis requires critique and action toward social justice. My journey continues. As a teacher educator in a faculty of Education in Ontario, I am in a propitious position to subvert the ideologically-constructed realities about children with disabilities and their education. Further, I engage teacher candidates in critical pedagogy that critiques the “taken-for-granted,” hegemonic practices of schooling and encourages teachers to become agents of change.

I align with scholars who believe teaching is more than a technocratic activity. Teaching has a moral purpose and, therefore, teachers are transformative agents dedicated to social justice and “building a more equitable social order” (Grundy & Hatton, 1995, p. 9). The identities of children with disabilities are constructed primarily within a discourse of benevolent humanitarianism. This discourse privileges professional authority and professional knowledge which leaves children powerless and victims of practices of exclusion disguised as protectionism and assistance. The mysticism surrounding categorization and the legislated processes of identification and placement needs to be debunked. Children with disabilities are learners. I attempt to empower teachers-to-be to foreground learning and background pathologies. I situate my teaching practice within critical pedagogy. I share with the teachers-to-be an approach that questions the status-quo, dominant view and taken-for-granted structures and practices of schooling. Further, I take action by subverting the discourses that reproduce inequalities for children with disabilities.

I continue to learn.
REFERENCES


Alliston Herald. It may be an unrecognized disability and not stupidity. November 3, 1976.


Canadian Broadcasting Company. *Special education.* 1971-03-11


Editor (1974b, September). The right to get by in the system *Communique*, 3(1), 1. Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities.
Editor (1977, February-March). News from the University of Toronto. Association of Bright Children.


Hartley, L. (2006). Constructing the common type: Physiognomic norms and the notion of civic usefulness, from Lavater to Galaton. In W. Ernst (Ed.), *Histories of the normal and the


Henteleff, Y. (1974a, September). Our concern is every child: All children learn differently, and all have unmet needs. Communique, 3(1). Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities.


Phimister, Dr. Z. (1966, May). Opening Address to the 44th International Convention Council for Exceptional Children.


Rioux, M. (1994). Towards a concept of the quality of well being: Overcoming the social and legal construction of inequality. In M. Rioux and M. Bach (Eds.), Disability is not measles (pp. 67-108). North York, Ontario, Canada: Roeher Institute.


Simcoe County Chapter 968, Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). (1977, June) As reading instruction unfolded. Author


**APPENDIX A: ABBREVIATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Association for Bright Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBC</td>
<td>Canadian Broadcasting Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEC</td>
<td>Council for Exceptional Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELDIC</td>
<td>Commission for Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDAO</td>
<td>Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OACLID</td>
<td>Ontario Association for Children with Learning Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAMR</td>
<td>Ontario Association for Mental Retardation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OACPH</td>
<td>Ontario Association for Children with Physical Handicaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAEDC</td>
<td>The Ontario Association for Emotionally Disturbed Children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mental retardation is a term used historically in Ontario and currently in many educational jurisdictions to describe persons with a low intelligence quotient that meet the characteristics outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual. In Ontario the term “developmental disabilities” is used.


For further details consult Mark McGowan’s The Enduring Gift: Catholic Education in the Province of Ontario available at http://www.ocecn.net/enduring_gift.htm


“trainable retarded” is a diagnosis of severe mental retardation. Currently the terminology in use in Ontario is “developmental disability” although in the United States the term mental retardation is commonly used.