

**LESSONS FROM OUR PAST: A COMPARISON OF THE
EXPERIENCES OF THE DESEGREGATION OF BLACK
STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES TO THE EXPERIENCES OF
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS**

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Abstract

Lessons From our Past considers the issue of inclusive education from the unique perspective of narratives from students with disabilities, as well as Black students who experienced desegregation in the United States. The research suggests that there exists a parallel between the experiences of the desegregation of Black students and students with disabilities in mainstream schools with respect to peer harassment, the degree of inclusion in the classroom and extra-curricular activities, as well as student friendships. Both populations experienced similar barriers to inclusion as a consequence of the fears and prejudicial attitudes of fellow students and teachers. The research is unique because it endeavours to include the voices of students with disabilities to the fullest extent possible. Many other studies tend to marginalize the voices of the participants. What emerges is a perspective on inclusive education which extends beyond previous studies in that it merges Black history with the relatively new scholarship of Disability Studies.

Introduction

In 1955 the story of a brave and tired woman named Rosa Parks was put in front of this country's awareness. They say this woman had gotten tired, in fact, historically tired of being denied equality. She wanted to be included in society in a full way, something which was denied people labeled as "black" people! So Rosa Parks sat down on a bus in a section reserved for "white" people. When Rosa was told to go to "her place" at the back of the bus, she refused to move, was arrested, and historically tired of being excluded. She had sat down and thereby stood up for inclusion! Another powerful cry for "inclusion" is being heard today... Across the country a definition of inclusion is offered. It is generally accepted that "Inclusion" means inviting those who have been historically locked out to "come in." (Asante, n.d., What is Inclusion?, p. 1)

There exists a wealth of information on the value of the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. Although the debate is one which is controversial, it is by no means settled as of yet. A comparison between the experiences of Black students who experienced desegregation to students with disabilities who attend mainstream schools is useful. The research suggests that there are parallels between the desegregation of Black students in the United States and the integration of students with disabilities in mainstream schools. Both involve the strong possibility of exclusion from mainstream education on the basis of a physical or other so-termed "defining" characteristic. The education of students with disabilities is indeed an emotion-laden and, at times, a confusing topic. Suggestions of similar effects emerge from an exploratory look at the desegregation of Black students in the United States to students with disabilities in mainstream schools. Such research allows for new perspectives on a major topic in the study of disability.

A close look at narratives from Black students as well as students with disabilities may be revealing. The findings are crucial to the research as they give voice to oppressed

populations of people. Through stories, patterns of oppression emerge. For example, Black students and students with disabilities recounted similar accounts of peer harassment (Chesler, 1967; Coles, 1964; Morris & Morris, 2002; Armstrong, 2003; Asch, 1989; Marini, Fairbairn, & Zuber, 2001). This is important for the research because both groups have endured, and still endure, negative experiences at school because of differences, or perceived difference. The research makes extensive use of Chesler's 1967 study on the experiences of Black children after desegregation. The interviews are important because research often does not endeavour to include narratives of Black students who experienced school desegregation.

A thematic comparison between the experiences of students with disabilities and Black students after desegregation yields similarities with respect to peer harassment, friendship, and inclusion in the classroom as well as in extracurricular activities. Certain groups of students were far from being included in school life. Much as colour had a significant impact upon the extent of inclusion, so does level of ability. Even with integration into schools, there is evidence that segregation continued to some extent, for Black students as well as for students with disabilities.

There is justification in comparing two different time periods. From an analysis of Black history, it allows for lessons to emerge retrospectively, such as the negative repercussions of exclusion. The value of including narratives from the present and the past is that they highlight common experiences specific to each era and allows for recommendations to emerge which highlight the effects of the attempts of inclusion in schools. While there are significant differences between the two time periods, such as with

respect to the political situation, enough commonalities exist for an excellent discussion on the inclusion of students to emerge. Furthermore, similar societal barriers precluded both populations from inclusion which warrants and validates a comparison.

The theoretical premise of the research is the Social Model of disability. The cornerstone of the theory is that “it is society which disables physically impaired people. Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society” (Oliver, 1996, p. 22). In the same manner in which Black people are oppressed as a function of social organisation, persons with disabilities are also an oppressed group within society. Oliver sees disability as “the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organization which takes little or no account of people who have physical impairments” (Ibid.). On a similar note, it seems that the colour of one’s skin often functions as a factor which isolates persons of colour from participation in society. As Oliver states, disability often “excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities” (Ibid.). Thus, as Black political activists work to remove barriers, so do persons with disabilities. The Social Model recognizes that persons with disabilities are an oppressed group. Most importantly, it is society, and not persons with disabilities, that needs to change (Oliver, 1996).

Therefore, the research privileges the voices of oppressed groups to articulate their experiences of confronting these societal barriers. In order that the voices of the students are preserved, all words quoted are reproduced in the language or grammar in which they were created.

Definitions

Inclusion.

Inclusive education refers to educational practice based on the philosophical belief that all learners, those with and without disabilities, have the right to be educated together in age-appropriate class groups, and that all will benefit from education in the regular classrooms of community schools. Within these settings teachers, parents, and others work collaboratively using appropriate and sufficient resources to interpret and enact the regular curriculum in a flexible manner in accordance with the individual abilities and needs of all learners (Bunch, Dore, L., Dore, R., Finnegan, & Humphries, 2005).

Integration.

Integration refers to attendance of learners with disabilities in regular classes on a full-time or part-time basis in the company of typical peers. It involves a process involving determination of the amount of inclusion and development of a supportive regular class instructional program. Integration, primarily, is associated with the Special Education Model (Bunch, Dore, L., Dore, R., Finnegan, & Humphries, 2005).

Bullying.

In order that a better frame of reference be obtained, it is crucial to define and explore the concept of bullying as a particular form of abuse that is perpetrated by peers and involves a significant power dynamic, as the definition of bullying for the research indicates. "Bullying is a particular type of peer victimization that can be defined as 'the abuse of physical and psychological power for the purpose of intentionally and repeatedly

creating a negative atmosphere of severe anxiety, intimidation, and chronic fear in victims” (Marini, Spear & Bombay, 1999, p. 33). Marini’s 2001 article on developmental disabilities and bullying makes a case for “conceptualising bullying as a particular type of abuse, one perpetrated by peers, where the behaviours involved can be severe, pervasive, and have long-lasting consequences (Olweus, 2001; Peplar & Craig, 1995; Smith, Shu & Madsen, 2001)” (Marini, Fairbairn & Zuber, 2001, p. 171). Marini et al. (2001) define peers as “individual(s) with no prima direct power over the individual and the association, for the most part, is social and voluntary” (Ibid., pg. 171). As is evident from the aforementioned definitions, peer victimization derives from incidences of bullying. Thus, for the purposes of this paper the terms shall be used interchangeably because the terms refer to a range of behaviours which serve to harass and exclude peers.

Mainstream School/ Integrated School.

With respect to the schools that Black students attended after desegregation, a mainstream school refers to one which both Black and White children attended. Schools which students with and without disabilities attend will be referred to according to either one of the aforementioned terminology.

Learning Difficulties.

British research uses the term learning difficulties to refer to the full range of disabilities, such as physical, learning, developmental, and mental. The research uses the term to refer to learning disabilities, although it should be understood that British research uses learning difficulties to refer to disabilities in general.

Peer Harassment

According to the literature, Black students and students with disabilities encountered similar experiences of bullying by their peers (Marini, Fairbairn, & Zuber, 2001; Norwich and Kelly, 2004; Davis, Howell, & Cooke, 2002; Chesler, 1967; Coles 1964). The purpose of this section is to show how the bullying experiences of the two groups were similar with respect to name-calling, ostracism, and physical violence in order to highlight their analogous experiences of oppression. These three categories represent the most common occurrences in the narratives of students with disabilities as well as Black students. Although name-calling is a form of ostracism, the choice of names students call other children is significant, as will be proven in this section.

In many cases, name-calling may be read as a form of social oppression, which is an experience which is contradictory to what an inclusive setting should entail, as it serves to isolate and silence students. These experiences often occurred as a consequence of fears the other students held and their not understanding and accepting difference. This section highlights how individual differences within an integrated setting often perpetuates teasing and social ostracism of Blacks, as well as students with disabilities. The experiences of these students warrant comparison as harassment often arises from misconceptions and unfamiliarity with members of marginalized groups by members of majority groups. As one child with a disability noted, "... *'racism and disability prejudice. They're all the same thing really'*" (Priestly, 1998, Attitudes section, para. 9). This quote highlights the significance of this section of the research. The quote is also significant because peer

harassment is often a major factor when one exhibits a difference whether it be visible or otherwise and whether the difference is perceived or blatant.

The educational space that Black students and students with disabilities occupied was often not well-received by students who were already in that setting. One of the consequences of the inclusion of a marginalized population in those environments was that they were, in many cases, shunned by the members of the majority. For example, some White students reacted with hostility towards the Black population after desegregation. Students with disabilities were also met with hostility by their peers without disabilities in mainstream schools. Attendance at integrated schools placed Black students and students with disabilities in a space in which they were in the extreme minority. As both are members of historically stigmatized populations, the aforementioned groups of students were at risk to be the recipients of malicious bullying behaviour. Misconceptions existed about these particular populations, as will be discussed later. As the evidence will indicate, one of the reasons bullying is worthy of discussion is because ostracism as a consequence of discrimination is contrary to the purpose and benefits of an inclusive setting.

Bullying pertains to and manifests an imbalance in power. This section of the paper explores the power relationship between Black and White children, as well as between students with and without disabilities. The evidence shows that within integrated environments, students were very much aware of such imbalances in power, and some chose to victimize others as a means by which to maintain and exert that power. The

subordination of stigmatized minority groups of students at school is manifested through peer harassment behaviours such as name-calling, ostracism, and even physical violence.

Name Calling

Name calling and students with disabilities.

Name calling may be construed as a means by which to suppress persons with disabilities because certain words function to derogatively describe an individual, which in turn oppresses and hurts that individual. Weber (2002) discusses how the word “retard” is used in many educational settings by students who do not understand students with developmental and other disabilities. Malicious words are used to exclude students because they function to look past the individual and describe only the difference.

Students who attend schools at which special education students also attend realize that the children who are different are subjected to verbal abuse and intimidation by their peers. Students with disabilities are certainly not strangers to the common use of the use of the word “retard” within the classroom, school washrooms, and playground. Weber describes how frequently the word “retard” is used as a means by which to oppress students who manifest differences. Names-calling is just one of the types of bullying used by students as a form of a verbal weapon against students with disabilities:

*‘I’ve had people call me names, really bad names.’
‘People pick on you. They call you spastic. They even laugh at you if you fall down.’ (Priestly, 1998, Attitudes section, para. 2-3)*

Name-calling has repercussions on students with disabilities: “Students continually taunt(ed) or belittle(d) a student with mental retardation by mocking and intimidating him so he (did) not participate in class (United States Department of Education)” (Davis, 2005,

p. 2). As the above examples prove, certain words are used by bullies to describe persons with disabilities in a negative fashion. For example, an Internet site entitled *Stop Bullying Now!* includes stories of students who are, have been, or are being bullied by their peers. One of the stories describes Allie, a student in grade five. Allie is a young girl with a developmental disability. Stan Davis, the author of the article, describes her as someone who wears second-hand clothing and has few friends. Davis describes how “another student at the Bean School began yelling at her on the playground, calling her a ‘*stupid retard*’ and telling her that she had no friends.” (Davis, n.d. p.6). Davis also describes how a student with dyslexia is referred to as “retarded” or “dumb” and students felt that this student did not belong in the class (Davis, 2005, p. 2).

Students who have differences, such as albinism, facial differences, or similar differences experience similar levels of harassment. While it should be recognized that certain pupils who have the aforementioned conditions often do not see themselves as having a disability, they are nonetheless recipients of abuse from their peers. Research on such conditions is scarce, although Wan (2003) has performed research on albinism, “a rare genetic disorder condition that affects the pigmentation of the retina, hair, and skin” (p. 277). The article is important because Wan gives voice to people with albinism because “they recount the negative social repercussions they face in societies that marginalise and stigmatise people with an unconventional physical appearance and an impairment, and the strategies they develop to cope with such discrimination and prejudice” (Ibid., p. 277). The respondents spoke of their experiences in mainstream elementary schools. Matthew explains how he remembers “ ‘*more unhappy times than*

happy times” (Ibid., p. 284). Examples of discrimination included classmates calling these students derogatory names such as “ ‘Whitey’, ‘Powder’, “Ghost”” and “Casper” (Ibid., p. 284).

It is evident that the experience of name-calling is an act of oppression with which many students with disabilities must contend in a mainstream setting. The fact that students face such abuse precludes such settings from being inclusive. The presence of difference seems to give some children the “green light” to tease other children. The foundations of such acts are ignorance, fear, and unfamiliarity with certain disabilities. For example, many students might be under the false impression that the students to whom they refer as ‘retard’ are not capable of learning. In order to overcome incidences of name-calling, proper strategies need to be applied within the classroom in order to promote acceptance, which will be discussed at the conclusion of this section.

Name calling and Black students.

Students use name-calling as a means by which to indicate that the presence of certain populations within the educational environment is not desired. This fact is evident through scrutiny the behaviour of some of the White students when Black students entered what had been all-White schools. During Black desegregation, there existed widespread White resistance to Black integration into educational institutions. Although some of the Black students conceded that the name-calling did decrease with time, one of the female interviewees in Chesler’s (1967) study mentioned that, “ ‘*There is always a rotten apple but we expected this... Things are better than they were last year*’” (p. 38). This is not to say that Black students did not experience much undue hardship. In terms of relations

with White classmates, schools were spaces wherein the language of oppression was used and rarely challenged:

Really I didn't know how I would take being called a Nigger because I had never been called a Nigger before. I just don't know how I would take it. I couldn't tell anybody I wouldn't hit anybody when they called me Nigger. But after I got over there and had been called Nigger about a thousand times during the first six-week period I'd feel a burning inside, and after the third six-week period I'd get over this burning inside, but really a Nigger still seems kind of insulting to me. (Ibid., p. 6)

White resistance and fearful resistance Black desegregation is also evident in comments such as, “ (White students) *see us coming they say here come a black Nigger, you better stand back.... They would get back up against the wall*” (Ibid., p. 8).

Although there are many instances in which Black students were called “nigger,” it is sufficient to recount only a few references as the experiences were so frequent that the aforementioned examples represent only tokenistic occurrences that Black students had to endure. What occurred in the schools mirrored what was happening in the broader society at the time. The use of the word “nigger” was so common in broader society that many White children undoubtedly heard parents and other adults use the word to describe Black people and thus mirrored the actions of adults.

Name-calling and discussion.

Resistance to diversity in the classroom was articulated through similar manners because Black students and students with disabilities were targets of similar types of oppression in the form of name-calling. These words of harm often functioned to preclude the students from finding comfort in what should have been an inclusive environment. Just as the use of the word “nigger” may be used as a means by which to distress and oppress Black children, the word “retard,” and other hostile words were used by children to “put

down” a specific population of pupils. The connotation of both words is to isolate and alienate a particular population, and to emphasize and exaggerate difference(s).

Language may be used as a means by which to oppress a marginalized population. The act of calling someone a name in order to tease the individual is contrary to the central tenets of People First language (Appendix A). The use of certain words serves to isolate groups who are already marginalized and functions to reinforce difference. “Retard” functions to target an individual and oppress that individual with language that is unacceptable as it is hurtful to persons with disabilities, much as the word “nigger” serves to torment members of the Black population. For students with disabilities and Black students, such harassment might reinforce the feelings of intrinsic inadequacy in Black students against which Brown fought.

The notion of space and who has the right to occupy certain spaces also emerged as an important theme. With respect to Black desegregation and owing to the political climate of the time, Black students faced more resistance than did students with disabilities who entered mainstream schools. That is not to say that students with disabilities did not face challenges, but the political climate in the 1960s was more inflammatory. For example, in the Black community, “ ‘*They (Black neighbours of a child attending an integrated school) said that our house was going to be burned and the Ku Klux Klan was going to get us and lots of people was going to get killed*’ ” (Chesler, 1967, p. 13). Black students also spoke of entering school with police presence to prevent rioting. Thus, when Black students and students with disabilities entered spaces in which

they were the minority, majority populations of students often reacted negatively to their presence by using language of oppression.

Social Ostracism

Social ostracism and students with disabilities.

In many cases, differences within the classroom increase incidences of peer bullying even if the differences are not visible, such as with learning disabilities. The presence of differences in students who have learning difficulties means that such students remain targets for ostracism even if the difference cannot always be seen. Social acceptance, thus, does not limit itself to the presence of particular physical attributes. Mishna (2003) remarks that “there is little research on the relationship between LD (learning disabilities) and bullying” (p. 336) and uses evidence from a study completed by Nabuzoka and Smith (1993) in order to prove that students with disabilities were more likely to be bullied than their peers without disabilities. “Children with LD were much more likely to be seen as victims, with girls with LD particularly to be identified as such” (Mishna, 2003, p. 340). Mishna herself concedes that “a stable finding is that children and youth with LD are more likely to be rejected, not accepted, and neglected by their peers (Greenham, 1999; Kuhne & Weiner, 2000; Nabuzoka & Smith, 1993; Weiner, 2002)” (Mishna, 2003, p. 337).

Norwich and Kelly’s 2004 research into the topic of bullying and students with learning disabilities points to the fact that students with differences, whether manifested on the outside or inside, were often targets for bullying behaviour. Children without learning difficulties pick up on the differences and use ostracism as a way by which to

devalue children with learning disabilities. Both children in mainstream and special education schools took part in Norwich and Kelly's semi-structured interviews. They found that "examples of 'bullying' relating to learning difficulties were described by 49% of pupils" (Norwich and Kelly, 2004, p. 56). For example, when students with learning difficulties were placed in a mainstream class and an assistant came to help them, the pupils encountered difficulties with the other students.

One girl in Norwich and Kelly's study reported that students noticed her learning disability in a negative manner " *'because it makes me look bad, 'cos when she comes up to me and I tell her to go away they start laughin' and they start taking the mick out of me and fings like tha'. That's when it all starts up when she comes up to me, all the time they start'*" (Ibid., p. 53). Another girl, who had previously been in a mainstream school reported that: " *'I was picked on more... because I couldn't read... they call me thick, dumb'*" (Ibid, p. 53.). The most important conclusion reached by the researchers was the significance of learning disabilities: "The most interesting emergent finding was the high level of 'bullying' experienced irrespective of gender, age, or school placement. About half the pupils reported that this 'bullying' was related to their learning difficulties" (Ibid., p. 60). The act of bullying unfortunately becomes synonymous with the act of attending school for children who have disabilities. The results are important because they are consistent with those of Marini et al. (2001) in that the presence of disability plays a huge factor in whether one experiences peer harassment.

Students who have markers of difference, such as students who stutter, also experienced incidences of bullying and harassment. Davis, Howell, and Cooke (2002)

examine the sociodynamic relationships between children who stutter and their non-stuttering classmates. Their findings are consistent with previous groups of students with disabilities as the researchers assert that “children who stutter are more likely to be bullied and to hold a lower social position than their peers who do not stutter” (p. 939), a finding which fits within the power imbalance discussed earlier in the section. Furthermore Davis et al. (2002) confirmed the earlier findings of Van Riper (1971), who suggested that school and the playground were harsh environments “where ‘teasing, mockery and rejection are common experiences for a child who stutters’ (Van Riper, 1971, p. 204)” (Davis et al., 2002, p. 939). In the review of literature, information on students who stutter and subsequent information on what those students had to say was scarce. Although Davis et al. provide statistics on the prevalence of the experiences of bullying of students who stutter, an emphasis on narrative would have been useful because the voices of children who stutter are rarely heard, especially when directly questioned about their speech differences. This is particularly important because many people assume that persons who stutter are unable to articulate their viewpoints. To include student voices would help prevent some people from having such erroneous notions. In any case, student acceptance of peers with disabilities has not yet occurred in any widespread fashion.

Wan (2003) recounts how Christa, a student with albinism, experienced ostracism by her peers:

Elementary school was really bad. I remember when I thought I had a group of friends and all of a sudden they turned against me and they were doing things like spitting orange peels at me and I had a hockey puck thrown at my head. I had really bad things like that and people teasing me and joking and I just felt like ‘What’s this class for? Tease Christa?’ (Wan, 2003, p. 285)

Students also engaged in activities which caused their peers with disabilities utter embarrassment and humiliation. Karen, a wheelchair user who attended a mainstream school recounts a degrading experience:

It was hard, it was hard. When I used to come downstairs I often found that my wheels had been punctured or someone had poured water on my cushion. I didn't look whether or not there was water on my cushion. It's not the sort of thing you expect to have to check. So when I sat down, of course, it wet my trousers and then they used to go round telling everyone that I'd peed myself which was extremely embarrassing at 16. Yeah, it was really tough. (Armstrong, 2003, p. 64)

Clearly, students with a wide range of disabilities face challenges in school as they often endure painful treatment by their peers. Whether the student has a disability which is visible or invisible is inconsequential; the mere presence of difference encourages social ostracism by classmates. The power differential between students with and without disabilities manifests itself when the students who do not have a disability mercilessly tease the latter group of students. When such incidents occur, children with a disability feel even more isolated and out of place, which is similar to the experience of Black children in the desegregated school setting.

Social ostracism and Black children.

Many White children perceived that the Black students had intruded into White space and thus did not belong.

In Atlanta,... some (children) begin to adopt their parents' ideas and some begin to reject them. As we talk with these children over the school year, we see that they fall under three large groups in their behavior and thinking about their new Negro classmates. A small number are immediately friendly and disposed to welcome them. By far the largest number are quizzical, annoyed, or would say that they don't want them or don't really care. A third group, small but articulate, are very much opposed to them and angrily willing to express their feelings in word or act which separate themselves from the quietly disapproving or careless majority. (Coles, 1964, p. 211)

The quote is very significant because it is the minority which often stands in and acts as the dominant voice for the majority. Thus, as a consequence of the actions of that minority, some of the Blacks assumed that that was the way in which all Whites felt and behaved. Although it is dangerous to generalize, the quote also exemplifies how many of the White students did not know how to react to their new classmates. “During the year the white child may slowly begin to recognize the Negro child and speak with him, or steadfastly avoid him... They repeatedly said they were afraid to talk to the Negro children at certain times or at certain places such as the cafeteria or crowded corridors” (Ibid., p.216).

Incidences of bullying attest to these postulations. For example, a Black female participant in Chesler’s study stated that “ ‘*That’s the way it is here. The whites got mad at us for going to that school*’ ” (Chesler, 1967, p. 26). In trying to get the two races together, students expected the incoming students to be different. “ ‘*They expected me to be different. I had to go along with their crude jokes. They were no good but I laughed anyway*’ ” (Chesler, 1967, p. 26). These incidents indicate that the status of the Black student in newly desegregated White schools was by no means on the same level of their White counterparts. As another Black student said, “ ‘*They (the White children) expected me to be different*’ ” (Ibid., p. 8).

The White children thought themselves superior to the Black students:
“ ‘*Sometimes when we are sitting in assembly we have a few students who don’t want to sit by us and they make insulting remarks like, ‘I had better not get too close to you,’ or something like that*’ ” (Ibid., p. 27). A low level of acceptance is evident during Black

desegregation when a Black girl reported that a White girl exclaimed: “ ‘*There’s a lot of white students who act like they think they are doing you a favour if they let you be their friends. It’s like a privilege for you to be their friend. Well, that’s not the kind of friend I need*’ ” (Ibid., p. 31). Another Black student reported having her books thrown in a trash can by other White pupils (Ibid., p. 44).

Black students faced much resistance when they entered what had previously been all-White schools. A significant challenge they faced was that many of the White children were uncertain as to how to react to such a dynamic change. Some reacted with hostility, others with avoidance. Whatever the case, the actions served to segregate the Black population. The ostracism the Black students endured on a daily basis was not conducive to an inclusive environment. The incidents which occurred at school mirrored, to a large extent, the negative treatments of Black by Whites in the greater society.

Social ostracism and discussion.

In the attempt to integrate two or more races or persons of varying abilities together, students expect the incoming students to be different. Allowing students with differences, such as colour or ability, into classrooms does not necessarily guarantee that the experiences of those students will be free of harassment and prejudice. Difference as a source of social ostracism seemed to be common in both populations as a consequence of ignorance and hostility towards an unfamiliar group of people. Although there were significant differences between the time at which desegregation occurred and the time at which students with disabilities were integrated into mainstream schools, peer harassment and bullying resulted as a consequence of perceived different social levels of acceptance.

Whether a difference manifests itself as something physical, or that which cannot be seen, it lends itself to peer rejection, intimidation, and harassment by peers. Black children and students with disabilities were very much aware of their differences in their new environments. The fact that a minority of the students transitioned into schools where the majority of students were not “like them” did nothing to satiate their fears. For example, “children who stutter are not only aware of their dysfluency but are also aware of the negative reactions it could prompt from fluent peers” (Davis et al. 2002, p. 945).

Social ostracism and negative attitudes were experienced by both populations as they entered schools. An environment of hostility and fear is not conducive to an inclusive environment, and leads to feelings of loneliness and isolation in students. This can, in turn, lead to a situation in which physical violence arises.

Physical Violence

Physical violence and students with disabilities.

Name-calling may escalate into incidences of physical violence. In the following examples, disability was the sole cause for the perpetrators of the violence to act upon their impulses. Davis (2005) describes an account of how three teenagers were convicted of severely abusing a fifteen year old with a disability who attended the same school:

According to the criminal complaint, the boys chased the victim – who was riding a bicycle... The suspects rode in the minivan as the victim pedaled west. The suspects hit the victim’s bike with the minivan. The older boys held the victim on the ground, kicked him and spit on him and choked him with his shirt. At one point, (one of them) asked the victim, ‘*How does a steel toe feel?*’ and then stomped on the victim’s head... The victim’s mother said he suffers from high-functioning autism (Green Bay Press Gazette, 2003). (p. 2)

Marini et al. adds validity to the claim that students with disabilities are often excluded from full participation as a consequence of negative student attitudes. One of the research participants in the study described how “ ‘a bully ... beat up a girl for having a disability and (he felt) that she shouldn't be in the same class as them and he knocked her senseless’ ” (p. 188). When school and its environs become a battleground, inclusion becomes even more elusive. The inclusion of students who have a different level of ability than that of the majority of their peers still presents a problem in mainstream schools.

Wan (2003) reports how persons with albinism were physically harmed by their classmates.

Objects were thrown at them and they were spat at, ganged up on and punched, on many occasions. As Virginia vividly recalls, children would ‘...*throw things at me, hit me, stick me with pins... and kick me*’. These acts of degradation and humiliation often led to feelings of anger and frustration. Respondents did not feel a sense of belonging, and frequently wondered why they even went to school (p. 284).

Students clearly did not accept their fellow peers who had albinism, which indicates that if one has a disability, coming to school often entails a physical risk.

One of the problems with violence and disability, especially in the case of invisible disabilities is that policy often does not exist to resist bullying within the environment of schools. If policy does exist, it is inadequate because bullying often goes unnoticed, handled in a poor manner, or is deliberately ignored:

A grade six student from the Musquodoboit Valley Educational Centre was constantly beaten up by his regular adversaries because of a physical disability, a Speech Impairment. He experienced some of the most heinous physical abuses anyone can endure. These abuses include punching, kicking, choking, slamming to the floor, and even getting kicked in the head. Despite the severe magnitude of the gross abuse, school teachers and administrators did absolutely nothing about it. (Barrett, n.d., p. 2)

In some cases, displays of physical violence led to acceptance of persons with disabilities. This manifested as a trend for male pupils with disabilities. For example, Shah, Travers and Arnold (2004) show that displays of physical violence may assist certain students in gaining peer acceptance. Their paper examines the experiences of students in both a special and mainstream education setting. In this instance, Jonathan, now a television producer who attended a mainstream school describes an incident which led to “the reduction of discrimination and the maintenance of positive relationships between disabled and non-disabled peers” (Shah et al., 2004, p. 276). Although Jonathan conceded that he experienced initial challenges, he explains how the other students eventually became aware of and accepted his disability:

I remember being in the cloakroom once and a kid started calling me names so I kicked him very hard several times until he was on the floor in tears. He then became my best friend! I realised that my able-bodied friends were no more special than I was. Mainstream education is good for disabled people to learn that non-disabled people aren't better than them. (Ibid., p. 276)

On a similar note, Bob recounts his experiences in mainstream education:

I was expected to do what everybody else did. If I didn't I would feel left out, so I just got on and did it. The other boys could see that I could achieve what they could achieve and there was nothing special about me and also, at that age, they quickly realized that you can put up with the rough and tumble of the teasing and the physical fights, and that I was just like the other boys except in a wheelchair. (Ibid.)

Lastly, the topic of “double bullying” (Barrett, n.d., p. 2) where the student fights back when the student becomes fed up with the abusive behaviour. A grade nine student, who experienced multiple oppressions because of his sexuality and his disability fought back and was suspended as a consequence of his actions:

A grade nine student from Hantsport Junior High was bullied and harassed since his first day at school. He was called derogatory names such as 'fag' and 'stalker.' The torments and abuses he suffered was due to the fact that he had a learning disability. Even though the student was suffering the abuse, the school administrators did little or nothing to stop the problem before it went out of control. As a result, the victim was forced to fight back by threatening the bullies because he couldn't take the abuse anymore. (Barrett, n.d., p.2)

Students with a wide range of disabilities endure physical maltreatment by their classmates, which is often ignored by or improperly addressed by teachers. In many cases, the abuse is ritualistic in that it occurs daily, or on a regular basis. Although there is some evidence to suggest that if the student with a disability fights back, or proves him or herself by using his or her own strength, this often eliminates incidences of bullying. For many students, however, this is not possible or even conceivable. It is contrary to inclusive education for the school environment to incite fear in individuals. In the cases outlined above, students with disabilities faced dangerous situations on the basis of their differences.

Physical violence and Black students.

A Black student suggested that “ ‘You find that people judge you by your group without getting to know you at first. The Negro group is such and such. After that they get to know you as the individual as you are’ ” (Chesler, 1967, p. 36). A particularly horrendous example of violence occurred when a Black boy defended one of his female Black classmates against teasing:

Those boys who I told on trailed me all the way home and stopped me and asked me why I had told on their friend. I said because I wanted to and they pulled out a knife and said if you tell again we gonna cut your neck off... and then the next day they started saying that's the nigger that I'm going to cut his head off and all that. I went and told the principal and he said there was nothing he could do about it. (Ibid., p. 46)

Incidences of physical violence seem to be a part of integration. With respect to the desegregation of Black schools:

And when we'd be in Physical Education class the coach wouldn't be there, he had boys lead the class. We would be playing football. Every day they's tell the boys to try to hurt us and knock us down and they would do it. One of them would pretend to act nice and tell them not to do it, but he didn't mean it anyway and this other one would tell them to keep on. (Chesler, 1967, p. 8).

A girl also reported a horrid experience whereby she would often come to school and see words and pictures written on the walls. “*They would always draw a little black man with a lynch rope around his head*” (Ibid., p. 18).

Teacher and administration impotence at stopping students who chose to fight back against violence was also evident during Black desegregation. For example, a Black girl related a personal narrative of how she was hit in the back by a rubber band on more than one occasion by a particular male White child, so one day she turned around and hit him back. When called to the principal's office, the girl told the truth while the boy claimed that he had never seen the girl before. “*I went into the office and the principal told me that I was suspended by him for five days and he said after that it was out of his hands*” (Ibid., p. 44). In another example:

In Physical Education, I was the only Negro in their class. It was a class of three grades, kids out of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades. And everytime I reported something to the teacher she acted as if it wasn't anything, so then I just started hitting them back if they hit me,. One day this girl and I started throwing books, she hit me with a book and I picked it up and I hit her back...The P.E. teachers heard about it... she talked to us and she told me that I brought a lot of things on myself (Ibid., p. 41)

The girl's use of the word “their” is of particular consequence and is indicative of the fact that she did not yet see herself as part of the class because the other children did not want

her there. Another example is when White students called a particular Black girl names and the other students would also try to physically injure her during Physical Education. When she approached the principal, “He said... ‘*Do it like you do it with mud, you let it dry and will shake off better*’” (Ibid., p. 40).

The physical violence which many of the Black students had to endure is ample evidence that their presence was not always desired by White students and educators. Such behaviour precluded the Black students from seeing the schools as their very own and from being active participants in their education. Instead, many White students felt as if the Black students were invading. The way in which Blacks were threatened, intimidated, and physically attacked attests to the fact that their acceptance was only very limited. The impotence with which school administrators and principals dealt with such situations perpetuated the incidences of violence, as they made no move to halt them.

Physical violence and discussion.

Black students and students with disabilities encountered very negative responses from some of their classmates when they entered the mainstream schools. One of the major themes which emerged is that principals and school administrators remained relatively inactive. Until a safe and healthy learning environment is created, inclusive education cannot occur. For example, when the Black student went to see her principal after surviving a physical attack, and then having the principal tell her to “ ‘*shake it off like mud*’” (Chesler, 1967, p. 40) is insulting, degrading, and ineffective. In all cases, teachers need to take bullying seriously, whether it be name-calling, ostracism, or physical violence.

It is evident that during Black desegregation, violence was a part of school life, perhaps more so than person with disabilities. “ ‘*When we got there, they started throwing rocks and crayons at us. I told the teacher and she went back there, and they all started laughing, and she was laughing with them*’ ” (Ibid., p. 3). Furthermore, teacher responses were atrocious: “ ‘*Some of the teachers will try to be funny. When they get to a word like Negro, they will call it Nigger or else try to make fun*’ ” (Ibid., p. 3). These acts mirror teachers doing little to fight against the use of improper language in school. It may be argued that if one does nothing to challenge the oppression, then one becomes part of the oppressors. Teachers are in a position of authority, and if they used their positions as a means by which to teach appropriate language and dispel myths, a more inclusive environment could be attained. Thus, appropriate responses to violence must be adopted by schools and implemented.

Closing Discussion

Close to fifty years after the desegregation of Black schools, discrimination on the basis of difference still persists as is evident from the aforementioned narratives. This indicates that the fear of difference is still present within school systems, manifested from the behaviour of students, teachers, as well as school policy. It is evident from the research that students with disabilities experience similar types and levels of harassment from their peers, as did Black students. The narratives highlight the similar effects of bullying as a consequence of belonging to a stigmatized population. Furthermore, fear of difference often instigates the bullying behaviour. This latter point is of particular concern

because students do not feel safe or included in the school if they are fearful of being the targets of bullies.

The role of power is tantamount to an analysis of peer relationships and the experience of inclusion, whether it pertains to the integration of Black students into what had previously been all-White schools or the transition of students with disabilities from special schools into mainstream schools. Weber (2002) is a useful source by which to analyze the power dynamic in both situations. He asserts that disability discrimination is the expression of ignorance and is an effort by able-bodied persons to subordinate persons with disabilities who generally have less power and social status than the majority (Weber, 2000). The situation is analogous to the suppression of Black students when they first entered newly desegregated schools and experienced overt discrimination. The subordination of marginalized minority populations within the classrooms was exemplified in the aforementioned narratives through behaviour such as name-calling, teasing, ostracism, and even physical violence.

Weber classifies harassment as a form of discrimination, which is an integral component to a discussion on inclusion. An environment in which discrimination occurs, whether it be covert or overt, cannot be one in which students have full inclusion. In the above examples, both students with disabilities and Black students experienced harassment within their respective schools. Examples of children who are harassed include children who are Black, have learning disabilities, and also children who stutter. In Marini et al.'s study of peer harassment, individuals with developmental disabilities

attributed incidences of bullying to a power imbalance between pupils with disabilities and those without disabilities.

The incidents of violence, whether verbal or physical, occurred as a consequence of perceived differences. Bullying may be construed as counterproductive to the achievement of an inclusive educational environment because when a child is victimized, he or she will not have a sense of belonging and acceptance. These findings are significant because “research reports consistently suggest that individuals with disabilities experience a significantly higher level of abuse than non-disabled individuals, regardless of age or gender (Doe, 1997; Sobsey, 1994)” (Marini, Fairbairn, & Zuber, 2001, p. 170). That it not to say that all children with disabilities are bullied (Richardson, 2005). According to the aforementioned report on the Safe Schools Task Force, and given that disability and skin colour are significant risk factors with respect to bullying, the repercussions of belonging to such groups are that membership often entails the experience of oppression by one’s peers in the form of bullying behaviour. As was evident in the above examples, membership to certain groups is made even more problematic when teachers and administrators in general take little or ineffective measures in order to solve the problem of abuse within their schools.

Abuse occurs because people fear difference. Some participants in the study by Marini et al. believed that the physical presence of persons with disabilities was what contributed to their rejection and experience of ostracism. As one student said, “*‘They’re not like everyone else, people think they shouldn’t be here and stuff like that’*” (Marini et al., 2001, p. 188). Practices of exclusion, such as peer harassment, are evident in attitudes

of students towards peers with disabilities. In another example, “several students continually remark(ed) out loud to another student during class that a student with dyslexia is ‘retarded’ or ‘deaf and dumb’ and *does not belong in the class* [italics added]; as a result, the harassed student has difficulty doing work in the class and her grades declined” (Davis, 2005, p. 2). Thus, it is clear that belonging to a minority group can often cause students within particular environments to want to exclude others purely on the perception of difference.

If a student exhibits a difference, such as by having a disability, this was cause for peer victimization. Difference plays a factor in whether or not a student is a recipient of peer victimization, and the difference might also be real or imagined in the mind of the bully. For example, White students often acted upon the prejudicial attitudes of their parents. In the case of students with disabilities, children told researchers about negative and preconceived attitudes toward persons with disabilities. When Marini et al. asked participants, “ ‘Why do you think someone with a disability would get bullied?’ nine out of sixteen participants stated that it was because of the way they walk, or talk, they are not as strong and *they are different* [italics added]” (p. 186). As with White attitudes towards members of the Black community, Marini’s interview participants hypothesized that perhaps a reason for the bullying was the fact that persons with disabilities were still very much a feared and stigmatized population:

Others reported a strong sense that individuals with disabilities are simply not well liked by the rest of the community, that they are not accepted and that they do not fit in. One participant explicitly stated that: ‘*Some people just don’t care about disabled people, they just like picking on them and hurting them as well.*’ Almost every participant had a strong stance against peer harassment. (Ibid., p. 186)

If a certain group in a population is not well liked or understood by the majority of a certain population, then such a trend allows certain behaviours of oppression to emerge. “A number of participants expressed an awareness of the power differential between the victim and the victimizer. In many cases the victim of the assault was depicted or described as being different or having a disability” (Ibid., p. 188). Such displays of power dynamics were also evident when Black students entered formerly all-White schools. According to Dan Olweus “children with disabilities are potential victims of bullying because of ... a power imbalance, - if they’re visually different, physically or emotionally vulnerable, or are perceived to be getting special treatment, ringleaders may target them” (Richardson, 2005, p. 28).

Such attitudes function to preclude inclusion because the aforementioned examples show how language has the power to oppress others. Furthermore, “negative peer attitudes are generally recognized as being a major barrier to full social inclusion at school for children and youth with disabilities” (McDougall, Dewit, King, Miller, and Killip, 2004, p. 288). The study proved useful in that it was able to highlight their conclusion that approximately 21% of 1,972 grade nine students they interviewed “held slightly below neutral to very negative attitudes” (McDougall et al., 2004, p. 288) about persons with disabilities. The study had only limited value since the researchers focused so much upon quantitative information that any reason for such hatred and student input and ideas was lost in numbers and complicated formulas. They neglected to include in their research student voices in their reasoning for such feelings and behaviour.

Although Black students gained entry into schools, as did students with disabilities, attitudes of oppression were still very much in existence. “ ‘*A spade is still a spade*’”(Chesler, 1967, p. 39), as one White student bluntly told a Black classmate. While not all students who transitioned experienced negative student attention, the types and incidences of bullying are consistent with one another. For example, many instances of overt acts of intimidation, such as threats and physical intimidation occurred as a direct consequence of the desire of some White students wanting to oust a particular population. Although students might have been integrated, everyone was not included in school life as a consequence of peer hostility to difference. It is important, in the journey towards inclusion, to understand that social relationships between peers are an important component of inclusion.

Many incidences of peer harassment arose from fear, stigma, prejudice, and ignorance. As one Black girl postulated: “ ‘*I just believe they are afraid. If they were not afraid of us, maybe they could stand us a little better*’”(Chesler, 1966, p. 30). Likewise, the myths Whites held about Blacks persisted even after desegregation. Some White students believed “*that Negroes will lower standards; that they are dirty and diseased; that they are like animals; that they are not like white people, inferior, less intelligent, born and made to serve... Two children experience physical revulsion when near a Negro, ‘like dirt being rubbed on you,’ one told me, and they try to avoid them with great care and obvious show*” (Bruner, 1964, p. 217).

Thus, fear precipitated many actions of bullying. Legal actions did little to satiate prejudicial attitudes. For example, in spite of the ruling in favour of Brown in *Brown v.*

The Board of Education, populations of White students still feared and avoided Black students. Peer intimidation served to reinforce the message that the Black students were not welcome in what had been a previously all-White space. A similar argument can be made for pupils with disabilities who transitioned to schools where most of the students did not have disabilities. Disability harassment and race-based harassment constantly reinforced the message that many students perceive that others do not belong, and their behaviour towards others function to reinforce notions of who may or may not occupy particular spaces in society. Such oppressive and negative behaviour does little to or nothing to change reality.

Notions of who has the right to occupy and enter certain spaces was a common issue which pervaded both the time at which Black students desegregated and when students with disabilities entered mainstream classrooms. Both groups faced similar situations in that peer harassment resulted from stereotypes, fear, and sometimes utter cruelty. Black students had to contend with negative attitudes such as “ ‘*Whites are higher class than Negroes*’ ” (Chesler, 1967, p. 9), which mirrors the power imbalance between students with and without disabilities. In many instances, students did not see beyond skin colour, just as students often did not see beyond the disability. Indicative of such narrow-mindedness is an examination of the social ostracism to which Black students and students with disabilities were subjected. The teasing to which students were subjected made both populations of students feel lonely and isolated.

While any policy might seem attainable on paper, the focus should be on the issue of preventing bullying in the first place. Play Fair Teams (Appendix B) are one solution to

combat fear of differences. Furthermore, in order to mitigate the fear of difference, teachers must be vigilant about their own use of language, as well as the language students use. By allowing words like “retard,” “dumbo,” and “stupid” to be used within the classroom environment, “we make harassment more possible. This is true even when those words are used to disparage events or objects. (*‘These shoes are so retarded.’*)” (Davis, 2005, p. 6).

In Davis’s (2005) conclusions, he quotes the United States Department of Education:

Disability harassment is preventable and cannot be tolerated. Schools, colleges, and universities should address the issue of disability harassment not just when but before incidents occur. (A)wareness can be an important element in preventing harassment in the first place.... When disability harassment limits or denies a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational institution’s program’s or activities, the institution must respond effectively. Where the institution learns that disability harassment may have occurred, the institution must investigate the incident(s) promptly and respond appropriately (United States Department of Education, 2000). (p. 11).

These actions are needed because one is not going to fully participate in the classroom if one is afraid of being teased or bullied. Effective intervention is needed as a means by which to combat misunderstanding and misconceptions.

Student Involvement in Extra-Curricular Activities, the Classroom and Student Friendships

The purpose of this section is to examine the extent to which students with disabilities and Black students were involved in school life. This is significant because inclusion can only occur when all students have the opportunity to participate. Participation in school life should not be limited to mere involvement in the classroom, but should extend to the right to be a part of extra-curricular activities. The research suggests that environmental and attitudinal barriers precluded full student participation, whether it stemmed from sheer oversight or ignorance (Asch 1989; Lightfoot, Wright, & Sloper, 1998; Shevlin, Kenny, & McNeela, 2002; Chesler, 1967; Morris & Morris, 2002).

The most common categories which emerged from the literature as to what aspects of student life occasionally prompted peer exclusion included: classroom involvement, participation in extra-curricular activities, as well as peer friendships. With inclusion, students should have access to all aspects of school life, whether it be within the classroom or access to activities outside the classroom. The issue is significant because even within the classroom, not all students were completely involved in day-to-day classroom activities. This held true for students with disabilities, as well as for Black student involvement after desegregation. All too often, researchers have a large input into what they think bothers students, and these topics often stem from the assumptions researchers make. Few research studies have actually included a large number of student voices as to their concerns while attending school.

Bolton Data for Inclusion

The issues for this section of the research emerged largely as a consequence of engagement with data from a *Bolton Data for Inclusion 1998 Study: What Children Say About School*. Whittaker, Kenworthy, and Crabtree (1998), all of whom spearheaded the research, explored student voices about what made them happy and unhappy in school. All too often, the voices of children are absent from academic literature. “If we want an effective schooling system we must begin to hear and value what children have to say” (Whittaker et al., 1998, p. 1). The evidence from this study may be extrapolated into the times during desegregation. It is not very far-fetched to postulate that Black students would have expressed similar concerns about issues such as friendship, acceptance, and teachers response to their presence in the classroom. This assertion arises as a consequence of the fact that Black students and students with disabilities faced similar challenges with respect to school access. If Black students were asked the same questions, it is conceivable that their concerns would be very similar because the evidence will show that both sets of students faced similar social concerns.

The British Bolton study of the inclusion of students with disabilities involved an analysis of the views expressed by 2,527 pupils in order “to gain an insight into pupils’ views on what made them happy and unhappy at school and what they considered made a good and bad teacher” (Ibid., p. 2). The categories which emerged in this section of the research were in large part attributed to the results of the Bolton study. For example, in response to the question, “What makes you happy at school?” (Ibid., p. 3), 63% of the students indicated friendships, which is very significant and provides justification for its

inclusion in the research. In response to the question, “What makes you unhappy about school?”, 33% indicated bullying, and 16% indicated unfairness, subjects which comprise a major portion of the narratives introduced in other sections in the research. In terms of teaching, fairness was an important aspect, with 27% finding favour with teachers who were respectful and fair. 27% found fault with teachers who were too strict and unfair, which is important for the discussion on classroom involvement (Ibid., p. 3-4).

As the evidence in this section will indicate in many instances, efforts at inclusion have often been misplaced and tokenistic, especially with respect to students who have disabilities. Although good intentions might have been present in school policy, inclusion has missed its mark. One of the first statements Bunch (1997) makes in *Inclusion: Essential Classroom Strategies*, is that he denounces the separation of students on the basis of ability. To expand on his statement, a further evil is to separate students on the basis of colour, particularly within academic institutions. Bunch posits that “a major activity within many educational systems is separating students, one from the other, on the basis of difference” (1997, p.2). This system of oppression is essentially what occurred during racial segregation, an argument which provides the basis for this section of the research. According to Bunch “inclusion, true inclusion of all, will wipe segregation from the face of the earth” (Ibid., p. 2). Bunch’s statements are crucial because segregation still continues, despite people who claim otherwise.

Involvement in School Activities

Involvement in school activities and students with disabilities.

Asch (1989) claims that “integration is not enough” (p. 197) in “*Has the Law Made a Difference: What Some Disabled Students Have to Say.*” She explores and denounces recent education law for its inadequacy at meeting the needs of students with disabilities. Her criticisms still hold true today. Her disappointment in the failings of *The Rehabilitation Act of 1973* and *The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975* is justified as she provides a litany of valid concerns over the failings of these laws. The same criticisms may be leveled against *Bill 82*. Asch is a woman who is blind, and thus speaks from direct experience. She is woeful because the aforementioned laws have yet to fulfill her expectations:

I pictured disabled children finally going to school with nondisabled students of their age and grade. I pictured disabled and nondisabled children taking the same classes, reading the same books, and taking the same tests. I pictured them participating in the same clubs, sometimes becoming friends and other times not, getting into the same scrapes, and learning how to solve the same problems. (1989, p. 181)

After-school activities provide an excellent way for students to get to know one another. Not only do they provide a chance to break down the barriers between students with and without disabilities, but such activities allow students of varying backgrounds to attend an activity in which they share a common interest.

Participation in some organized activity may be one of the best ways for people with disabilities to break down the barriers of fear and awkwardness that may exist between themselves and nondisabled classmates. Mere classroom participation, no matter how full and exemplary, may not be enough. Participation in the interest group, or after-school project, as well as attendance at plays, sporting events, or dances, can be ready-made vehicles for letting people know that a disabled student is interested in the world, in others, in fun and good times, and in making friends. (Asch, 1989, p. 192)

Owing to a wide array of characteristics, persons with disabilities, invisible or otherwise, are not adequately represented in after-school activities, much to the detriment of any school which claims to be inclusive. It should not be incumbent upon the student to include him or herself in activities in which he or she is interested. Schools should provide the means by which students may join with as few barriers as possible.

Exclusion from social activities for students with disabilities emerged as an important theme in the literature. Persons with disabilities are often precluded from participation in after-school clubs and activities for a variety of factors. For example, many students who use wheelchairs must often adhere to a very rigid bus regiment, which means that they are often unable to attend after-school functions. Asch describes a student named Doris, who uses a wheelchair and had such a passion for Spanish that she yearned to join the Spanish club, which met after school: "*I would like to stay, but I would have no transportation. I take the schoolbus, and it leaves right after school gets out*" (Ibid., p. 192). The reasons for exclusion from some activities are numerous. For example, "after-school activities were difficult due to tiredness, physical inability to take part in activities, feeling self-conscious, problems with access facilities or needing to go home using prearranged support" (Lightfoot, Wright, and Sloper, 1999, p. 274). Thus, the conclusions of Lightfoot et al. are not surprising as school administrations often do not take into account the complexities and valid concerns of their students with disabilities. Lightfoot et al. also relate the experiences of three pupils who discussed the fact that they had to miss school trips as a consequence of illness or being unable to find someone to go with them. It is shameful that schools still fail to accommodate students with varying levels of

ability. Participation in school field trips are usually a mandatory part of the school curriculum and to deprive students with disabilities of the opportunity to participate is a violation of their right to inclusion in school activities.

Shevlin, Kenny, and McNeela (2002) also comment on the extent to which students with disabilities are involved with extra-curricular activities. They conclude that participation is not something which is guaranteed for students with disabilities in mainstream schools. As one student admitted, “ *‘Everybody had to do the school musical. I found I actually enjoyed it... There were a lot of activities like swimming and trips, they wouldn’t let me do for insurance reasons’*” (p. 165). As a result, many students with disabilities reported feeling excluded and had to contend with hearing comments from the other students. “ *‘I would listen to them when they came back – ‘you missed a great couple of days we’d great fun’. Even sitting beside them hearing them laughing, it was laughing at something you didn’t understand. I didn’t like that’*” (Shevlin et al., 2002, p.166). This served to make their disabilities more visible and undoubtedly sent messages to students who were able-bodied that including students with disabilities is not a priority.

Hughes, Carter, Brown, and Washington (2004) describe a boy, Aaron Litchfield, with a developmental disability whose ambition was to become a bodybuilder. “Coach Fischer didn’t think much about teaching students with disabilities and, with 25 other students in his weightlifting class, he hardly had the time to provide the individual support he thought Aaron would need... Besides, who would help Aaron in the locker room if he were to need it?” (p. 17). If students like Aaron are not included in regular activities,

students without disabilities will not be exposed to difference. A boy like Aaron should be able to be involved in a weightlifting class, and not hampered by prejudicial attitudes.

Litner (2003) discusses the challenge of high school for teenagers with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). She hypothesizes why such teenagers are not involved in extra-curricular activities to the extent of their non-ADHD peers. She claims that many ADHD youth experience poor co-ordination, weak motor skills, and “their coordination deficits become more apparent in adolescence” (p. 141). According to researchers such as Lavoie (1994), and Litner and Ostiguy (2002), “if we consider their disorganization, poor social skills, and interpersonal difficulties combined with their inattentiveness and/ or impulsiveness, it becomes apparent why they are habitually not chosen on athletic teams, invited to social gatherings, or asked to join school clubs” (Litner, 2003, p. 141). Litner, unfortunately, chose to focus on the deficits of persons with ADHD and neglected to consider the positive contributions they could make to clubs and other such activities. Many students, with disabilities and otherwise, have poor athletic skills, but take pleasure in non-competitive athletic activity. Litner provides an excellent example of how a specific group of students are not fully included in school life on the basis of level of ability, and the failure of school policy to make allowances for such differences. Stereotypes and lack of understanding often preclude the participation of all students within the school community.

It is very difficult for students to form friendships when students of varying abilities remain so isolated from one another. For example, Hughes, Carter, Brown, and Washington (2004) describe how Tyrell Smithers never had the opportunity to meet

students with disabilities at Tavock High School in Nashville, Tennessee. Although he passed these students in the hallways or “saw them eating together at a corner in the lunchroom” (p. 17), his interaction with students with disabilities was very limited. What further compounds the problem is that often cafeterias are not accessible to persons with disabilities. “The cafeterias are often not adapted to the needs of students who use wheel chairs, with food aisles being too narrow, food placed too high to reach, and inaccessible seating arrangements. According to the parents, these types of environmental barriers cause their children to be differentiated and isolated from their peers” (Pivic, McComas, & LaFlamme, 2002, p. 103). Thus, as a consequence of barriers, Tyrell lacked the opportunity to have any close interaction with his peers with disabilities. The school cafeteria provides a place for students to meet outside of class and interact in a non-academic environment. If cafeterias remain inaccessible, students with disabilities will remain isolated, stigmatized, and perceived as different. Levels of interaction between peers are clearly at an inadequate level.

When students with disabilities are isolated from their peers without disabilities, this does little to satiate fears and stereotypes. It is possible to hypothesize that if students like Aaron are precluded from joining events like bodybuilding, the other students might think that students with disabilities *cannot* perform certain activities, thereby isolating students with disabilities to an even greater extent. Activities are still not structured to include students with disabilities, should they choose to join. Perhaps if more non-competitive sports teams could be created, more youth would join. Even youth who do not

have disabilities could benefit as not everyone feels comfortable in a highly competitive sporting environment.

If activities were re-structured such that all students felt they had a place, inclusion could become even more of a reality. Students with disabilities should have the opportunities to take part in every aspect of school life. When a student such as Aaron is precluded from joining a weightlifting team just for the fact that the coach has narrow-minded views, then students without disabilities are deprived of forming a potential friendship or other positive acquaintance with someone who has a disability. This is important if the goals of an inclusive setting are to combat stereotypes of persons with disabilities, as well as to give students with disabilities opportunities to participate.

Involvement in school activities and Black students.

Black students who attended what had previously been all-White schools experienced great difficulty in becoming fully involved with all aspects of school life. With respect to Black school desegregation, students felt that “ ‘we need more activities together so we’ll have more in common. Maybe gradually in two or three years we’ll do more things together like proms and dances’ ” (Chesler, 1967, p. 31). The significance of Black exclusion from the classroom and extra-curricular activities was the fact that in their old, segregated schools, they enjoyed inclusion on the sports field, cheerleading, the debating team, and other similar clubs. For example, Black pupils who attended Trenholm High School, a Black school in a small northwest Alabama community were able to develop leadership skills and have fun. “Both boys and girls were involved in a variety of sports activities including football (boys only), basketball, and track and field. Students

had opportunities to participate in the marching band, the concert band, and the school chorus” (Morris & Morris, 2002, p. 53). With desegregation, the students lost their valuable connections to these clubs and organizations, which helped to provide evidence for the comment made by Harvard University sociologist Charles V. Willie that African Americans lost something significant after desegregation.

Whites took the concept of integration and hijacked it. Furthermore, they dropped the educational components that blacks had assumed would go hand in hand with integration. It was like turning to the fox that had been stealing chickens and then saying, ‘*Fox, develop a plan to secure the chicken house*’ (Hendrie, 2000, p. 72). (Morris and Morris, 2002, p. 5)

With desegregation, Black students never did receive inclusion. At Deshler, the integrated school, they were not included in the school community to any great extent. Morris and Morris (2002) describe how the students were excluded from their new community. Preventing Black students from being able to join particular student groups was just a strategy for exclusion. Although their old school, Trenholm, had provided many leadership opportunities with which Black students could become involved, they were precluded from participation in many activities at their new desegregated school.

At Deshler, African American students had fewer leadership roles than they had had at the segregated African American high school. With only one desegregated high school in Tuscumbia, the number of leadership positions were reduced. And with most positions of leadership determined by popular vote, African Americans students were very unlikely to hold as many top offices in school clubs and special activities as they had at Trenholm. (Morris & Morris, 2002, p. 57)

Such problems were anticipated by members of both the Black and White communities. For example, Coles (1964) raises the issue of Black and White uncertainty about the issue of “whether a Negro boy or girl could belong to a school club, or go to a game, could work on the paper, or go to a dance” (p. 221). He further states that “in the

two schools (*in Atlanta*) where the Negro children had the easier time, they avoided dances, advised by their principals aware of possible difficulties” (Ibid., p. 221). These problems were not exclusive to Deshler. Black students sacrificed many opportunities when they attended an integrated school, as one Black girl describes all of the opportunities that the Negro child had at their old schools.

The way I see it is that people want things to happen but they are waiting for somebody else to do it. They will not realize that those who do something have to sacrifice... A lot of kids came up to me and told me they would like to... be on the basketball team.... They are just plain scared. (Chesler, 1967, p. 27)

It is clear retrospectively that concessions needed to be made. Hostility by White parents, educators, and policy-makers prevented Black students from being able to become participants in the schools they attended. Under these new conditions, the Black students felt left out and isolated because they were not part of school life anymore. For both the White and Black students, there was uncertainty on both sides. “Like the white students, they are meeting Negroes in a new context, and many new perceptions may come to them, and must be assimilated in their minds” (Coles, 1964, p. 220). Thus, developing patterns of behaviour in which the two races could be included in student life proved difficult.

Involvement in school activities and discussion.

Young people with disabilities were ecstatic “when teachers adapted extracurricular activities, such as drama and music events, to enable them to take part and when they had the opportunity to go on school trips” (Lightfoot et al, 1999, p. 274). One student indicated that “*It was nice being with the normal crowd. It was just around the corner and I liked it and I put my name down, that’s how I got to go there*” (Shevlin et al.,

2002, p. 162). It becomes obvious that single-minded attitudes prevent pupils with disabilities from being able to be full members of their school community. Rigid school policy, such as bussing services, precludes full involvement, as it did with Black children. The aforementioned examples point to the fact that students do not feel as if they are full participating members of the school community because they are unable or prevented from participating in activities. Environmental barriers, and in some cases attitudinal barriers prevented students with disabilities from doing the activities they wanted; differences in attitude did not allow Black students to enjoy the commitment to extra-curricular activities to which they were accustomed.

In the case of persons with disabilities, there is often the perception that they are unable to perform certain activities because of physical limitations. For the Black students and students with disabilities, attitudes which suggested uncertainty prevented groups from interacting with one another. The reasons why the settings were termed 'integrated' was to indicate the physical presence of Black students, or students with disabilities. From the aforementioned evidence, it is clear that although the settings might have been integrated, inclusion never actually occurred in both cases.

Classroom Involvement

Classroom involvement and students with disabilities.

Even within the classrooms themselves, students with disabilities have yet to be included. This is evident in student participation, as well as the structure of the classroom environment. The transition from a special school to a mainstream school where one is still isolated serves little purpose. This statement is supported by a study from the

University of Wisconsin which postulates that “being isolated in special education classrooms in regular schools is only slightly better than being isolated in special education classrooms in segregated schools” (Brown, Kluth, Suomi, Causton-Theoharis, Houghton, and Jorgensen, 2000, p. 9). The researchers assert that inclusion means meaningful experiences for students with and without disabilities. Their suggestions arise from their observations that segregated school campuses are ineffective because they help validate the idea of a confined space for persons with disabilities (Brown et al., 2000, p. 6), an idea which is contrary to what a least restrictive environment entails.

Inclusion is still a dream because some students with learning disabilities spend 50% or more of their day in a self-contained setting (Murray & Greenberg, 2001). If so much time is spent away from one’s peers, then inclusion has yet to occur. If students with disabilities are isolated then it is no small wonder that many of them do not feel as if they are part of school activities. “It is possible that such settings isolate students with ED (*emotional disturbance*) from the everyday school activities that can promote positive school bonds” (Ibid. p. 37). Another problem Murray and Greenberg discovered was the perception that students with learning disabilities were dangerous, which consequently had a negative impact upon student self-esteem (p. 35). The students with disabilities they interviewed indicated that they “had greater dissatisfaction with their relationships with their teachers, (and) poorer bonds with school” (Ibid. p. 25). Thus, students with learning disabilities (LD) have yet to experience inclusion and feel as if they have strong bonds within their school.

Instruction in separate classrooms may further isolate students from one another.

In Straub's *Inclusion and the Other Kids*, she argues for inclusion. One of the reasons she advocates for inclusions is an increase in comfort levels with people who are different.

On surveys and in interviews, nondisabled junior-high and high-school students say they're less fearful of people who look different or behave differently because they've interacted with individuals with disabilities. One seventh grade girl says, '*Now I'm not like, 'Uh, she's weird.' She's normal. I've gotten to work with people with disabilities'*' (p. 3).

Exposure to people mitigates stereotypes and fears, and builds friendships, in many instances. Exposure to persons with disabilities only comprises a part of the discussion on inclusion. If students with disabilities are to be fully included as members of the class, the classroom environment must be conducive to the needs of these students.

The segregation of students within the classroom also has the effect of the unequal distribution of classroom resources. Asch describes Zach, a student who is blind who, "said that he was often excused from requirements in physics and other classes because his teachers didn't want to take the time to explain lab work, material on the blackboard, or other things that he could not see" (p. 185). The ramifications of such prejudicial actions could conceivably not only be felt by Zach. Perhaps other students could have benefited if the teacher had read her notes off the board because students have a variety of learning styles. Zach's experience is not exclusive to his life. "Science laboratories and cafeterias were also reported as typically inaccessible for students with mobility limitations in high school. The laboratories themselves usually have benches that are too high, materials that require the use of two hands, and microscopes placed too high" (Pivik, McComas, & LaFlamme, 2002, p. 103). Zach's experiences are common to other students

with disabilities since they often have to play the role of the audience in Science: “ *In science, using things on the bench, I just sat down and watched*” (Shevlin et al., 2002, p. 165). It is shameful when students with disabilities should be downgraded to a member of the audience when the rest of the class is able to participate.

Students with disabilities are often denied access to classes and classroom materials which are freely allocated to students without disabilities. Schools fail to include students with disabilities on the basis of misunderstanding and sheer ignorance. Shevlin et al. show how teachers often underestimated, and to some extent, hampered, the academic potential of students with disabilities. Students had to struggle to gain access: “(The teacher) *told me I wasn’t suitable for the higher class. But I got into it and I got a B1. She just assumed that because I had a disability I should be in a lower class*” (p. 163). The literature indicates that, in many cases, less was expected of the students just for the fact that they had a disability and teachers reasoned that since students had a disability, much less was expected of them.

The majority of the participants, whatever their disability, felt that their school had expected less from because they had a disability. They spoke of teachers who excluded them in classroom question times, accepted lower standards for their work, provided inadequate feedback and placed them inappropriately within class. (Shevlin et al, 2002, p. 163)

For example, one participant felt that “ *The attitude was if you’re dyslexic you won’t be going anywhere so let’s not bother*” (Ibid. p. 163). The same was applicable to the standards: “ *There was an attitude that if you have something wrong with you, you don’t have to reach the same standards others do*” (Ibid., p. 163). Furthermore, there is often the expectation of failure on the part of the teachers who teach students with

disabilities. Shevlin et al. quote a student who reported that: “ *If I didn’t do my homework they wouldn’t really mind*” (p. 163).

Sutherland (1981) describes Derek McCarthy who spent five years at an ordinary school:

They had the science equipment but our science teacher had it locked up in a cupboard and used to give us all academic stuff, theory, and never let us do practical work. I don’t think he thought we were capable of doing it, because we had bad eyesight. Yet I, at that point, thirteen, decided I wanted to do an O level in science. The headmistress said it was absolutely unheard of and told us: ‘*You can take CSE, but you can’t take O levels.*’ We had one parent leave our school because of that, their parents took them away (p. 4). (Appendix C)

Derek McCarthy and his twin brother elected to not attend a special school, despite “advice” from a doctor to his parents that they should be educated at a special school. Derek further explains that children who are partially sighted belong in mainstream schools. It seems as if children are often able to articulate with more clarity than are adults. Children are, after all, the ones who are most affected by moves to mainstream schools from special schools. Their voices are virtually absent from those decisions or research which concerns such decisions. Derek rejects the idea of special schooling and “suggests that they (*children who are partially sighted*) could easily be integrated into ordinary schools and the major reason many partially sighted children are at special schools is simply that other schools are unwilling to make the very simple adjustments that would make integration possible” (Ibid., p. 5).

Derek McCarthy believes that the whole concept of partially sighted schools is wrong and mainstream schools fail in that they do not provide the materials students with disabilities require in order to succeed and fulfill the basic requirements of class:

It's no hardship for anyone to write a bit bigger on the blackboard. And it means that even kids with normal eyesight can see that much better. You don't need special books, you need magnifying glasses. If they supplied magnifying glasses, or even special glasses – you can get bioptic glasses, they're like a pair of binoculars, designed for reading – and supplied the kids with those, they could read normal books. (Ibid.)

Such means of inclusion might decrease incidences of stigma on account of eyesight.

The aforementioned examples of ignorance within school policy indicates that failure to accommodate students with disabilities is one of the reasons why inclusion cannot and has yet to occur. Pupils with disabilities need various types of accommodation if they are to be participants in the school community. There needs to be, “for instance, material available in Braille or on tape, sign language interpreters, readers, work stations in the library or in labs that people who use wheelchairs can access, or other low- or high-tech equipment, such as voice-activated computers” (Linton, 1998, p. 73). Linton’s findings are by no means unusual in school failure to fully accommodate all of their students. Students with disabilities are precluded from participation in the classroom environment because of a variety of factors. The exclusion of particular resources prevents pupils from fully participating in the basic functions of everyday school life.

Appropriate support to access schooling should not be seen as ‘conditional’ or as an ‘optional extra’ or dependent on ‘good will’... Supports should be so effective and available that they are not seen or presented as ‘special.’ A ventilator, signer, an interpreter, a personal assistant, voice recognition software, physical adaptations, accessible transport and toilet facilities, should be as available and central to places where people learn as a pair of spectacles or a text book. (Whittaker, 2001, The Statement of Special Educational Need section, para. 6)

Shevlin, Kenny, and McNeela (2002) indicate that they recognize the problem that young people with disabilities still have yet to gain access because of environmental barriers. As with Derek’s and Zack’s experiences, participants in Shevlin et al.’s study

faced challenges in terms of access to the curriculum because the environment was inaccessible:

There were girls in wheelchairs and they got round easily and everything was at a level where they could do everything. If a class was downstairs, no problem. But stairs, there'd be a problem. Prefabs were a big problem, big steps into them, I had to be lifted. If my friends weren't around I wouldn't get there I wouldn't go to class. (2002, p. 162)

The failure of teachers to take into account the varying levels of ability isolates children. The inaccessible environment precludes students from moving freely about the school to the same degree as their able-bodied peers. It seems as if persons with disabilities are rarely consulted as to the architectural infrastructure seeing how schools have failed miserably in this area:

(Karen says that) the mainstream school was a massive school. There are three separate buildings. One lesson was at the other end of the building and I was expected to manage. Once I got to the correct block I had to go up flights of stairs. Although I now use a wheelchair full-time, in those days I had no choice but to walk. I used my wheelchair to get from A to B but I had to put everything in one bag on my back and I had to climb two flights of stairs. And by the time I got there I was shattered and I could very easily fallen asleep in those classes. And then by the time I'd woken myself up it was time to go downstairs for the next lesson.... The education was absolutely fantastic, I couldn't have asked for more in that department and the teachers were really good but, I think, looking back I wish I had gone to a school that had the same level of education but was more wheelchair friendly. (Armstrong, 2003, p. 64)

Although students with disabilities gained some access to mainstream schools, there are instances whereby students are denied access to these schools, which violates every tenet of what encompasses full inclusive education. A February 2000 *Globe and Mail* article attests to the fact that persons with disabilities still face enormous barriers in gaining entrance to mainstream schools. The article's title, *Boris, 7, isn't welcome at school* describes how Boris Ortiz, a young boy who has Down syndrome was not

welcome at Saint-Jean-Baptiste School. As a consequence, he had to attend a segregated school, Ecole Saint-Pierre-Apotre. Picard, the article's author, states what is known to most parents of children with disabilities: "Integration of children with disabilities is the norm, at least in theory. But in practice, children with disabilities, particularly those with developmental and behavioural problems, continue to be shut out of the general school system" (Picard, 2000, para. 8). Borris's mother feels emphatically that " '*segregation is wrong-headed... because the social skills that children learn at school are as important, if not more so, than what is taught in the classroom*'" (Ibid., para. 29).

It is apparent that the inclusion of students with disabilities within the classroom environment is a major theme indeed. Environmental barriers often prevent students from participating in classroom activities. For example, as a consequence of the architecture of the school, a student in a wheelchair must make compromises such that he or she is tired when he or she reaches class. Within the classroom, schools fail to properly provide for students because teaching materials do not allow for certain students to participate. Accommodations for persons with disabilities potentially might benefit other students as well. For example, if the teacher assigns a student to read aloud items from the blackboard for a student who is blind, this could potentially benefit other students who might not otherwise be paying attention. The inclusion of students with disabilities decreases stigma and increases an understanding as to the needs and accomplishments of persons with disabilities.

Attitudinal barriers prevent students with disabilities from achieving inclusion. The fact that teachers often expect less of persons with disabilities makes the implicit

suggestion that persons with disabilities are incapable of rising to challenges. In the narratives, students spoke of teachers not caring if they did not care if they handed in homework. In a truly inclusive setting, all students, regardless of ability, should be penalized for failing to complete homework assignments, although allowances should be made for mitigating circumstances. The main point of this section is to show that persons with disabilities are not on the same level as their peers without disabilities as they do not have access to the same resources, they are treated differently by their teachers, and they are left out of class activities. These factors do little to combat the stigma of difference and if anything, show and emphasize that persons with disabilities are different from their peers and deserve “special treatment” which is contrary to the tenets of an inclusive environment, and to the Social Model of disability.

Classroom involvement and Black students.

School desegregation is perhaps a misnomer for newly mixed raced schools because segregated lunchrooms and bathrooms continued to exist in some schools. “ ‘When we went to the other bathrooms, to see what separate booth we had, we saw that on the first day that had written ‘Private.’ The next day they had written on a big white sign ‘Nigger’ in red lipstick’ ” (Chesler, 1967, p. 17). Integration of Black students, then, did not lead to their inclusion. Although this example occurred shortly following desegregation, similar attitudes continued to manifest themselves in subsequent years. Furthermore, the Black students were further excluded in that they had to use cups in order to obtain a drink from the water fountain (Ibid., p. 17). Thus, segregation continued more covertly despite *Brown*. Surprisingly, many Black students expressed optimism

towards their treatment: “*Once they learn that we are no different from them, and white people are no different from colored people, the situation will be much better. I’ll be glad when that day comes*” (Ibid., , p. 25). Thus, if such lessons were to be learned, it only seemed logical that Blacks and Whites should have been included together in a further range of activities.

Inclusion in the classroom is often hampered by attitudes on both sides. In a 1966 interview, a girl describes her reluctance to sit with White classmates because she felt that she could not act like herself around them:

In one class I have, there are only five of us in there. There are two white boys, two white girls, and myself. Usually, I don’t sit with anyone... someone might say, ‘Why don’t you come and sit with us?’ I can’t tell them that I don’t want to sit with you because I don’t enjoy talking to them... It’s just that you can’t act like yourself around them. You want to be with your friends, the Negroes. I can be more me then. (Ibid., p. 30)

As with students with disabilities, Black students could not always access resources to the same degree as their White counterparts. For example,

In the home economics classroom they have more machines; and this is another place that we found we were discriminated against. Our home economics teacher would have the new machines on one side of the room and the old on the other side, and would put us into groups to let us use the old machines and the white girls use the new ones. And in cooking she would always give out the recipes and stuff and we would always get the small amount. And she would separate us into three separate groups so that the three Negro girls were in the same group together. (Ibid., p. 42)

The quote exemplifies discrimination on many levels. First of all, the home economics teacher reinforces difference by segregating the girls by who has access to the new equipment and who does not. The teacher also emphasizes differences through her discriminatory actions. Her favouritism towards a certain group of girls mirrors White privilege. Teachers’ perceptions of Blackness often causes them to display overt acts of

discrimination, as was exemplified by the aforementioned examples. These attitudes often sanctions student prejudicial behaviour as teachers are in positions of power.

Another particularly poignant and dreadful example of segregation:

I had this teacher divide the class up into groups. The Negroes sit on one side and the white students sit on the other side. She would teach the Negroes like on half of the class and then she would go over to the white kids. If we came to anything about communism or something relating to civil rights, she would bring up King's name and say something like, 'In a little time our freedom will be gone,' their freedom, the whites. She feels that just because she is a teacher she can talk about anything. (Ibid., p. 20)

Black students were also the objects of teachers who just did not understand and had severe misconceptions of the ability of the Black population:

One of my other problems was that my history teacher would call on me to read mostly all the time, and because I couldn't read very well the children would laugh... The teacher would go out of the class almost everyday so the kids could call on me and have fun on me. (Ibid., p. 41)

Classes whereby the teachers displayed inappropriate behaviour merely served to isolate and further exclude the Black students:

Our teacher was always calling on us when we wouldn't have our hands up, and when we did have our hands up she wouldn't call on us, when we'd take them down that's when she would call on us. And then one morning in our first period class, my friend was at his desk, and she called him up in front of the class, trying to embarrass him. He has soap on his face that couldn't come off good and she told him that he had soap on his face and that he hadn't washed his face. (Ibid., p. 45)

Unfair grading systems were also common: “ ‘If you make a good grade they'll give you a bad grade and if you make a bad grade then they still give it to you. But they also make it lower and they don't treat you equally’ ” (Ibid., p. 47). Another boy concurred as he stated: “ ‘Well, I think the teachers are worse here because they don't give you what you make’ ” (Ibid., p. 48). Black students were subordinated in the classroom because of

prevailing attitudes at the time, mostly by the other students: “ *I feel that they made us feel that we don’t know anything because they always keep us in jobs like in the kitchen or in the yard or on the farms. They never have made us feel like we should be anything; never made me feel like anything*” (Ibid., p. 11).

Black students faced the challenge of being segregated in an environment which supposedly preached desegregation. If the claim was that desegregation occurred, then to be forced to use a separate washroom facility would have been an affront to the psyche of the Black student and would just function to emphasize difference. Teacher attitudes compounded the differences between Black and White students because many teachers exhibited preferential behaviour onto their White students. Thus, although desegregation supposedly occurred, perhaps it was only very tokenistic as Black students continued to be segregated in school.

Classroom involvement and discussion.

The literature indicates how colour, and not the individual was seen first, much as individuals with disabilities were defined solely by their disability. A non-inclusive setting is one which is an affront to diversity. “Student populations are becoming more diverse. As diversity in the American populations increase, so does the diversity of the students that compose our schools. to meet this diverse population’s needs, the schools must respond with varied services for all its students” (Walker & Ovington, 1998, p. 4). Whittaker (2001) states that “inclusive education cannot exist in a system that offers disabled people partial access, partial support, and partial rights. The presence of ALL learners is only the first step in the eradication of irrational fears about difference” (No

Equal rights Means No Inclusive Education section, para. 3). Schools should provide the means by which students may join with as few barriers as possible. From the literature, it appears that many students with disabilities encountered structural, attitudinal, and architectural barriers, while Black students confronted mostly attitudinal barriers.

In both instances, the majority of teacher attitudes indicated that they thought less of Black students, as well as students with disabilities. Their expectations were lower and they infantilized them, in many cases. They obviously did not expect much from both populations. With respect to the Black population, the “rewarding” of bad marks might be construed as an act of maliciousness on the part of the teachers to indicate their discontent with the desegregation of schools. Although the White teachers were more overt with respect to their prejudicial attitudes against the Black students, the effect of the treatment was no different from that of children with disabilities. By expecting less from both populations, the students lost out on a positive and fair educational experience.

Friendship

Friendship and students with disabilities.

An inclusive mainstream environment should allow for the opportunity for friendship with members of certain populations that one would not necessarily come into contact with outside of school. There is evidence in the literature that says mainstream education benefits students with disabilities because inclusive education allows greater interactions between students with and without disabilities:

Social relationships with peers provide children with a range of supports and tacit acknowledgment of their acceptance in the social milieu of the school. Studies of young elementary-age children reveal that positive social relations influence their intellectual, communicative, interpersonal, and emotional development (Asher, 1983;

Bates, 1975; Hartup, 1978; Parker and Asher, 1987; Rubin, 1980). During the primary grades, children begin to understand and adopt the core values of their culture and they develop the social skills needed to act effectively on those values (Solomon, Walson, Delucchi, Schaps, & Battistich, 1988). The public school classroom has particular importance as a context for the development of relationships between groups of children who have little contact outside the school setting. (Salisbury, Gallucci, Palombaro & Peck, 1995, p. 1)

Kennedy, Cushing, and Itkonen (1997) researched this premise in their article, *General Education Participants Improves Social Contacts and Friendship Networks of Students with Severe Disabilities*. Kennedy et al. hypothesized that “one desired outcome of inclusive education is the enhanced social development of students with disabilities.” (p. 167). To test their hypothesis, the researchers studied two students who had severe disabilities when they entered an inclusive classroom. “Recent research (Hunt et al., 1994; Kennedy & Itkonen, 1994) has demonstrated initial positive benefits for children with disabilities participating in general education settings in the form of increased opportunities to interact with peers” (Ibid., p. 169). For example, Paul, one of the participants, was a eleven-year-old male who was labeled as having a severe disability. Before Paul attended the integrated school, Paul’s parents enrolled him in a special school. In his new school, Paul was able to meet new peers and develop more positive social interactions with peers who did not have disabilities. Thus, their findings are consistent with those of Brown et al. as well as those of Salisbury (1995): “The development of positive social relationships and networks is a particularly important and problematic goal for students with moderate and severe disabilities – because this is the group of children who have been most routinely segregated from contact with ‘typical’ children in general education” (p. 2).

Inclusive education allows for diverse friendships to emerge. Many students live in neighbourhoods where they would otherwise not have contact with children with disabilities. Furthermore, they may be members of clubs or sports teams of which children with disabilities are not members. If persons with disabilities are not members of these groups, school might be one of the only ways by which they may attain close friendships, which highlights the value of an inclusive educational environment. The experience of school should allow students to come into contact with a wide range of diverse members of the population. Staub (1998) speaks extensively of friendships, in *Delicate Threads* whereby she addresses the value of positive social interactions between students with and without disabilities. She describes the friendship between Stacy, a nondisabled 12-year-old and Molly, a student with Down syndrome at the Jane Austen Elementary School in the Pacific Northwest. Staub chronicles the friendship Stacy and Molly. She describes how the friendship benefits both of the girls, even though at first Stacy was afraid of Molly.

Salisbury et al's (1995) research also points to the important physical arrangements in the classroom which enable students with physical disabilities to be included. Jackie, a ten-year-old girl in fourth grade with a developmental disability now has many friends: “*‘Intentionally connecting her with certain people that we knew probably would be receptive. Kids who were outgoing didn’t seem to be frightened of her. We... got her going with those other three children. They were sort of her advocates’*” (Ibid., p. 8). Likewise, if the children have an understanding, friendships are more likely to form:

Kathy (a six year-old in first grade) screamed and everything was to such a degree that most of the kids did not want to approach her. ... We talked about Kathy’s needs and

why we felt she screamed and what we might be able to do to make school a more pleasant place for her.... Now they realize that's the way she communicates; and they might comment sometimes, saying '*Oh Kathy's having a bad day*' or approach her and say, '*Kathy – want to listen to tapes?*' (Alice, K1 teacher). (Salisbury,1995, p. 10).

Students are less likely to be hostile, and will initiate friendship if they know more about disability. In a particularly touching example:

The challenges of inclusion are substantial, but the payoffs come in small day-to-day moments. Tiffany Kendall recalls, for example, the time a fifth-grade student with Down Syndrome, sharing a learning experience with two non-disabled peers, put his arms around their shoulders and said, grinning, '*Friends! I love friends!*' '*That,*' says Kendall, '*makes it all worthwhile*' (Flores, 2003, Big Challenges, Big Rewards Section, para. 3-4).

The accessibility of schools also had an impact upon friendship, as to dependency considerations.

It was kind of difficult just to get around. And asking for help, I found that difficult I didn't like asking the same person all the time. Some people would make a fuss over and others wouldn't think – it was a mixture of reactions. (Shevlin et al., 2002, p. 162).

Parental attitudes and misconceptions also play a role in the development of friendships. Houses might be physically inaccessible or inaccessible owing to attitudes. For example, Staub (1998) describes the worries of a mother (Linda) whose daughter (Stacy) wanted her friend with Down syndrome (Molly) to come over and play. Linda related a conversation she had with Molly's mother: "*I was quite embarrassed so I just blurted out... 'What does (Molly) eat? What do I do if she chokes? Does she know how to use the toilet?'"* (p. 165). Thus, if parents had access to more information, friendships between children with and without disabilities might emerge more easily.

Furthermore, students with disabilities do not want to be pitied or be given special treatment, as is consistent with The Social Model of disability. The development of

positive social relationships is often contingent upon how the teacher introduces students with disabilities to the rest of the class. If he or she focuses upon deficits, then it is likely that the student with a disability will not have a wide range of alliances. If teachers explain things in a frank manner, as was exemplified in the Salisbury example, this facilitates the formation of friendships, as students understand one another better.

Friendships and Black students.

During desegregation, myths still continued to persist about Blacks and it was incumbent upon the children to dispel their own myths as well as the myths thrust upon them by their parents. Perceptions of Blacks still persisted among the White children and made for rumours which distanced the members of the two races. One of the perceived disadvantages of members of the Black population entering a White school were the White impressions of Blacks. “*I have heard that there was a case of a Negro child molesting a six-year-old child*” (Swanson & Montgomery, 1968, p.277). For example, in the Chesler interviews, one of the girls stated that: “*I think they get many of these ideas from their parents. Most of the adults feel that integration results in intermarriage, especially in the elementary school*” (1967, p. 30). Friendships did form in the desegregated schools, but it was difficult as a consequence pre-conceived notions about the Black and White races.

Prejudicial attitudes of parents still persisted. Some parents told their White children not to play with the Black kids. For example, Coles (1964) explains how “in 1961 one of the white children who returned to the almost totally boycotted Frantz school told a little coloured girl that she would not play with her because her mother had

forbidden this, and then, a few minutes later, did just that” (p. 210). Coles describes, that as a consequence of parents children might develop a fear of Blacks, which might have an impact upon friendship choice: “Of course, a child of five, or 15 for that matter, may develop a true phobia about Negroes, just as he may about dogs or heights or certain foods. The child has been taught to associate extreme danger and hurt or harm with dark skin” (p. 210). With this in mind, it is somewhat remarkable that interracial friendships emerged at all. “In terms of racial myths, the Negro is often depicted as little better than a savage animal, intellectually and morally inferior, childish and irresponsible, and supposedly unable to control allegedly excessive sexual and aggressive impulses” (Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, 1957, p. 17). Swanson & Montgomery’s (1968) findings are consistent with these assertions as many White students felt that “there is a lowering of educational standards and standards of decorum” (p. 277). Thus, White students often had to act against their own myths of the Black students, as well as those of their prejudiced parents.

Despite outside influences, friendships between the two races did emerge:

There was one girl in my homeroom who is okay. She would talk to us and when we are in some kind of trouble, she will help us out. I found that she likes a lot of things I like. She doesn’t sit around and keep to herself and her white friends. Like when we are doing something and you have to pick someone to be on your team, a lot of white students will pick some white students because they are white. She is different, she will pick on you because she thinks you are good. (Chesler, 1967, p. 30)

The concept of friendship was different between Black and White students. Some Whites still thought of themselves as superior:

There’s a lot of white students who act like they think they are doing you a favour if they let you be their friends. It’s like it is a privilege for you to be their friend. Well, that’s not the kind of friend I need. (Ibid., p. 31)

An added problem is that not all of society had caught up to the more progressive

White children:

They all seem afraid of what someone else might think... they are always afraid of what someone else might think. There are very few incidences of violence, killings, etc., but they are afraid to take me home after practice. They say, 'somebody might shoot me,' 'take you home in broad daylight, you must be kidding.' Sometimes they will take me home and sometimes they will make up excuses. They are just afraid. (Ibid., p. 33)

Many of the houses in which the White students lived were inaccessible to their Black peers. Even after desegregation, there were some White houses which the Black children could not enter. For example, in response to the question that Chesler posed: "Have any of you had any of your white classmates to your homes, or have you gone to any of their homes?" (Ibid., p. 38). One boy laughingly replied "*I've been to the front door*" (Ibid.).

In another example,

I almost got into a fight one day over this visiting bit. I asked _____ about would he invite me over for a visit. He said, "No!" And I asked "Why not?" He said, "Going to school is okay, but that's the limit' I said, 'I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll come over and pretend like I'm cutting the hedges and I'll go around the back and come in the back door.' Well, we got serious about it and he said he jus couldn't invite me to his house. (p. 38)

Preconceived attitudes had a major effect on friendship between Black and White peers. Both populations had only limited contact with one another. In the analysis of friendships, the White children often thought themselves superior and friendship with a Black student might have been construed as 'altruistic' behaviour. Furthermore, parent attitudes might not have changed to the same degree as their White sons and daughters. This is why certain friendships did not exist outside of school.

The myths which existed about the Black population had a negative effect upon friendship formation in the schools. Ideas were imbedded in the heads of the White students that the Black student was one who was inferior in every way to the White person. This perpetuated fear of Blacks, which made it difficult for friendships between the races to emerge.

Friendships and discussion.

One of the more important, and perhaps, obvious things to realize, is that the composition of the class is a factor in both cases in what type of friendship emerges. As Hallinan and Williams (1987) say, “the racial composition of a class stimulates or limits opportunities for interracial interaction” (p. 654). In both cases, it was only a small number of students who entered the mainstream schools. As was indicated earlier, it was often the case that there were only one or two children with disabilities in a classroom whereby the rest of the children did not have disabilities. For example, if many students who are Black or have disabilities are in the same class, this may assist in disavowing stereotypes and myths. Further, it allows for more group work and interaction between the children. “Assigning children to the same instructional unit exposes them to similar educational activities and experiences that produce new similarities. The racial composition of the class affects student opportunities to transcend racial differences and focus on existing similarities” (Ibid.). As many of the aforementioned examples attested, when children had the opportunities to work with students with disabilities, fears and hatred melted. Friendships are a means by which students may learn about one another in a way which satiates myths and fears. It is also obvious that the attitudes of the teachers

plays a huge difference. Friendships in classrooms emerged where teachers explained differences and this occurred far more significantly for the students with disabilities. Black and White children often had little contact with one another outside the school setting. The fact that contact was limited allowed White students to internalize the myths about Black students, and fear them. In both cases, it seems as if access to more information about the minority population leads to peer acceptance, which leads to friendships.

Closing Discussion

Mainstream schools have yet to attain the inclusion of pupils with disabilities. As is evident with Black students after desegregation, there continues to be little evidence of inclusion in all school activities of students with disabilities inside and outside of the classroom. In both cases, students remained segregated by race or ability in terms of their academic and social relations with the other students. The theme is significant because it means that certain students are deprived from participating fully in the school community. According to Whittaker (2001), “over the last 50 years different governments have told us that we are moving towards ‘integration’, where disabled children and non-disabled children work together in the same school and everybody has equal opportunities” (Introduction section, para. 2). *Brown v. the Board of Education* made similar promises that never came to fruition. Disadvantages for the Black child were many: “They are still kept apart from the white children. They live apart, they are bused-in separately, they leave separately, and do not join in after-school activities with their playmates (Swanson & Montgomery, 1964, p. 278). Furthermore, there is the tenet of pity which threads its

way through both situations: “The white children can easily get the idea that ‘*we have to make room in our nice school for these unfortunate children*’”(Ibid. , p. 277). Lastly, many houses are inaccessible for students with physical disabilities, just as many White students feared bringing their Black friends home for fear of what their parents might say or what the neighbours might think. Houses might be physically inaccessible, as well as inaccessible owing to ignorance.

Children have yet to gain access to full curriculum choices, extra-curricular activities, and access to regular classroom space. On a similar note, after desegregation Black students faced similar challenges. It is questionable whether or not they were fully included into schools. Both disability and race created barriers which were evident with respect to full classroom inclusion, as well as in extra-curricular activities.

Staub (1998) states that “extracurricular activities within the school provide additional opportunities for children to meet one another, participate in activities of common interest, and learn and practice skills other than strictly academic ones” (p. 218). As Asch (1989) suggested, “not only do extracurricular activities provide extra support for children to discover and develop their talents, but they also provide opportunities to facilitate the development of children’s friendships” (p. 218).

Conclusions

hooks and Students with Disabilities

Much as Asch (1989) was able to give voice to her experience in school as a woman who is blind, bell hooks articulates her experiences as a student in a segregated school who made the transition into an integrated school. In *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, as well as *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*, hooks' experiences are useful in that they help to highlight the parallels which exist between race and disability as both groups share common experiences of oppression. Both groups confront similar barriers, as was articulated in the Social Model of disability. While it should not be concluded that hooks is the authoritative voice on disability, hooks' evidence offers suggestions which help to promote an inclusive environment. One should not conclude that the inclusion of a black voice within the concluding statements is evidence of privileging race over disability. On the contrary, the words of hooks help provide the necessary cohesion for an inclusive educational environment to emerge. The research provided pertinent experiences of students with disabilities. Although hooks does not identify as a person with a disability, hooks' words help to articulate a possible avenue for inclusion to flourish. This final section will address potential concerns students with disabilities might encounter in the transition from special to mainstream schools, using the teachings of bell hooks as a tool by which to attain an inclusive environment.

In *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, hooks speaks of her experience at Booker T. Washington, a segregated school. The significance of her

experience at this school is her description of the education that she received. This particular type of pedagogy was important to her as a Black woman.

We (as students) learned early that our devotion to learning, to a life of the mind, was a fundamental way to resist every strategy of white racist colonization. Though they did not define or articulate these practices in theoretical terms, my teachers were enacting a revolutionary pedagogy of resistance that was profoundly anticolonial. Within these segregated schools, black children who were deemed exceptional, gifted, were given special care. Teachers worked with and for us to ensure that we would fulfill our intellectual destiny and by doing so uplift the race. (hooks, 1994, p. 2)

In the same way, pedagogy is an important consideration for students with disabilities. Thus, when students with disabilities enter mainstream schools, it is crucial that they achieve academic success. Furthermore, these students should receive empowerment as a consequence of proper pedagogy in that they resist discrimination, thereby uplifting the status of persons with disabilities.

The Classroom

As hooks emphatically states, “students need to be active participants, to link awareness to practice” (1994, p. 14). This statement is a crucial one for students with disabilities who attend mainstream schools. For example, a student who uses a wheelchair or a student who is blind (like Zach in an earlier example) and sit on the bench in Chemistry class, are not active participants in the class. Such an arrangement deprives students with disabilities of receiving an education which is on par with students without disabilities. All students need to be actively involved in their education, which evidently has yet to occur, as the research indicates. According to hooks, if this goal was achieved, then perhaps students with disabilities would have more of a passion for the mainstream schools they attend.

The transition from an all-Black school to an integrated one made hooks lose her passion for school and for learning.

That shift from beloved, all-black schools to white schools where black students were always seen as interlopers, as not really belonging, taught me the difference between education as the practice of freedom and education that merely strives to reinforce domination. (hooks, 1994, p. 4)

As was exemplified earlier in the research, Blacks had to endure White racist assumptions: “School was still a political place, since we were always having to counter white racist assumptions that we were genetically inferior, never as capable as white peers, even unable to learn” (Ibid., p. 4).

When students with disabilities entered mainstream education, they encountered similar negative stereotypes, which could conceivably cause students to have a negative educational experience. Such blatantly erroneous stereotypes should not be part of an inclusive educational experience. In order to counteract this, hooks suggests that a change in the attitude of educators is necessary: “More than ever before in the recent history of this nation, educators are compelled to confront the biases that have shaped teaching practices in our society and to create new ways of knowing, different strategies for the sharing of knowledge” (Ibid., p. 12). The latter point is of crucial importance as strategies need to be re-evaluated in order that student needs are met. The research has shown that student needs are not being met. For example, knowledge cannot be shared adequately when a student who is blind is unable to see the board, and adequate measures are not taken so that the student might be an active participant in the learning environment.

The Curriculum and How Knowledge is Disseminated

Hooks asserts that there are “biases in curricula that reinscribe systems of domination (such as racism and sexism)” (Ibid., p. 10). Disability might easily be added to this list, as it often functions to challenge the norm. An inclusive educational environment should serve to resist systems of domination. This should be of concern for the full inclusion of students with disabilities in education because “despite the contemporary focus on multiculturalism in our society, particularly in education, there is not nearly enough practical discussion of ways classroom settings can be transformed so that the learning experience is inclusive” (Ibid., p. 35). hooks calls for new ways to teach a diverse group of students (Ibid., p. 10). To do this, students need positive role models. If more teachers with disabilities were hired, this would help to create a more inclusive environment. Much as Black students felt isolated and inferior in the desegregated schools, in which most of their teachers were White, including teachers with disabilities in mainstream schools would provide role models for the students, as well as facilitate a better understanding of disability.

Many teachers lacked an understanding of the needs of their own students, which is important because teachers need to inspire their students. Numerous examples of Black students who attended desegregated school faced horrendous teachers, much as students with disabilities endured teachers who failed to inspire them as a consequence of their prejudicial attitudes. With regard to students with disabilities, their teachers failed to inspire them because of lowered expectations. For hooks, she was “most inspired by those teachers who have had the courage to transgress those boundaries that would confine each

pupil to a rote, assembly line approach to learning” (Ibid., p. 13). Furthermore, teachers must think about how unconsciously they might be “reinforcing existing systems of domination” (Ibid., p. 10). This was exemplified when teachers assumed that children with disabilities had limited ability and the type of language they use. Teachers need to re-evaluate in order that students gain a positive education experience. For example, Shevlin et al. (2002) describe how a student with dyslexia had a positive experience with his/her teachers:

A few teachers took me aside and went through things with me. But we had to work in the canteen, there was nowhere else. Classmates were astonished – spending time with a teacher! If they knew what they were talking about they’d know I needed the extra help. (p. 164)

This example supports both hooks’ assertion that education must be flexible if it is to be beneficial. As hooks asserts, it “was crucial for (her) and every other student to be an active participant, not a passive consumer” (hooks, 1994, p. 14). The research is fraught with examples of students with disabilities who were merely passive consumers in their educational experience. For example, their homework was not checked for completion, and they were not fully included in classes like science. Just as hooks articulates – ‘it was obvious to every black student in these predominantly white schools that our teachers did not really believe we were as capable of learning as white children did” (hooks, 2003, p. 69) – misconceptions about the ability to learn often causes students not to live up to their true abilities. Thus, schools should be places in which students with disabilities gain self-esteem. hooks states that she believes the reason that Black schools were successful was because the majority of her teachers “were politically astute about the impact of racist thinking on black self-esteem and chose to counter that” (Ibid., p. 69). Thus, if teachers

were made more aware of the negative impact that certain ideas might have (lowered expectations of persons with disabilities), then perhaps this might be an incentive for teachers to alter their behavior.

A means by which to allow students to become active participants in their education is to include disability issues into various aspects of the curriculum. For example, several history classes might include discussions on the history of the oppression of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, English classes might include narratives and/or stories written by persons with disabilities. This would facilitate an understanding of disability culture. Thus, teachers must clarify their reasoning behind the decision to include various topics within the curriculum. Part of the reason for Black nostalgia for their old segregated schools was that they no longer learned of important Black leaders, or information about Black culture and history. Therefore, with this in mind, an inclusive education might be a means by which to attain what hooks refers to as a 'racial uplift' (Ibid., p. 68).

Lastly, students with disabilities should not always be looked upon as the "informants." In order to clarify this statement,

Often, if there is one lone person of color in the classroom she or he is objectified by others and forced to assume the role of 'native informant.' For example, a novel is read by a Korean American author. White students turn to the one student from a Korean background to explain what they do not understand. This places an unfair responsibility onto that student. (hooks, 1994, p. 43)

This is significant as students with disabilities are usually the only one with a disability in the class. If this person is seen as the "tokenistic person" with a disability in the class, this could be construed as problematic. He or she might not know all the

answers, and thus school may be a place at which to obtain those answers. Further, constantly being “put on the spot” might emphasize differences between students.

In order to assist in the apartheid between students with and without disabilities, voice is important, as well as to ensure that the educational environment is “safe” from bullying, teasing, and name-calling. hooks’ articulated the fear that Black students had in articulating their voices within the classroom environment:

Throughout my teaching career, white professors have often voiced concern to me about nonwhite students who do not talk. As the classroom becomes more diverse, teachers are faced with the way the politics of domination are often reproduced in the educational setting. For example, white male students continue to be the most vocal in our classes. Students of color and some white women express fear that they will be judged as intellectually inadequate by these peers. I have taught brilliant students of color, many of them seniors, who have skillfully managed never to speak in classroom settings. Some express the feeling that they are less likely to suffer any kind of assault if they simply do not assert their subjectivity. They have told me that many professors never showed any interest in hearing their voice. (Ibid., p. 39- 40)

The experience of students with disabilities are similar in many ways to the Black student experience. They might be afraid to articulate their voices, for fear of bullying or teasing. Teachers must ensure to call on all students equally. Just as Black students resented never being called upon, teachers must make sure that all student voices are heard.

The foundation for inclusion has been set. The use of PlayFair teams and positive role models are only the beginning. If inclusion is to grow to fruition, it is imperative that students with disabilities are not marginalized. As Asch states, “integration is not enough” (p. 197) and the quest for inclusion must prevail until it is attained.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

People First Language

Titchkosky describes a representation of disability referred to as People First Language. For example, the purpose of People-First language uses phrases such as “persons with disabilities” is to counteract the objectification of persons with disabilities, through terms such as, “the disabled” (Titchkosky, 2001).

Appendix B

PlayFair Teams

In the Executive Summary with regard to PlayFair Teams, whose overall objective “is engaging Canadian youth, with and without disabilities to increase awareness in schools and local communities of disability, education, and social justice”

(www.inclusion.com/mfcplayfirexecsummary.html) the project is one which is administered by the Marsha Forest Centre (MFC). Founded in 1989, The Toronto-based Marsha Forest Centre functions to foster the development of inclusion. Named after one of the founders, the Centre works to advance the concept of inclusion as it relates to education and other aspects of the community.

PlayFair workshops include a presentation to mainstream schools and community groups by PlayFair Teams comprised of students with and without disabilities. The purpose of the teams is to educate students about disabilities through the use of everyday simple scenarios. “The primary intended results for the Canadian community include raising awareness of issues of disability in Canadian society through students activism (and the) development of support through MFC and partners, and contact with other Teams to support sustainability” (Ibid.)

Appendix C

CSE

Certificate of Secondary Education, similar to the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

O Levels

These are courses which are usually taken by British students between 14 and 16 years of age. Recognized across the world, the courses are intended to prepare students for employment as well as for higher education.

