“BACKWARD AND BRILLIANT CHILDREN”: A SOCIAL AND POLICY HISTORY OF DISABILITY, CHILDHOOD, AND EDUCATION IN TORONTO’S SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSES, 1910 TO 1945

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is about the origins of the modern special education system (ca. 1910 to 1945); the students who attended special classes; and changing educational categories of ability and disability. Toronto public schools are presented as case study of the typical North American special education system. This system, which school reformers established in different cities in the early twentieth century, represented an approach to educating 'exceptional' children that was characterized by segregated instructional settings and separate curricula, as well as by adherence to the medical model of disability and learning difficulty. Based on the argument that student experiences greatly enhance our understanding of special education history, this dissertation uses a rare source—student records—to reconstruct the school days of special class students in Toronto.

Eugenics, the progressive organizational revolution in urban schooling, and intelligence testing contributed to the development of Toronto's special class system. By 1930, Toronto had instituted special classes for children and adolescents with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties, children with physical disabilities, children who were deaf, and other children with perceptual impairments and speech difficulties. Reform in the 1930s and early 1940s altered the categories of disability and ability special educators used. However, despite these reforms, the special education system's basic principle of separate, special classes remained intact into the post-1945 period.

Young people's experiences with Toronto special classes were diverse and complex—and were often shaped by their various disabled and deaf, class, ethnic or racialized, and gender identities. The many interactions between the special class system and young people and their parents teach two general lessons. First, that young people and their parents were historical actors, even as they faced off with a daunting bureaucratic school system. Second, that some young people benefited from special classes and some did not. Consequently, the complex history of special education cannot be characterized solely as enlightened benevolence or as draconian social control.

This dissertation has contemporary policy implications. It offers an explanation as to why contemporary special education has proven resistant to inclusive educational reforms that challenge the basic premise of separate instruction for ‘exceptional’ children.

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Misinterpretations of the good advice I have received from my colleagues are, of course, my personal responsibility.

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My sister, Megan Ellis, has also read large parts of this dissertation and I thank her particularly for her helpful suggestions about wording. Megan always knows just what to say, in dissertations and in all things.

My greatest thanks of all are reserved for my parents. In different ways my parents were both unlikely university students when they walked onto the campus of Waterloo Lutheran University around 1970. When later they graduated from Ottawa Teachers' College, and became elementary school teachers, neither of my parents ever forgot the unconventional paths they had followed to higher education. As educators they were defined by their great ability to identify with their students, especially those who were, like them, perhaps not natural scholars. Teaching school comes with many rewards. But there are few accolades. This dissertation, therefore, is dedicated to my parents: Bev and Jeff Ellis—in recognition of everything that you have accomplished and with the greatest love and admiration.

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Introduction: Special education and history.

What is the best way to educate schoolchildren who are disabled, difficult, or just plain different? This question has been the subject of considerable debate in recent decades.[1] Quite often that debate has surrounded questions of place.[2] Is it better to include exceptional children in mainstream classrooms with every other child? Or is it better to teach them separately, in differentiated educational settings where a modified school program is used? These are, in fact, questions that educationists have asked for a century or more.[3] Approximately 100 years ago, Toronto schoolmen and schoolwomen joined in a North American educational reform movement that answered questions about the proper place of exceptional children in the public schools by implementing a system of separate, segregated special education classes for children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Separate special classes, reformers argued, would provide these young people with a specialized school program that was different from the mainstream program and tailored to their specific needs. "Progress lies more in the line of adapting the course to the pupils than in attempting to conform the pupils to the course," Toronto's Chief Inspector, R.H. Cowley, wrote about the city's nascent special education classes in 1916.[4] A policy of separate special classes held benefits for children in the mainstream classes as well, supporters argued. With disabled children out of the way, the teacher would have "the chance to do her best work for the largest and most important class of children, the normal."[5] Not least of all, as we shall see, reformers promised that differentiated settings for children with disabilities and learning difficulties would "promote the efficiency and economy of the whole school system."[6] It was not just school reformers who were interested in special classes either. A century ago, special education was cutting edge—a topic of conversation in many different reform circles. Educationists, social reformers, vocational guidance experts, social workers, eugenicists, child savers, psychologists and psychiatrists, public health officials and physicians, municipal politicians and members of the provincial legislature, charitable societies, and journalists—all of these groups took an avid interest in special education at one time or another in the early twentieth century.

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[1] See: Gordon Porter, "Making Canadian Schools Inclusive: A Call to Action," *Education Canada* 48:2 (Spring 2008): 63-64.
[2] See: Sherman Dorn, Douglas Fuchs, and Lynn S. Fuchs, "A Historical Perspective on Special Education Reform," *Theory into Practice* 35:1 (Winter 1996): 12.
[3] Robert Osgood, *The History of Inclusion of Inclusion in the United States* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 2005), 1-2.
[4] *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Annual Report 1916*, 73.

This dissertation looks at the early-twentieth-century origins of separate special education classes as a public school reform. It examines the development of a special education policy for Toronto public schools, from a modest beginning of four part-time classes opened in 1910, through the creation of a comprehensive system of special classes in the 1920s, and, finally, to the reforms to that system that school authorities unveiled in the mid-1930s and early-1940s.[7] The dissertation also explores the experiences of the most important stakeholders in the special class system: the young people who attended the classes. I argue that their experiences are crucial to special education history, that they can tell us much about segregated special education—about its effectiveness as a policy especially—that school officials' accounts cannot. In the historiography on Canadian childhood, young people with disabilities have only recently become a subject of study, even though disability has historically been a common childhood experience.[8] The Ontario Society for Crippled Children estimated that 7,000 "crippled" youngsters alone lived in the province in 1930.[9] Another estimate, based on 1948 numbers, pegged the number of "handicapped children requiring special education" in the province's elementary schools at over 55,000. The number of "handicapped" pupils in 1948 included over 10,000 "mentally handicapped" children, approximately 2,500 children who were deaf or hard-of-hearing, over 11,000 children with speech difficulties, and thousands more youngsters who had other disabilities. All told, Ontario's "handicapped" children represented roughly one in ten of the province's 550,000 elementary school pupils.[10]

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[5] Mrs. Kerr, "Defective Children," *The Public Health Journal* 5:12 (December 1914): 620

[6] *TBE Minutes 1920*, Appendix No. 10, "Auxiliary Classes. Special Report Dr. Helen MacMurchy to the Toronto Board of Education," 9 January 1920, 26.

[7] The Toronto Separate School Board, which was funded by the education portion of local property taxes paid by Catholics, also had a small number of special classes. These classes, which I do not look at in this dissertation, opened in 1923 and were chronically under-funded, due in part to taxation rules that diverted corporate property taxes to public schools. Although I do not look at Catholic schools, Catholic children are still present in my study because many Catholics attended public schools, for different reasons explained elsewhere. See: R.T. Dixon, *We Remember, We Believe: A History of Toronto's Catholic Separate School Boards, 1841 to 1997* (Toronto: Toronto Catholic District School Board, 2007), 132-133, 147.

Part of my motivation for studying the lives of young people with disabilities and learning also springs from a desire to restore dignity to their experiences by acknowledging their accomplishments and documenting their struggles.[11] This desire is reflected in the dissertation's title, "Backward and Brilliant Children," which is based on the title of a 1931 book written by Ontario's head special educator, Dr. S.B. Sinclair.

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[8] See, for instance, Veronica Strong-Boag, "'Forgotten People of All the Forgotten': Children with Disabilities in English Canada from the Nineteenth Century to the New Millennium," in Mona Gleason, Tamara Myers, Leslie Paris, and Veronica Strong-Boag eds., *Lost Kids: Vulnerable Children in Twentieth-Century Canada and the United States* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 33-50 and Nic Clarke, "Sacred Daemons: Exploring British Columbian Society's Perceptions of 'Mentally Deficient' Children, 1870-1930," *B.C. Studies* 144 (2004-2005): 61-89. The rest of this historiography is discussed later in this introduction.

[9] H.J. Prueter, "The Care and Education of Crippled Children in Ontario," D.Paed. thesis (University of Toronto, 1936), 97-98.

[10] *Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario* (Toronto: Province of Ontario, 1950), 378-379.

[11] See: Nic Clarke, "Opening Closed Doors and Breaching High Walls: Some Approaches to Studying Intellectual Disability in Canadian History," *Social History/Histoire Sociale* 39 (2006): 479-480.

Sinclair's *Backward and Brilliant Children* contains a eugenic parable about the social benefits that would accrue from establishing separate special programs that would help to control "backward" young people—whom, he argued, "usually become a burden on society"—and other separate programs to nurture "brilliant" young people—whom, Sinclair said, were "by far the most valuable asset of a country."[12] To me, the phrase "backward and brilliant children" means something different. The young people whose experiences I learned about through my research, the boys and girls that school authorities and other adults in Toronto labelled with such terms as 'backward,' 'crippled,' or 'non-academic,' were brilliant. They were not burdens or failures. Like all labelled children, including so-called "brilliant," or 'gifted' young people (like 'backwardness,' also a problematic category), they were shining, clever, complex, and fascinating young people who were much more than the labels they acquired at school.[13]

Finally, this dissertation also traces how schooling, and special classes in particular, were shaped by—and helped to shape—twentieth-century ideas about ability and disability in Canada. It was mainly through early special education that the medical model of childhood disabilities and learning difficulties became embedded in public education policy.[14] Schools and special classes, I argue, were also amongst the highest profile venues in which public officials, as well as ordinary Canadians, encountered and dealt with disability, and children with disabilities, on a direct and ongoing basis.

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[12] S.B. Sinclair, *Backward and Brilliant Children* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1931), 25, 66.

[13] In examining students' lives, I attempt to follow the high example that Canadian historian Geoffrey Reaume set with his *Remembrance of Patients Past*, in which he shows the complexity, variety, and dignity in the lives of people labelled 'insane' as "individual human beings who deserve to be understood on their own terms as *people*, rather than labels." See: Geoffrey Reaume, *Remembrance of Patients Past: Patient Life at the Toronto Hospital for the Insane, 1870-1940*, new ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 5. See also: Richard J. Altenbaugh, "Where are the Disabled in the History of Education? The Impact of Polio on Sites of Learning," *History of Education* 35:6 (November 2006): 705-730; Clarke, "Opening Closed Doors"; E. Anne Bennison, "Creating Categories of Competence: The Education of Exceptional Children in the Milwaukee Public Schools, 1908-1917," Ph.D. diss. (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1988), 182-280. On 'giftedness,' which I do not look at in this dissertation because Toronto did not have separate special classes for 'gifted' children, see: Leslie Margolin, *Goodness Personified: The Emergence of Gifted Children* (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1994).

Their early-twentieth-century origins as a dynamic reform now mostly a faint memory, separate special classes are today a very familiar part of the school system. Special education has truly become part of what David Tyack and Larry Cuban call the "grammar of schooling," the set of educational practices that over time become accepted as implicit, natural features of what schools are simply supposed to look like. The movement to include exceptional children in mainstream classes has discovered recently just how well engrained and resistant to change elements of the grammar of schooling, such as separate special classes, can become.[15] This dissertation, by tracing special education's largely forgotten ties to the eugenics movement, to the rise of educational bureaucracies, and to the proliferation of mass intelligence testing in the schools, as well as the effects of such ties on schoolchildren, challenges policymakers to look carefully at the legacy that these movements have left behind in contemporary education policy, perhaps even to ask if separate special classes are still relevant in a twenty-first-century school system that claims equity and inclusion as important values.[16]

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[14] Barry M. Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk': Childhood Learning Difficulties and the Contradictions of School Reform* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 12-13. See also Sol Cohen, "The Mental Hygiene Movement, the Development of Personality and the School: The Medicalization of American Education," *History of Education Quarterly* 23:2 (Summer 1983): 123-149.

[15] David Tyack and Larry Cuban, *Tinkering Toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 85-88. On the obstacles faced by inclusion advocates, see Porter, 63-64. For example, only three provinces and one territory legislate mandatory inclusion: British Columbia, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Northwest Territories. Margret Winzer and Kas Mazurek, "Including Students with Special Needs: Implications for Social Justice," in Joseph Zajda ed., *Globalization, Education and Social Justice* (Heidelberg: Springer, 2010), 90.

Toronto schools in the early twentieth century and the rise of special education

Special education, like many reforms of the early twentieth century, was partly the product of an urban environment beset by deep changes. Sheer population growth alone transformed the city of Toronto in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The city had 208,040 residents in 1901. Just twenty years later, the population had more than doubled to 521,893.[17] Behind population growth were rapid social and industrial changes. Although Toronto always retained a larger Anglo-Saxon population than such immigrant-laden metropolises as New York City, Chicago, or Winnipeg, after 1900 the city nevertheless was increasingly home to significant numbers of immigrants.[18] Families and individuals that emigrated to Toronto from parts near and far contributed to a city that had become, by about 1920, an important industrial and commercial metropolis, with a strong manufacturing base and growing service and financial sectors. Over ten thousand women and men—and even a few hundred children—toiled in the city's thriving garment industry, whose factories and workshops lined Spadina Avenue. The department store and mail order companies, Eaton's and Simpson's, were major employers and retail powerhouses. Their massive downtown operations included warehouses, factories, and flagship stores at the intersection of Queen Street and Yonge Street.[19] Municipal and social reform, designed to curb what reformers saw as big city problems in "Toronto the Good"—immigration, urbanization, industrialization and the supposed consequent spread of poverty, labour unrest, crime, and vice—were important causes in this period.[20]

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[16] See: Franklin, *From 'Backwardness to 'At-Risk'*, 20. On educational historians and educational policymaking generally, in Canada and the United States, see: Eric W. Ricker, "Historians and the Study of Educational Policy: An Overview," in Ricker and B. Anne Wood, eds., *Historical Perspectives on Educational Policy in Canada: Issues, Debates, and Case Studies* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1995): 3-24; Tyack and Cuban; Diane Ravitch and Maris A. Vinovkis eds., *Learning from the Past: What History Teaches Us About School Reform* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Kenneth K. Wong and Robert Rothman eds., *Clio at the Table: Using History to Inform and Improve Education Policy* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009).

[17] J.M.S. Careless, *Toronto to 1918: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: J. Lorimer and National Museum of Man, 1983), 149, 157-161.

[18] See Robert F. Harney, "Ethnicity and Neighbourhoods," in *Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834-1945,* ed. Robert Harney (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985), 1-23; James Lemon, *Toronto Since 1918: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company and National Museums of Canada, 1985, 50-56.

The city's public schools were growing and changing rapidly as well. By 1900, Toronto's public school system was over 50 years old and mid-nineteenth-century voluntarism and sporadic school attendance were increasingly distant memories.[21] Of Toronto's approximately 50 public schools, a number were quite large, such as Ryerson Public School (PS), located near Kensington Market at Dundas Street and Bathurst Street. This school, named for the father of public education in Ontario, Egerton Ryerson, already had over 1,000 pupils in 1900.[22] Another 970 scholars attended Lord Dufferin PS, near the intersection of Parliament Street and Gerrard Street. Both locations are still home to Toronto public schools today. In 1900, local ratepayers voted to merge three distinct educational entities: the public school board, the collegiate institute (secondary school) board, and the technical school board. The municipal plebiscite on the merger also decided that the new board would be elected and that it would consist of two trustees from each of the city's seven wards, and two more trustees appointed to represent Catholic ratepayers on matters relating to secondary education. This new school system, which began operations in 1904 as the Toronto Board of Education (TBE), was much more streamlined than the system it replaced. The pre-merger collegiate institute board alone had consisted of 20 trustees.[23] Under the new system, a non-elected Chief Inspector, and a half dozen school inspectors who worked under him, were responsible for implementing policies set by the trustees, as well as directives from the Ontario Department of Education. Inspectors nonetheless exercised considerable discretion in setting school policy.

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[19] Careless, 149-155; Lemon, 37-41; Ruth Frager, *Sweatshop Strife: Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Jewish Labour Movement of Toronto 1900-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 16-24.

[20] Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 132-134; Paul Rutherford, "Introduction," in *Saving the Canadian City: The First Phase 1880-1920*, ed. Rutherford (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), ix-xxiii; "What is 'The Ward' going to do with Toronto?" (Toronto: Bureau of Municipal Research, 1918). Reformer C.S. Clark made popular the city's monikers "Toronto the Good" and "The Queen City." See C.S. Clark, *Of Toronto the Good: The Queen City of Canada as It Is* (Montreal: The Toronto Publishing Company, 1898).

[21] On the development of public education in Toronto and Ontario in the nineteenth century, see E.A. Hardy and Honora Cochrane, *Centennial Story: The Board of Education for the City of Toronto, 1850-1950* (Toronto: Thomas Nelson, 1950), 3-105; Alison Prentice, *The School Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977); Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871* (London, ON: Althouse Press, 1988). On attendance changes, see Robert Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 37-39.

[22] Hardy and Cochrane, 106-108.

By 1910, TBE schools enrolled 43,476 students. In the next ten years the school population experienced astonishing growth, with the number of students more than doubling to 90,000 by 1920. (See Figure i.1)

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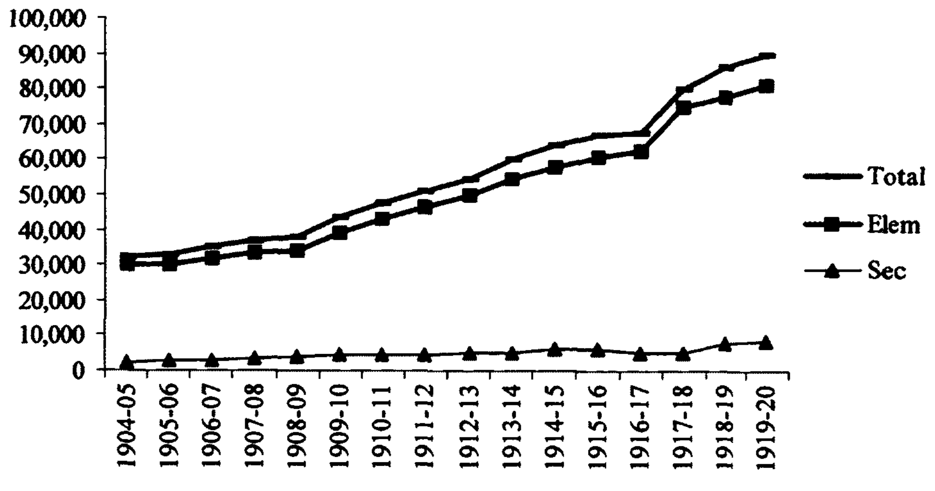
[23] On the merger, see Hardy and Cochrane, 117-119. The number of wards eventually expanded to nine by 1932. See Lemon, 34.

Figure i.1. Toronto Board of Education Enrolment, 1904-1920.



Sources: *Ontario Department of Education Annual Report 1905... to 1920.* Detailed statistics. For 1916 to 1919, some secondary school statistics are from: *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Minutes 1916*, Appendix No. 66, Technical and High School Report No. 5, 703; *TBE Minutes 1917*, Appendix No. 103, Technical and High School Report No. 5, 649; *TBE Minutes 1918*, Appendix No. 97, Technical and High School Report No. 5, May 1918, 644.

Legend: Elem = elementary schools (Kindergarten to Grade 8[24], or to Grade 10 in some schools).

Sec = secondary schools (Grades 9 to 13; collegiate institutes, high schools, commercial schools, technical schools).

Toronto's public school system in 1920 had the largest enrolment in the province by a wide margin. In fact, Toronto public schools enrolled approximately as many pupils as the school systems of various leading American urban centres, such as Los Angeles, Baltimore, and St. Louis.[25] The sharp increase in Toronto's school population was caused by several factors. One factor was the sheer growth in the city's population. Another factor was a series of new compulsory education laws passed in the late 1910s and early

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[24] Until 1937 Ontario schools were divided into forms not grades. Increasingly in the early twentieth century, these forms paralleled modern day grades. In the elementary schools, for example, there were four forms, each with a junior and a senior division. For instance, Junior 1 was equivalent to Grade 1; Senior 1 equated Grade 2; Junior 2 equated Grade 3, and so on. See Stamp, 164. To simplify for the reader I have decided to use the terminology of grades throughout the text, instead of switching back and forth from forms to grades.

[25] *Ontario Department of Education (DOE) Annual Report 1920*, 131, 242, 250, 259. H.H. Bonner, *Statistics of City School Systems, 1919-20*, United States Bureau of Education Bulletin, 1922, No. 17 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), Table 10, p. 38.

1920s. These laws extended the age of mandatory attendance from fourteen to sixteen. The legislation also required school districts to hire attendance officers to round up truants. Truants also became less common as parents in the first two decades of the twentieth century increasingly saw more years of schooling as a valuable investment in their children and consequently became more likely to willingly send their children to school.[26] Urban population growth, new compulsory schooling laws, and changing attitudes towards the value of public schooling all helped to make early-twentieth-century urban public school populations more heterogeneous than they every had been before.[27] That new diversity included unprecedented numbers of young people with disabilities and learning difficulties.[28] In the nineteenth century exceptional children's education, where it was a consideration at all, had largely been the responsibility of state custodial institutions. In Ontario, this included places such as the Ontario Asylum for Idiots at Orillia and the Ontario School for the Deaf at Belleville.[29] After 1900, custodial institutions continued to accept children. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century the Orillia institution took in many young people excluded from Ontario public schools on the basis of low IQ.[30] Nevertheless, it was in this same period that the responsibility for the education of children with disabilities and learning difficulties shifted perceptibly onto the public school system.[31]

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[26] Stamp, 106-108.

[27] David B. Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 182-186.

[28] See Marvin Lazerson, "The Origins of Special Education," in Jay G. Chambers and William T. Hartman eds., *Special Education Policies: Their History, Implementation, and Finance* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 17; Barry M. Franklin, "Progressivism and Curriculum Differentiation: Special Classes in the Atlanta Public Schools," *History of Education Quarterly*, 29:4 (Winter, 1989), 572.

[29] On Orillia, see: Harvey G. Simmons, *From Asylum to Welfare* (Toronto: National Institute on Mental Retardation, 1982). On the Ontario School for the Deaf, see: Clifton H. Carbin, *Deaf Heritage in Canada: A Distinctive, Diverse, and Enduring Culture*, Dorothy L. Smith ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1996), 92-105.

[30] The schools of Ontario established an IQ of 50 as the cut off for eligibility to enrol in a public school, a line that remained in place into the 1950s. Simmons, 91. On Orillia, and admissions from Toronto public

Main arguments

The early policy development of separate special classes in Toronto public schools took place in a context of urban and educational change. This change included the growth in numbers, and increasing heterogeneity, of the urban school population. However, more students and more student diversity did not alone determine the course of policy development. In Chapters 1 and 2 of this dissertation, I argue that two important forces—the eugenics movement and the administrative revolution in public schooling—contributed directly to the emergence of special education as a school policy in Toronto in the 1910s, and also shaped the direction that this policy would take in the next several decades. Chapter 1 looks at the influence of eugenics on early special education in Toronto. In the early 1910s, social reformers and eugenicists, led by the well-known Canadian eugenicist, Dr. Helen MacMurchy, tried to convince Toronto school authorities that special classes in the public schools would help to advance eugenics policies intended to control the city's supposed 'feeblemindedness' problem. "The school must take its place as the greatest preventive agency against this great menace to society," MacMurchy wrote about special education and 'feeblemindedness' in 1915.[32] MacMurchy and the other reformers wanted special classes to serve as a "Clearing

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schools, see also John P. Radford and Deborah C. Park. "'A Convenient Means of Riddance': Institutionalization of People Diagnosed as 'Mentally Deficient' in Ontario, 1876-1934," *Health and Canadian Society* 1:2 (1993): 385.

[31] Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education," 16-18.

[32] Helen MacMurchy, *Organization and Management of Auxiliary Classes*, Educational Pamphlets No. 7 (Toronto: Department of Education, Ontario, 1915), 3.

House" for locating and labelling so-called 'mental defectives' from a young age. The classes would also provide these youngsters with a modicum of training, eventually channelling them to provincial custodial institutions—farm colonies—where they could be closely supervised for the rest of their lives.[33] Toronto school officials welcomed MacMurchy's plan at first. In 1910, school authorities opened the city's first ever special education classes, four part-time classes for children with intellectual disabilities, or so-called 'mentally defective' children. These classes, located at Elizabeth Street PS, George PS, Grace PS, and Essex PS, represented the furthest extent to which school authorities implemented the clearing house plan.[34] Nevertheless, eugenics continued to influence special education in Toronto until at least the mid 1930s, helping to shape early categories that special educators used, such as 'mental defectiveness.' Eugenicists who were members of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene (CNCMH), a group that included the TBE's first school psychologist, Dr. Eric K. Clarke, conducted the intelligence surveys that identified students for special classes in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Eventually, however—by the mid 1930s—educationists developed the skills and expertise to manage special education on their own. By that time as well, the eugenicists' hereditarian explanations of learning difficulty rang less true to educators than they had in the 1910s. Both changes contributed to the eventual decline in the direct influence on special education of eugenics groups such as the CNCMH.

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[33] Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Third Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1908.* Toronto: 1908. (Sessional Papers 1909, No. 58): 39-40.
[34] Toronto District School Board Archives. (TDSBA). *TBE Handbook 1911*, 41-42, 44; *TBE Minutes 1912*, Appendix No. 69, R.H. Cowley, "Report on the Public Schools of Toronto," 7 June 1912, 585.

The administrative revolution that remade North American urban public schools, which I examine in detail in Chapter 2, was the other main factor in the development of special education in Toronto after 1910.[35] As cities, and their school systems, grew larger in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, schoolmen and schoolwomen had trouble keeping up—especially, many educationists believed, because the schools were haphazardly organized and lacked coordination, clear lines of authority and control, and standardized routines and procedures.[36] The main strategy that urban school reformers used to address increased size and complexity, and what they saw as the chaos of decentralization in educational administration, was to attempt to transform disorderly city school systems into sleek educational bureaucracies. The bureaucratization of a city's school system almost always entailed reformers pursuing three principal objectives: the centralization of educational decision-making authority; the standardization of educational practices, curricula, and administrative routines across the schools; and the putting in place of a specialization of function that encouraged differentiated instructional settings, which were supposed to more effectively meet the diverse needs of increasingly heterogeneous urban school populations.[37] As the University of Toronto educational psychologist, Dr. Peter Sandiford, told Hamilton, Ontario schoolteachers in 1915, "the fact which every teacher knows, which everybody who gives a moment's thought to the matter knows, [is] that children are *not* identically equal, that they have different capacities and need different educational treatment."[38] Special education was a very important branch of a strategy of bureaucratic school reform in this period that saw authorities differentiate school programming for many groups of schoolchildren.[39]

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[35] Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education," 15-46.
[36] Tyack, *One Best System*, 30-39.
[37] Tyack, *One Best System*, 39-59.
[38] Peter Sandiford, "Exceptional School Children," *The School* 4:10 (June 1916): 835.

In 1912, two years after opening the first classes for 'mentally defective' children, TBE officials opened a different type of special class, for so-called 'backward' children. Also part of the strategy to make schools more bureaucratic and efficient, Toronto's special classes for 'backward' children in the 1910s were intended to help alleviate the city's 'retardation' problem—the number of children who were older than they were supposed to be for the grades they were in—which, I will explain, differed from its 'feeblemindedness' problem.[40]

David Tyack has described bureaucratic school reformers as "administrative progressives." There were three different branches of progressivism in education in this period. Each of them, I argue, intersected with special education in some way. One branch of educational progressivism consisted of administrative progressives, reformers who, like many other urban reformers in this period, were mainly interested in organizational reforms that would make public institutions, such as schools or municipal government, more rational, and efficient, usually by placing these institutions under more centralized, often elite, control.[41] Pedagogical progressives, a second group of educational progressive, consisted mainly of educators who advocated for a more child-centred approach in public schooling. Commonly associated with just the educational philosophy of John Dewey, pedagogical progressivism was in fact much more broad than this. (In Canada it was sometimes also referred to as the New Education.) Progressive classrooms were supposed to be less authoritarian and hierarchical than traditional classrooms, with greater curricular differentiation and more learner-driven school exercises.[42] Some debate exists about the actual impact of progressive pedagogies on mainstream Canadian classrooms.[43] As we shall see in several different chapters in this dissertation, special educators were somewhat unique, in that they embraced many aspects of progressive instructional methods and curricula with unusual willingness. Progressive social reformers, who wanted to use the schools for the social uplift of the poor and new immigrants, were the third type of educational progressive in the early twentieth century. Special classes, along with other dedicated programs in Toronto, such as 'foreign classes' for immigrant children, forest schools, and open-air classes, all of which were also started in the 1910s, were part of the broader movement by progressives to link to the schools to social reform.[44] There was considerable overlap among these groups and progressivism in education in this period could easily refer to only one, one or two, or all three of these branches simultaneously.

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[39] See also: Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education," 27-28. Franklin, "Progressivism and Curriculum Differentiation: Special Classes in the Atlanta Public Schools," 571-593; Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk'*, 32-40.

[40] On 'retardation' see: Leonard P. Ayres, *Laggards in Our Schools: A Study of Retardation and Elimination in City School Systems* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1909).

[41] Tyack, *One Best System*, 126-130.

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[42] See, Lawrence Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education 1876-1957* (New York: Vintage Books, 1964); Tyack, *One Best System*, 196-197. On pedagogical progressivism in Canada, see George S. Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall, 1986), 189-213; Neil Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 202-224. See also, on Ontario, Stamp, 51-73 and Theodore Michael Christou, "Parallel Progressivist Orientations: Exploring the Meanings of Progressive Education in Two Ontario Journals, *The School* and *The Canadian School Journal, 1919-1942*," Ph.D. diss. (Queen's University, 2009), 84-131.

[43] See: Neil Sutherland, "The Triumph of 'Formalism': Elementary Schooling in Vancouver from the 1920s to the 1960s," *BC Studies* 69/70 (Spring-Summer 1986): 175-210.

[44] Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society*, 172-173; Cremin, 85-88; Ronald D. Cohen, *Children of the Mill: Schooling and Society in Gary, Indiana, 1906-1960* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 30-36. On the specific programs named, see: *TBE Minutes 1912*, Appendix No. 54, Management Report No. 10, 30 May 1912, Adopted 6 June 1912, 441; *TBE Annual Report 1916*, Inspector D.D. Moshier's Report, 26; Neil S. MacDonald, *Open-Air Schools* (Toronto: McClelland, 1918). Although these programs shared similarities with special education classes, because they did not deal exclusively or even primarily with children with disabilities and learning difficulties, I have decided not to examine them.

Other educational developments in the early twentieth century also shaped special education in Toronto. Between the end of World War I and the end of World War II, the rise of mass intelligence testing and the concept of intelligence quotient (IQ) played a very important role in the development of special classes—a role that I examine in Chapter 3 of this dissertation in particular. Mass intelligence testing tools gave school authorities a new and very efficient way to diagnose children's learning problems and to stream children with disabilities and learning difficulties into the new special classes. The concept of IQ also helped to alter educationists' views on the nature and origins of learning problems, with important effects on special education policy. The mental testers who promoted the concept of IQ after WWI argued that IQ represented intelligence, that intelligence was innate and therefore unchangeable, and that low IQ was the cause of practically all learning difficulties.[45] By contrast, educationists in the 1910s had been more open to multiple explanations of schoolchildren's learning problems, including environmental explanations that involved such factors as truancy that contributed to a child falling behind his or her schoolmates, or even the "in-elasticity of our school programme of study."[46] A learning problem with this type of external or environmental origins, educators believed, could be easily enough addressed, even alleviated, with the correct remedial instruction. Indeed, in the 1910s, remedial instruction was the approach used in Toronto's special education classes for 'backward' children. However, with the shift in the 1920s to the view that low native intelligence was the cause of nearly all learning difficulties, new special education classes for 'subnormal' children, a new category which experts associated with IQs in the 50 to 75 IQ range, abandoned remedial instruction, although it would reappear in special education in the 1930s, as we will see.

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[45] See: Paul Davis Chapman, *Schools as Sorters: Lewis M. Terman, Applied Psychology, and the Intelligence Testing Movement, 1890-1930* (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 28-29; Lewis M. Terman, *The Intelligence of Schoolchildren* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1919), 24-25.

[46] *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Elliott's Report, 39-41.

With its connections to IQ testing, and to vocational schooling, special education was at the very centre of the movement in the 1920s to sort and stream young people in the public schools. Intelligence testing, streaming, and vocationalism, especially came together in Toronto's junior vocational schools, which are the subject of Chapter 4. Junior vocational schools, founded in 1923 (and later renamed handicraft schools), were initially supposed to absorb the large number of 'subnormal' adolescents that school officials believed would enter the public schools when the new Ontario Adolescent Attendance Act's provisions to raise the school leaving age from fourteen to sixteen were fully implemented.[47] Like all secondary schools in this period, junior vocational schools in Toronto had a mandate to prepare their graduates for work and adult life, in the case of junior vocational school pupils, mainly blue-collar occupations and domestic service. Realizing the importance of streaming in the secondary schools, by the late 1920s Toronto school officials implemented a policy of streaming another group of young people, so-called 'dull-normals' (IQ 75 to 90), into the junior vocational schools as well. The category of 'dull-normality' was closely associated with working-class children.

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[47] *TBE Minutes 1923*, 18 January 1923, 16; Appendix No. 28, Advisory Industrial Report No. 3, 6 February 1923, Adopted 15 February 1923, 131. On the renaming of the schools see: *TBE Minutes 1935*, Appendix No. 24, Advisory Vocational Report No. 3, 12 February 1935, Adopted 21 February 1935, 152.

Thus the junior vocational schools, through vocational education, helped to merge categories of IQ, intellectual disability, and class—a merger that endures in the common association of vocational education with both working-class young people and young people with disabilities and learning difficulties.[48]

Toronto's special class system expanded in other directions in the 1920s as well, as school officials added special sight-saving classes for children with visual impairments, classes for children who were hard of hearing, speech correction classes, day school classes for children who were deaf, and orthopaedic classes for children with physical disabilities. These classes, which I examine in Chapters 5 and 6, were supposed to help disabled children to 'overcome' their disabilities and to become more fully 'integrated' into schools and society. The curriculum and therapies that the classes offered, such as lip-reading instruction for children who were deaf, or rehabilitation training for children with physical disabilities, were supposed to help young people to meet these two difficult, and often subjectively defined, goals.

By 1930, Toronto's special classes were a well-established feature of the city's public school system. Even during the Great Depression, Toronto school officials continued, and even expanded somewhat, the city's classes for children with physical disabilities and perceptual impairments, its junior vocational and handicraft schools, and the auxiliary classes for 'subnormal' children, which were renamed opportunity classes in 1937.[49] Yet there were important changes to Toronto's special class system in the 1930s as well. As I show in Chapter 7, educational research in that decade revealed that children with IQs in the normal range of intelligence could also experience very specific learning difficulties, such as the complete inability to read.[50] The growth of this research led experts to reconsider the relationship between intelligence, IQ, and learning problems. Remedial educators, reading experts, and psychologists began to assert that learning difficulties could be caused by factors other than low native intelligence—specifically, by a constellation of learning problems that I refer to in this dissertation as 'specific learning difficulties.' The rise of theories of specific learning difficulties in the 1930s ultimately motivated Toronto educationists to reintroduce remedial instruction into special classes and contributed to curricular reforms in special education as well.

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[48] See: Bruce Curtis, D.W. Livingstone, and Harry Smaller, *The Streaming of Working-Class Kids in Ontario Schools* (Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves, 1992).

[49] *DOE Annual Report 1937*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 47.

In Chapter 8, I show that in addition to the new theories of specific learning difficulties, mental hygiene and child guidance experts' theories on the environmental origins of children's personality maladjustments lent further support to the view that factors other than low IQ affected children's mental development and learning. Mental hygiene and child guidance experts also helped to transform special education after 1930, by creating a greater focus on disabled children's personality development and adjustment. These experts often argued that children with disabilities were at a greater risk of maladjustment than their 'normal' peers because of their physical differences, which the experts argued contributed to feelings of inferiority.

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[50] See, for example, Marion Monroe, *Children Who Cannot Read: The Analysis of Reading Disabilities and the Use of Diagnostic Tests in the Instruction of Retarded Readers* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1932), 1.

It is impossible to fully comprehend any of the changes in special education policy and practice that this dissertation looks at without also examining how these changes affected children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Each chapter in this dissertation places the special education student's experience and perspective near the centre of the analysis. Studying young people's experiences—how they responded to testing and labelling practices, learned in modified instructional settings, and interacted with teachers, schoolmates, parents, and with school authorities, such as school psychologists—reveals the incongruity that often existed between special education policy and practice and the complicated and complex classroom reality of young people. Some young people obviously benefited from special classes. Many others clearly did not. Whatever their individual experiences were, I argue that young people with disabilities and learning difficulties were historical actors. Sometimes they managed to shape their own school circumstances (occasionally with their parents' help as well) and on a few rare occasions they even shaped school policies. Ultimately, the many obstacles that the school system placed before them, and their relative lack of authority and control over their own education, compared to that which adults possessed, usually circumscribed the opportunities young people had to change their own circumstances.

A focus on children with disabilities and learning difficulties throughout this dissertation also permits me to carefully examine important, although subtle changes over time in categories of disability and in disabled identities. I also show how the segregated special class was both a result and a cause of early-twentieth-century definitions of disability and difference. Early-twentieth century school reform—especially the rise of special education as a distinctive form of public school policy— pedagogical and curricular change, and developments in eugenics, mental hygiene, and educational psychology, helped to shape and reshape disabled identities, not just at school but in Canadian society as well.

Historiography

This dissertation builds on several different historiographies, but especially on educational history, children's history, and disability history. It also contributes a historical perspective to the educational policy studies literature on special and inclusive education. The history of special education belongs—I argue in this dissertation—within the historiography on urban education and urban school reform in Canada and the United States. Such an approach affords an interpretative flexibility that has not always been present in many accounts of special education history that pinpoint crusading special educators (while glossing over more uncomfortable associations, such as that with eugenics); in liberal progress narratives about "isolation to integration" or "integration to inclusion"; or in radical revisionist approaches that emphasize social control.[51] The complicated history of special education, which was shaped by multiple, sometimes contradictory, trends in progressive social and school reform, fits well within a historiography of urban education that emphasizes similar complexity and contradiction in the development of city school systems, as histories of special education written by Marvin Lazerson, Barry Franklin, and Robert L. Osgood have shown in particular.[52]

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[51] See, respectively, Kimberly Kode and Kristin E. Howard, *Elizabeth Farrell and the History of Special Education* (Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children, 2002); Margret A. Winzer, *The History of Special Education: From Isolation to Integration* (Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press, 1993) and Margret A. Winzer, *From Integration to Inclusion: A History of Special Education in the 20th Century* (Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press, 2009); Joseph L. Tropea, "Bureaucratic Order and Special Children: Urban Schools, 1890s-1940s," *History of Education Quarterly*, 27:1 (Spring, 1987): 29-53 and Joseph L. Tropea, "Bureaucratic Order and Special Children: Urban Schools, 1950s-1960s," *History of Education Quarterly*, 27:3 (Autumn, 1987): 339-361. As the interpretations listed here suggest, the historiography on special education was shaped by many of the same historiographical schools—laudatory, liberal, and revisionist—that have shaped historical writing about North American education generally over the last 50 years. On this historiography, see Marvin Lazerson, "Revisionism and American Educational History," *Harvard Educational Review* 43:2 (1973): 269-283; and, on Canada, specifically: Donald Wilson, "From Social Control to Family Strategies: Some Observations on Recent Trends in Educational History," *History of Education Review* 13 (1984): 1-13; Paul Axelrod, "Historical Writing and Canadian Education from the 1970s to the 1990s," *History of Education Quarterly*, 36:1 (Spring, 1996), 19-38; Neil Sutherland and Jean Barman, "Out of the Shadows: Retrieving the History of

In the expansive historiography on urban schooling one work still stands out: David Tyack's synthesis, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education*.[53] In this book, Tyack argues that between approximately 1850 and 1940, American school reformers remade urban education systems, transforming them into bureaucracies. Urban schoolmen and schoolwomen developed a national set of best practices for bureaucratic school reform that Tyack calls "the one best system."[54] While in the mid nineteenth century, multiple and competing models of urban public school organization and administration coexisted and jostled each other for precedence, by the late nineteenth century, bureaucracy, or the one best system, had wiped out practically all of the competition.[55] In cities across the United States (and in Canada, as I will argue

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Urban education and Urban Childhood in Canada," in Ronald K. Goodenow and William E. Marsden eds., *The City and Education in Four Nations* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 87-108. On the United States, specifically, see especially, Michael B. Katz, *Reconstructing American Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 111-159 and Diane Ravitch, *The Revisionists Revised: A Critique of the Radical Attack on the Schools* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).

[52] See Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education"; Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk,'*; Robert L. Osgood, *For 'Children Who Vary from the Normal Type': Special Education in Boston, 1838-1930* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 2000). See also Seymour B. Sarason and John Doris, *Educational Handicap, Public Policy, and Social History* (New York: The Free Press, 1979). On the history of urban education, see especially, Tyack, *One Best System* and Marvin Lazerson, *Origins of the Urban Public School: Public Education in Massachusetts, 1870-1915* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).

[53] Tyack, *One Best System*. On the lasting impact of Tyack's analysis see Harvey Kantor, "In Retrospect: David Tyack's 'The One Best System'," *Reviews in American History* 29:2 (2001): 319-327.

[54] See Tyack, *One Best System*, 39-59.

[55] Tyack, *One Best System*; David B. Tyack, "Bureaucracy and the Common School: The Example of Portland, Oregon, 1851-1913," *American Quarterly* 19:3 (Autumn 1967): 475-498. Katz interpreted the

momentarily) "administrative progressives," a designation Tyack uses to describe urban school reformers in the period from 1890 to 1940 especially, implemented reforms that replicated the bureaucratic model of schooling on a geographically wide scale.[56]

Administrative progressive reform moved north into city school systems across Canada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, although the bureaucratization of Canadian schools has been the subject of some debate. Michael Katz, while he was at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, argued that the bureaucratization thesis should apply equally to the United States and to Canada, a view that the leading scholar of the history of Canadian childhood, Neil Sutherland, did not share. Defining bureaucracy primarily in terms of the number of supervisory personnel in the school system, Sutherland's contention was that bureaucracy grew slowly in Canada and that the few supervisory personnel the schools did employ were at the mercy of more powerful school trustees.[57] Subsequent scholarship, by Alison Prentice and Marta Danylewycz and R.D. Gidney and D.A. Lawr, brought much-needed nuance to the interpretation of bureaucratization in Canadian schools. Their studies illustrated that it was urban school systems, in cities such as Toronto and Montreal, that became

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development of educational bureaucracy similarly. See: Michael B. Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and the Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America* (New York: Praeger, 1971), 56-104. The analysis in Katz's *Class, Bureaucracy, and the Schools* also appeared earlier as: Michael B. Katz, "The Emergence of Bureaucracy in Urban Education: The Boston Case, 1850-1884: Part I," *History of Education Quarterly* 8:2 (Summer 1968): 155-188 and Michael B. Katz, "The Emergence of Bureaucracy in Urban Education: The Boston Case, 1850-1884: Part II," 8:3 (Fall 1968): 319-357.

[56] Tyack, *One Best System*, 127.

[57] Michael B. Katz, "Class, Bureaucracy and Schools," in Douglas Myers, ed., *The Failure of Educational Reform in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1973), 15-28. Sutherland, *Children in English Canadian Society*, 169-171. See also: Wilson, 1-13.

bureaucracies (even if rural schools did not) and that bureaucracy was not necessarily imposed on Canadians, as Katz and the radical revisionists had tended to suggest.[58]

The emergence of bureaucracy in city school systems had important implications for special education. It seems that practically every urban school system that became a bureaucracy also instituted a special class system, including Toronto's public school system. The special education system that grew up in Toronto public schools—which had been run bureaucratically since James L. Hughes took over as Chief Inspector in 1874—was, in other words, typical.[59] Case studies by Lazerson (Oakland, California; Philadelphia; and the state of California), Robert Osgood (Boston), Barry M. Franklin (Atlanta and Minneapolis), E. Anne Bennison (Milwaukee), and Gerald Thomson (Vancouver), point to a similar pattern of administrative progressive urban school reform and the concurrent emergence of new special classes in various urban school settings.[60] Joseph Tropea's smaller comparative case study of special classes in Baltimore, Detroit, and Philadelphia further supports the case that a common special class system existed.[61] In Ontario too, by 1925, public school authorities in major and minor urban centres in addition to Toronto, including Hamilton, London, Ottawa, and Windsor, could boast that their school systems had embraced similar aspects of the typical special class system.[62] There were, of course, exceptions and administrative progressive school reform did not touch every single city school board in North America. Moreover, different school systems implemented special classes differently and unevenly, as Sherman Dorn shows using the example of Nashville, Tennessee.[63] These exceptions however seem to prove the rule that in cities where administrative progressives held the reins of power they usually also implemented some system of separate special classes for children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Despite evidence for this pattern historians, except for Marvin Lazerson and Barry Franklin, have not yet drawn strong analytical ties between administrative progressive urban school reform and the emergence of similar special education systems in different cities around the same time.[64]

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[58] Alison Prentice and Marta Danylewycz, "Teachers, Gender, and Bureaucratizing School Systems in Nineteenth Century Montreal and Toronto," *History of Education Quarterly* 24:1 (Spring 1984): 75-100; R.D. Gidney and D.A. Lawr, "The Development of an Administrative System for the Public Schools: The First Stage, 1841-50," in Neil McDonald and Alf Chaiton eds., *Egerton Ryerson and His Times* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978), 160-183; R.D. Gidney and D.A. Lawr, "Bureaucracy vs. Community? The Origins of Bureaucratic Procedure in the Upper Canadian School System," *Journal of Social History* 13:3 (Spring 1980): 438-457.

[59] For bureaucratic reforms under Hughes, see Hardy and Cochrane, 68-99.

[60] See Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education,"; Robert L. Osgood, *For 'Children Who Vary from the Normal Type': Special Education in Boston, 1838-1930*; Barry M. Franklin, "Progressivism and Curriculum Differentiation: Special Classes in the Atlanta Public Schools," 571-593; Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk'*; Bennison; Gerald Thomson, "'Remove from Our Midst These Unfortunates': A Historical Inquiry Into the Influence of Eugenics, Educational Efficiency as well as Mental Hygiene Upon the Vancouver School System and Its Special Classes, 1910-1969," Ph.D. diss. (The University of British Columbia, 1999).

[61] Tropea, "Bureaucratic Order and Special Children: Urban Schools, 1890s-1940s," 29-53.

By studying Toronto as a typical case, especially by studying policy, practice, and the pupil's perspective in Toronto special education, we can learn much about special education in other North American cities as well.[65] Indeed, Tyack's metaphor of a one best system could also be applied to the development of special education systems. Tyack argues that the main tenet of the one best system of *urban education* was bureaucracy. The one best system *of special education* likewise had a core principle—namely segregation, of children with disabilities and learning difficulties, and children who were deaf, from their mainstreamed peers. Once the segregated model for educating these children gained a momentum of its own, like bureaucracy, it too eliminated competing models (as we shall see in Chapter 2 of this dissertation). What is more, Tyack's argument that the administrative progressives shared best practices freely between different cities and across far-flung territory, as part of a sort of informal network of bureaucratic school reformers, might also apply to the distribution of special class policies across different North American cities. All of the major settings for special education in typical North American early-twentieth-century city school systems are discussed in this case study of Toronto, with two exceptions. Toronto did not have classes for so-called 'gifted' children before WWII, although a few other North American school districts did. In educational discourses, the category of 'giftedness' often ran parallel to 'feeblemindedness.'[66] The TBE also operated an "extramural" instruction program for children who were temporarily recovering from an illness in isolation at home, as well as for a few children who had disabilities. I lack the sources to look in detail at this program

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[62] *DOE Annual Report 1925*, Appendix I, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 47. There is evidence that Montreal Catholic schools adopted the same approach as well by about 1930. See: Luce Duval, Claude Lessard and Maurice Tardif, "Logiques d'exclusion et logiques d'intégration au sein de l'école. Le champ de l'adaptation scolaire," *Recherches sociographiques* 38:2 (1997): 307-315.
[63] Sherman Dorn, "Public-Private Symbiosis in Nashville Special Education," *History of Education Quarterly* 42:3 (Autumn 2002): 368-394. See also, Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk'*, 79-103.
[64] Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education"; Franklin, "Progressivism and Curriculum Differentiation: Special Classes in the Atlanta Public Schools," 571-593; Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk,'* 4-7, 30-32. Joseph Tropea deals with bureaucratization and special education in several American school systems, but his principal interest lies in examining the "'backstage' ... rules" for social control that operated through different bureaucracies. Tropea, "Bureaucratic Order and Special Children: Urban Schools, 1890s-1940s," 29-30.
[65] Although there are parallels in the British and North American cases, most notably around eugenics, developments in English special education, especially in terms of school organization, do not seem to have as often been part of the same policy network as Canadian and American developments. On Britain, see: Ted Cole, *Apart or A Part: Integration and the Growth of British Special Education* (Milton Keynes, UK:

Open University Press, 1989); Ian C. Copeland, *The Making of the Backward Pupil in Education in England 1870-1914* (London: Woburn Press, 1999); Jane Read and Jan Walmsley, "Historical Perspectives on Special Education, 1890-1970," *Disability & Society* 21:5 (2006): 455-469.

[66] On classes for 'gifted' children in other cities, see Winzer, *From Isolation to Integration*, 353-355. On

in Toronto, which served perhaps 100 students a year, many of whom eventually returned to day school classes.[67]

The history of student experiences and their importance to the literature on educational history, children's history, and disability history is a second historiographical issue that this dissertation addresses. There is a tendency in special education history to focus only on policy progress and adult reformers, as well as a predisposition to see disability as pathology. These two inclinations, historian Richard Altenbaugh has observed, have tended to obscure the experiences and actions of young people with disabilities and learning difficulties in the schools, an omission that has prompted Altenbaugh to ask: "Where are the Disabled in the History of Education?" Putting children with disabilities into the narrative of special education history, as I do in this dissertation, helps to build on the student-centred approach to special education history that Altenbaugh uses.[68] An analysis that includes young people's perspectives also builds on the considerable insights that can be found in a well-developed Canadian historiography on children and youth that is built on strong foundations put down in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, by scholars such as Neil Sutherland and Joy Parr.[69]

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[67] See: *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Chief Inspector's Report, 86-87; E.M. Snyder "Extramural Teaching in Toronto," *The Bulletin* 2:2 (March 1926): 14-15.

[68] Altenbaugh, 705-730.

[69] See: Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society*; Joy Parr, *Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1980). See also, Joy Parr ed., *Childhood and Family in Canadian History* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1982); Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993); Dominique Marshall, *Aux origines sociales de l'état-providence: familles québécoises, obligation scolaire et allocations familiales, 1940-1955* (Montreal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1998); Nancy Janovicek and Joy Parr eds., *Histories of Canadian Children and Youth* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003). In 1986, Chad Gaffield called on historians to deepen the scholarship in children's history as a way of expanding educational history. Chad Gaffield, "Back to School: Towards a New Agenda for the History of Education," *Acadiensis* 25:2 (Spring 1986): 169-190. More recently, Tamara

Scholarship in Canadian children's history has recently also begun to include specific studies of children with disabilities. Mona Gleason's work on the history of the psychological, medical, educational, and moral regulation of children and their bodies establishes much of the groundwork for histories of Canadian children with disabilities.[70] Veronica Strong-Boag and Nic Clarke have written more specifically on disabled children's lives in Canada, especially in relation to family history.[71]

As a disability history of special education, this dissertation also adds to the field of the 'new disability history.'[72] Studies in the new disability history illustrate that categories of disability (and deafness as well) are socially, culturally, and historically produced.[73] Public schools, my dissertation illustrates, were one of the most important institutions helping to produce these categories. By elevating disability to the same level of analysis as other historical identity categories—such as gender, class, and race and ethnicity—my dissertation also helps to maintain a focus on children with disabilities in

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Myers, Cynthia Comacchio, and other scholars studying the history of children and youth have completed more focussed studies on specific groups of young people. See, for instance, Tamara Myers, *Caught: Montreal's Modern Girls and the Law, 1869-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) and Cynthia R. Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of a Modern Canada, 1920-1950* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006).

[70] See: Mona Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling, and the Family in Postwar Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Mona Gleason, "Between Education and Memory: Health and Childhood in English Canada, 1900-1950," *Scientia Canadensis* 29:1 (2006): 49-72; Mona Gleason, "Disciplining the Student Boy: Schooling and the Construction of Canadian Children's Bodies, 1930 to 1960," *History of Education Quarterly* 41:2 (Summer 2001): 189-215.

[71] See: Veronica Strong-Boag, "'Children of Adversity': Disabilities and Child Welfare in Canada from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century," *Journal of Family History* 32:4 (October 2007): 413-432; Strong-Boag, "Forgotten People of All the Forgotten," 33-50; Nic Clarke, "Sacred Daemons," 61-89; Clarke, "Opening Closed Doors." See also Jessa Chupik and David Wright, "Treating the 'idiot' Child in Early 20th-Century Ontario," *Disability & Society* 21:1 (2006): 77-90.

[72] See Altenbaugh, 718-719, on special education history as disability history.

[73] See: Catherine J. Kudlick, "Disability History: Why We Need Another 'Other'," *American Historical Review* 108:3 (June 2003), 763-793; Paul K. Longmore, "Review: Uncovering the Hidden History of People with Disabilities," *Reviews in American History* 13:3 (September 1987): 355-364; Longmore and Umansky, 7-9; Lennard J. Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body* (London: Verso, 1995), 1-22; Henri-Jacques Stiker, *A History of Disability*, trans. by William Sayers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

discussions about special education policy. Surprisingly, historians, social scientists—and policymakers—have at times overlooked the effects of special education on children with disabilities, while lamenting how schools systematically stream working-class children, racialized children, and boys into "dead-end" special educational programs "with stunted curricula." One of their main contentions is that school systems 'misdiagnose' working-class children, racialized children, and boys as disabled.[74] From the 1920s, when records become available, to the mid-1940s, various statistics—including statistics that I compiled from Toronto student records—show that working-class children, children from racialized groups and minority ethnic groups, as well as boys, were often over-represented in Toronto's special classes. To be sure, special education was a classed, racialized, and gendered experience. However, when attention is paid only to the 'misdiagnosis' of these different groups, historians and social scientists tend to overlook that if special programs are the 'dead-ends' that they say they are, then children with disabilities or learning difficulties no more deserve to be shunted into this sort of educational setting than any other child.[75] The low quality of any school program is a question of equality of educational opportunity for all children. What is more, Steven Gelb points out, holding fast to the idea that there is proper diagnosis and misdiagnosis, "permits the field of special education to avoid grappling with the moral, social, and political issues inherent in its assumptions that students can and should be rank ordered and classified."[76]

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[74] Curtis et. al., 99. See also, Sally Tomlinson, *A Sociology of Special Education* (London: Routledge, 1982), 65-67; David J. Connor and Beth A. Ferri, "Integration and Inclusion: A Troubling Nexus: Race, Disability, and Special Education," *The Journal of African American History* 90:1-2 (Winter, 2005), 107-127.

[75] Douglas Baynton's criticism of the representation of disability in mainstream historiography applies here as well. As Baynton writes, "Disability ... one of the most prevalent justifications for inequality has rarely been the subject of historical inquiry." Douglas C. Baynton, "Disability and the Justification of Inequality in American History," in Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky, eds., *The New Disability History: American Perspectives* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 33.

Disability historians have recently suggested that a comparative approach to the study of disability history will help to elucidate important common patterns, although not exact similarities, in the experiences of different groups of people who were labelled disabled.[77] By studying categories of intellectual disability and learning difficulty, such as 'subnormality' or 'mental defectiveness,' alongside deafness, sensory and perceptual impairments, physical disability, and speech difficulties, my dissertation contributes to comparative disability history. As a category, disability is also hierarchical.[78] A comparative perspective also allows me to explore disability hierarchies that the school system helped to shape. Children with intellectual disabilities often were at the bottom of these hierarchies.

Terminology and sources

Words have political and emotional power, especially in the fraught area of disability. Many of the terms that educators, experts, and non-disabled people have used in the past to refer to people with disabilities—for instance, terms such as 'mentally defective' or 'crippled'—are often today considered offensive by people with disabilities, because such terms recall the language of degradation and oppression that is one aspect of disability history. Yet historical disability terminology often contains vital clues about values and attitudes towards disability in the past. Historical disability terminology also encompasses all of the important shades of difference, and changes over time, in categories of disability that were significant to the historical development of special education policies and to young people's experiences of special education as well. Understanding the difference between the labels 'backward' and 'mentally defective' is, for example, crucial to understanding how special class policy evolved in the 1910s. Placing terms such as 'backward' and 'mentally defective' in quotation marks, something that I have done often in this dissertation, allows me examine disability terminology as a historical artefact, while also acknowledging and indicating that many of labels once applied to people with disabilities are no longer appropriate today. In accordance with North American disability etiquette, I have also attempted to use 'people first language' (e.g. 'person with a disability,' as opposed to 'disabled person') in my narrative. There are rare places in the text where I have not used people first language, instances where its use would create confusion or would be unusually unwieldy. I have done my best to reduce as much as possible the number of these exceptions to people first language in the text.

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[76] Steven A. Gelb, "'Not Simply Bad and Incorrigible': Science, Morality, and Intellectual Deficiency," *History of Education Quarterly* 29:3 (Autumn 1989): 379.
[77] See Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky, "Introduction: Disability History from the Margins to the Mainstream," in Longmore and Umansky eds., 21.
[78] See, on disability hierarchies: Baynton, 51.

A second clarification about language concerns two terms I use often in this dissertation: 'learning difficulty' and 'children with learning difficulties.' These are not historical terms, but rather terms of my own invention. The phrase 'children with disabilities' usually refers to children that educators and school authorities labelled as physically or intellectually disabled (as 'crippled' or 'mentally defective,' for example). Educationists also identified for special instruction young people who experienced difficulty learning in mainstream classrooms, but who did not necessarily exhibit outward disabilities, at least not to educators, and were not labelled. I use the terms 'learning difficulty' and 'children with learning difficulties' to refer to this second group of schoolchildren. At specific and important times in history, for example with the rise of IQ testing in the 1920s, the distance between disability and learning difficulty narrowed enough that the two effectively became conflated. These convergences, which I will identify and discuss in different time periods, reified an important association between learning difficulty and disability that remains with us today.[79]

Amongst the main sources for this dissertation are student records—specifically the thousands of record cards left behind by the official record system that urban school systems, including Toronto's system, used to track individual pupils in the early twentieth century.[80] The use of student records in educational history is somewhat unique, although two other historians have used pupil records to write about the history of special education in the United States.[81] Student records contain a wealth of historical information about special education and special education students that is not usually available in other sources. The Toronto cards include such information as individual students' movements into, and out of, special classes, students' gender, their birthplace and religion, as well as their father's (or mother's) birthplace and occupation. Student record cards therefore typically include the results of all medical and psychological examinations (plus IQ test scores), as well as the psychological clinic's other notes on mental diagnoses and on placement recommendations.[82] Notes on conduct and discipline, on parents' visits to the school, and on other aspects of the child's academic experience, as well as ephemera in the form of appended transfer slips, report cards, parent letters, and notes written by teachers, principals, and other school authorities, round out the information that can be found in Toronto student records.

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[79] For an interesting example of how educators more recently conflated disadvantage, learning problems, and disability, see: Adam R. Nelson, *The Elusive Ideal: Equal Educational Opportunity in Boston's Public Schools, 1950-1985* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 31-60. I do not, however, distinguish 'learning difficulty' this way in order to say, as some historians and sociologists of education have suggested, that disability is 'real,' or a clinical phenomenon, while learning difficulty is socially constructed. See: James G. Carrier, *Learning Disability: Social Class and the Construction of Inequality in American Education* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986), 4-5; Tomlinson, 65-67. Learning difficulty is one socially- and historically-constructed category that at different points in time has overlapped partially or entirely with another socially- and historically-constructed category, namely disability.
[80] The TBE began to use a systematized student record system in the late 1910s. The record system involved two types of uniform, pre-printed index cards. A less detailed Office Record Card (ORC) for each child was kept on hand in every school the child attended. More detailed Admission-Discharge-Promotion (ADP) cards—a sort of permanent record—followed each child from school to school. Teachers, as part of their regular duties, were required to fill out the ADP and ORC cards of pupils in their classes. Teachers were very thorough on most of the records I looked at. This reflects the fact that keeping the records was a part of every Toronto teacher's routine, a practice consistent with the standardization of school administration under bureaucratic reformers in this period.
[81] See Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At Risk'*, 43-47; Franklin, "Progressivism and Curriculum Differentiation"; Bennison.

The main challenge with student records is the very large number of cards, and the large amount of detail that can be found on each card, which made it necessary for me to sample student records. I looked at records from only three Toronto schools whose record cards for the period up to 1945 are preserved in the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) Archives: "The Ward PS," "Armoury Park PS," and "East Ends PS." [83] I eventually located records for about 600 different special education students who attended these schools between approximately 1918 and 1945. To protect the privacy of these pupils, especially the few who may still be alive today, and because my researcher agreement with the TDSB requires me to do so, the three school names given here are pseudonyms. I also use pseudonyms in this dissertation to refer to all individual students identified through student records, to further protect their privacy.[84] I have not named teachers at the three schools either, another condition of my researcher agreement. Much, perhaps most, of the other information on special education in this dissertation can be found in official, published, and publicly available sources, such as school board minutes and annual reports. When drawing on these types of sources I do not change the names of schools or people, except if it is necessary or appropriate to do so in order to protect the identity of a student or a teacher at one the three schools whose student records I used.

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[82] School nurses, doctors, and school psychologists, were mainly responsible for filling out the medical side of the ADP card. See: Heather MacDougall, *Activists and Advocates: Toronto's Health Department, 1883-1983* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1990), 192. Around 100 of the individual student records that I consulted also had an appended "Psychological Examination Record" (PER), a narrative description of a student's one-on-one meeting with the school psychologist—always a male medical doctor—as well as the child's IQ test results and the school psychologist's diagnosis and placement recommendation. Female nurses, sometimes referred to as "psychologists and psychometrists," were at times responsible for administering the IQ test. CTA. Former City of Toronto fonds. Department of Public Health, Nursing Division records. File 38, Folio 3. Gordon P. Jackson, "City Health Services," (Toronto: Department of Public Health, 1930).

[83] The record cards are contained in boxes that are arranged by school.

I selected The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, and East End PS for this study because I believe these schools to be reasonably representative of different types of schools and neighbourhoods in Toronto. (I also had to take into account the important variable of the availability of student records, which do not exist for all Toronto schools.)[85] The Ward PS was a medium-sized, downtown school, with a student body of around 400 enrolled in classes from the Kindergarten to Grade 6. The Ward PS had several special classes on site throughout the 1910 to 1945 period. Armoury Park PS was actually initially four small schools located within very close proximity of one another. The Board merged these schools in 1930 when a new, modern school building was constructed. The new Armoury Park PS was a very large school that covered

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[84] I have also tried not to provide a level of specific detail on the students whose stories I tell that would make them identifiable.

[85] The three schools I selected had some of the most complete student record collections, which included ADP cards, ORC cards, and PERs. For notes on the collections see Roy Reynolds and Donald J. Netherty eds., *An Annotated Guide to the Manuscripts in the Historical Collection of the Toronto Board of Education* (Toronto: Toronto Board of Education, 1977), 84-91.

Kindergarten and all eight elementary school grades. The school had several special classes. The third school whose records I looked at, East End PS, was a very small school consisting of only five rooms with about 200 pupils in total. East End PS enrolled students up to Grade 5 only. There were no special classes at the school and students referred for special education from East End PS transferred to other nearby elementary schools to attend special classes.[86]

Neighbourhood is an important factor in the history of special education, as we shall see. The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, and East End PS, served somewhat different neighbourhoods. The Ward PS was located in 'The Ward,' an immigrant neighbourhood where poverty was a grim reality of daily life for most residents. The neighbourhood around Armoury Park was much more Anglo-Saxon than immigrant, although economically its residents were not much better off than their neighbours in The Ward. The Armoury Park school area went into more serious economic decline after 1930. The homes around East End PS, in the city's far east end, were very modest and the families that resided in them primarily blue collar, which still made the neighbourhood around East End PS the best off economically of the three in this study. Indeed, all three schools shared an important general similarity: they served mainly working-class or poor students.[87] As we shall see, school officials seldom placed special classes in schools located in middle- or upper-class, Anglo-Canadian neighbourhoods.

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[86] See: *TBE Annual Report 1927*, 139-141 on the size of the The Ward PS and East End PS. For the information on Armoury Park PS, see *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 106-107. See also: Donald J. Netherty, "Report on the Founding Dates of the Elementary and Secondary Schools of the Toronto Board of Education" (Toronto: Toronto Board of Education, n.d. [ca 1976]), 7. Records for students who attended the pre-merger schools in the 1920s were incorporated into the Armoury Park PS school record collection, although it seems that not all records were transferred over to the new school.

The data that can be found on individual student records, data that is detailed and spans multiple years (often as many as nine or ten years of a child's school career) and even multiple schools, is simply unprecedented in the other sources that one might use to write educational history from a pupil perspective. Yet, student records, even those records that do record young people's thoughts and feelings about schooling, as a number of the records I looked at do, seldom contain their subjects' unmediated words. Instead, student records, like case files, typically reflect primarily the interests, often clinical in nature, of the authorities that assembled them. Reading case files calls upon social historians to carefully balance questions of power and agency, to determine what case files can tell us about the institutional structures that created the records and what they can tell us about the individuals whose lives those institutions shaped.[88] Wherever possible, I supplemented historical evidence about the student experience that I gathered from student records with as many other student-centred sources as I could find, including material such as poems and other student writing, memoirs, and adults' written recollections of their own childhoods and school experiences in special classes.[89]

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[87] On these various neighbourhoods, see: "What is 'The Ward' going to do with Toronto?" (Toronto: Bureau of Municipal Research, 1918); Lemon, 51, 59-60; Nadine A. Hooper, "Toronto: A Study in Urban Geography," M.A. thesis (University of Toronto, 1941), 69-70 and Figure 39, Plate 7 of 8.

[88] See Franca Iacovetta and Wendy Mitchinson, "Introduction: Social History and Case Files Research," in *On the Case Explorations in Social History*, Iacovetta and Mitchinson eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 13-15, and other essays in this volume. See also: Reaume, 3-4; Clarke, "Opening Closed Doors," 479-480.

[89] In using these latter sources I took into consideration the challenges that such sources present, challenges that Neil Sutherland has outlined. Neil Sutherland, "When You Listen to the Winds of Childhood, How Much Can You Believe?," *Curriculum Inquiry* 22:3 (Autumn, 1992), 235-256. I also protect the identity of

The result of my analysis of all these sources is a pupil-centred and policy history of special education in Toronto public schools, which begins in the 1910s with the founding of the city's first special classes.

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individual authors as appropriate. Generally I use only their real names when their work was meant for publication.

Section 1, Origins of the Special Education System, 1910-1920:

Chapter 1. Eugenics Goes to School: Helen MacMurchy, The Menace of the 'Feebleminded,' and Toronto's Special Education Classes for 'Mentally Defective' Children, 1910-1920.

Special class teachers who read a 1915 pamphlet on special education in Ontario would have encountered the following passage: "The mentally-defective child, neglected, drifting, tempted, weak, incapable, leaves school soon to re-appear as an object of public charity, continually degenerating, unable to keep from vice and crime. ... The school must take its place as the greatest preventive agency against this great menace to society."[1] It is difficult today to imagine how schoolchildren could be considered a menace, or how eugenics—the science of improving the human race—and special education classes for children with intellectual disabilities might be even remotely related. In fact, in the early twentieth century, special education and eugenics shared many important associations.[2] This chapter looks at how the origins of special education were mixed up with eugenics and with fears about 'feeblemindedness' and racial degeneration. I argue that eugenics played a complex role in special education in 1910s Toronto, framing policy, curriculum, and pedagogy in the city's very first public school special education classes. Much of the chapter examines Dr. Helen MacMurchy's considerable influence on special class policy. MacMurchy, a respected physician and social reformer, produced a remarkable body of work on 'feeblemindedness' and special education, including the 1915 pamphlet for special class teachers mentioned above, *Organization and Management of Auxiliary Classes*. Her efforts pushed auxiliary classes, as special classes were known at first, to the forefront of educational and social reform debates in Toronto the Good during the 1910s. Frequently those debates involved local eugenicists' plans for the creation of farm colonies that the eugenicists hoped to convince local officials to use as part of a strategy for segregating 'mental defectives.' MacMurchy and other eugenicists wanted Toronto school officials to establish special education classes that would serve as "clearing house[s]" for identifying 'mental defectives,' and eventually placing them in farm colonies.[3] The farm colony plan ultimately failed. Its rise and fall helps to illustrate the possibilities and limitations of eugenics at school. Eugenicists failed to make the public schools, and special education classes, part of a grand policy strategy to address 'mental defectiveness.' Yet many elements of eugenics were successfully integrated into public schooling. Eugenics had its greatest effect on special classes and special education students at the school and classroom levels. This chapter also takes into account the chorus of voices—teachers, school trustees, school medical officials, and school inspectors—who faithfully supported the application of eugenics to public education, sometimes for reasons very different than MacMurchy's. The chapter looks briefly at the school experiences of children who were labelled

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[1] Helen MacMurchy, *Organization and Management of Auxiliary Classes*, Educational Pamphlets No. 7 (Toronto: Department of Education, Ontario, 1915), 3.

[2] See: Marvin Lazerson, "The Origins of Special Education," in Jay G. Chambers and William T. Hartman eds., *Special Education Policies: Their History, Implementation, and Finance* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 27-30; Robert L. Osgood, *For 'Children Who Vary from the Normal Type': Special Education in Boston, 1838-1930* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 2000), 53-57; Gerald Thomson, "'Through no fault of their own': Josephine Dauphinee and the "Subnormal" Pupils of the Vancouver School System, 1911-1941," *Historical Studies in Education* 18:1 (Spring 2006): 51-73; James W. Trent Jr., *Inventing the Feeblemind: A History of Mental Retardation in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 144-155.

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[3] Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Third Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1908*. Toronto: 1908. (Sessional Papers 1909, No. 58), 25.

'mentally defective' in the midst of unfolding special class policies shaped by eugenics in the 1910s.

Eugenics goes to school

Before we can examine eugenics in the schools, we must look at the history of 'mental defectiveness' as a category of intellectual disability, and the history of eugenics as an idea. 'Mental defectiveness,' or 'feeblemindedness' as it was also known, was an invention of the years 1890 to 1920. Before 1890, as James Trent Jr. has shown, large numbers of experts in the field still believed in the potential mental uplift of many people with intellectual disabilities. However, as early as the 1870s, some people were calling for greater attention to heredity and the possibility that intellectual deficit was fixed at birth, a view implying that education could do little to revive 'feeble minds.' The new voices included that of Richard Dugdale, who published an inheritance study of intellectual disability and degeneration, *The Jukes*, in 1877. *The Jukes* was received well, and as evidence for the hereditary nature of 'feeblemindedness.' (In fact Dugdale was not strictly a hereditarian in his views, although eugenicists who rediscovered his book later misinterpreted his work this way.)[4] By the 1890s, medical experts, reformers, and many members of the public in Canada, the United States, Britain, and other parts of the world, discussed 'feeblemindedness' using new terms of reference. These terms of reference increasingly set aside the possibility of the uplift of the 'feebleminded' through education or other means. Experts and segments of the public also believed that the condition of 'feeblemindedness' was hereditary, transmitted from generation to generation through germ plasm or genes. "There is no escape from the taint of Feeble-Mindedness," Helen MacMurchy wrote. "If it is there it descends."[5] MacMurchy and others claimed that the morally, intellectually, and biologically inferior 'feebleminded' population was reproducing faster than the 'normal' population and that 'mental defectives' would soon swamp society and would smother humanity, what MacMurchy and many people at the time referred to as "the race."[6] The 'menace of the feebleminded' certainly appeared acute to many people at the turn of the twentieth century.

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[4] See: Trent, 60-95.

Eugenics supplied scientific backing for the argument that the 'feebleminded' were a 'menace' and provided a means for controlling that 'menace' as well. Eugenics was no fringe science in its heyday. As Diane Paul has convincingly argued, eugenics in its heyday attracted many of the best scientific minds, including such founders of modern human genetics as Charles Davenport and Edward M. East.[7] Canadian, American, and British eugenicists, their fears stoked by a declining middle- and upper-class birth rate, and fanned by rapid urbanization, industrialization, immigration, and social upheaval, argued that only direct intervention into the reproduction of what they arbitrarily decided were fit and unfit human beings could prevent a looming catastrophe.[8] New scientific advancements in genetics, especially the rediscovery of Gregor Mendel's work on dominant and recessive genes, led turn of the century eugenicists to claim that they could control human heredity through straightforward means, such as the segregation and sterilization of the unfit and reproductive incentives for the fit.[9] An organized Canadian eugenics movement had already begun to take shape by 1918, the year in which Toronto psychiatrist, Dr. C.K. Clarke, and physician Dr. C.M. (Clarence) Hincks, founded the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene (CNCMH). The CNCMH quickly emerged as the most prominent and powerful voice for Canadian eugenics.[10]

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[5] Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Sixth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1912.* Toronto: n.d. (Sessional Papers 1912, No. 23): 26.

[6] *Third Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1908*, 41. On 'feeblemindedness,' or 'mental defectiveness,' and society in the early twentieth century see: Mark Jackson, *The Borderland of Imbecility: Medicine, Society and the Fabrication of the Feeble Mind in late Victorian and Edwardian England*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), espec. 128-148; Trent, 131-183; Harvey G. Simmons, *From Asylum to Welfare* (Toronto: National Institute on Mental Retardation, 1982), 50-59; Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 104-114.

[7] See Diane B. Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity: 1865 to the Present* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1995), 1-21. See also, Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981), 21-23, and, Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 193-211.

More than biological politics were involved in defining the 'menace of the feebleminded.' Many Canadian social reformers claimed that 'mental defectives' were responsible for most of the pressing social problems of the age—crime, prostitution, delinquency, poverty, unemployment, industrial unrest, and "inefficiency in educational institutions."[11] Eugenics was prominent in important public policies in immigration, public health, corrections, and in social policies for children as well, including special education policy, child health policy, and juvenile justice policy. Eugenics often involved ingredients of racism, sexism, and class bias; yet it also sometimes contained the seeds of a sincere desire to help the poor by decreasing their numbers.[12] Consequently, historians have shown that eugenics held broad appeal and that it attracted supporters from the political left and political right. Eugenics swayed essentially conservative reformers, such as Helen MacMurchy. But some of Toronto's left-leaning political figures were drawn in as well. While serving on the school board in 1909, Jimmie Simpson, the famous Toronto politician and "redoubtable workers' champion," eagerly endorsed the city's first special education classes for 'mentally defective' children.[13]

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[8] Paul, 22-24.
[9] See Paul, 46-49; Kevles, 44-49.
[10] Ian Robert Dowbiggin, *Keeping America Sane: Psychiatry and Eugenics in the United States and Canada, 1880-1940* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 167-190; Angus McLaren *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990), 109-113. See also, Clarence M. Hincks, "The Scope and Aims of the Mental Hygiene Movement in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene* 1:1 (April 1919): 20-29.
[11] See Hincks, 24-27.

Helen MacMurchy, the 'menace of the feebleminded,' and public schooling

One individual in particular was responsible for bringing eugenics to Toronto schools in the early twentieth century. In 1905 the Local Council for Women (of Toronto) convinced Premier James Whitney's government to appoint Helen MacMurchy to inspect the problem of 'feeblemindedness' in Ontario.[14] In her new role, MacMurchy discovered special classes for 'mentally defective' children as a useful means to a very important end. MacMurchy believed that if an entire generation of 'feebleminds' were permanently segregated "there would be such a drop in their numbers that soon we should be practically rid of this terrible problem."[15] Special classes, where MacMurchy argued 'mentally defective' children could be "recognized, studied, classified," would help authorities to identify the province's 'mentally defective' school population and to segregate these children from others. Special classes would serve as a "Clearing House" for assigning 'mental defectives' to a custodial institution, a "continuous authority" that would monitor and care for them and segregate them from the rest of the population.[16] Eugenicists had two objectives for segregation. Segregation would prevent mental defectives from contributing any further to the social problems they were accused of exacerbating, and it would prevent them from reproducing. By facilitating segregation the schools could help directly the battle to halt the supposedly rapid increase in the population of 'feebleminds' that MacMurchy believed threatened 'normal' Canadians.[17]

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[12] See McLaren, espec. 28-106; Dowbiggin, 133-190; Jennifer Stephen and Carolyn Strange, "Eugenics in Canada, 1850s to 1990s: A Chequered History" in Alison Bashford and Phillipa Levine eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 523-538; Jennifer Stephen, "The 'Incorrigible,' the 'Bad,' and the 'Immoral': Toronto's 'Factory Girls' and the Work of the Toronto Psychiatric Clinic," in *Law Society and the State: Essays in Modern Legal History*, eds., Louis A. Knaffa and Susan W.S. Binnie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 405-439; Kathleen McConnachie, "Science and Ideology : The Mental Hygiene and Eugenics Movements in the Inter-war Years, 1919-1939" PhD diss. (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1987). See also, on eugenics in policies for Canadian children, Neil Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 71-78 and Theresa R. Richardson, *The Century of the Child: The Mental Hygiene Movement and Social Policy in the United States and Canada* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), 69-73.

[13] James M. Careless, *Toronto to 1918: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: James Lorimer and National Museums of Canada, 1983), 169. See *TBE Minutes 1909*, 18 June 1909, 108-109.

[14] Simmons, 67.

Helen MacMurchy was convinced of the need for special classes, but she lacked a receptive audience for her plan. That state of affairs began to change in the summer of 1909, when the Manchester special educator Mary Dendy visited Toronto for the worldwide meetings of the International Council of Women. At the Toronto women's congress, Dendy presented a lecture on 'mental defectiveness' in her native England. "In dealing with a defective child," she told Council delegates—underlining the connection between special classes and eugenics— "we are not dealing with an individual only, but with the human race."[18] Dendy's visit, as we shall shortly see, helped to catalyze the movement for special classes in Toronto.

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[15] *Sixth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1912*. 6.

[16] *Third Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1908*, 39.

[17] *Third Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1908*, 39-40. See also, Margret A. Winzer, *From Integration to Inclusion: A History of Special Education in the 20th Century* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 2009), 90; Gerald Thomson, "'Remove from Our Midst These Unfortunates': A Historical Inquiry Into the Influence of Eugenics, Educational Efficiency as well as Mental Hygiene Upon the Vancouver School System and Its Special Classes, 1910-1969," Ph.D. dissertation (The University of British Columbia, 1999), 85-89.

Mary Dendy and Helen MacMurchy had much in common. Both were middle-class, middle-aged, professional women who were well connected to social reform movements. Dendy and MacMurchy had long public service careers. They distinguished themselves especially by reaching heights in public service and the professions that were accessed only with great difficulty by other women of their generation. MacMurchy came from a family of established Toronto educators. Her father was Dr. Archibald MacMurchy, Toronto's most highly regarded secondary school educator in the late nineteenth century, a man known to generations of students and teachers at Jarvis Collegiate Institute (CI) simply as "the Rector."[19] From about 1878 to 1898 Helen MacMurchy taught high school English under the Rector at Jarvis CI. Seeking a change, she enrolled in medical school in 1898 and graduated in 1901 with rare first class honours in medicine and surgery. Her medical background drew MacMurchy to public health work. After serving as inspector of Ontario's 'feebleminded' population for ten years, MacMurchy became the province's inspector of Auxiliary Classes (as special education were called), serving in that role from 1915 to 1918. From 1920 to her retirement in 1934, MacMurchy headed the Child Welfare Division of the federal Department of

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[18] Miss Dendy, "Types of Feebleminded Children," *Report of the International Congress of Women. Held in Toronto Canada. June 24th-30th, 1909* (Toronto: The National Council of Women of Canada, 1910), 45. See also, Simmons, 73.

[19] E.A. Hardy and Honora Cochrane, *Centennial Story: The Board of Education for the City of Toronto, 1850-1950* (Toronto: Thomas Nelson, 1950), 143-145.

Public Health. In the midst of all these posts MacMurchy spent a short and turbulent term as a Toronto school medical inspector.[20]

MacMurchy and Dendy—and other reform-minded women of their generation who became involved in special education, such as Vancouver schoolteacher Josephine Dauphinee—poured enormous effort into spreading the notion that the 'feebleminded' were a 'menace.' MacMurchy did more to advance this view than any other person in Canada at this time.[21] MacMurchy, however, experienced less success than Mary Dendy in translating her views into actual policies. In 1896 Dendy gained a school board seat in Manchester, where a report she prepared led the Board to establish its first special classes. In 1902, the Lancashire and Cheshire Society for the Permanent Care of the Feeble-Minded, which Dendy had founded in 1898, welcomed the first inmates to the Sandlebridge Boarding Schools, a custodial institution at Alderley Edge. The English Board of Education recognized Dendy's school as one of the approved options to which local education authorities could turn to educate 'feebleminded' youngsters under the provisions of England's permissive special education legislation, the Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act (1899). Dendy's star rose rapidly in England, and her views on the permanent segregation of the 'feebleminded,' alongside Dr. A.F. Tredgold's eugenic studies of the inheritability of 'feeblemindedness,' dominated a 1904 to 1908 Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-Minded. Subsequent legislation, the 1913 Mental Deficiency Act and 1914 Elementary Education Act (Defective and Epileptic Children), permitted lifelong segregation of 'mental defectives' in schools and colonies, where local authorities favoured that option.[22] Sandlebridge and, later, the 1913 and 1914 English mental deficiency legislation, served as models for MacMurchy. She later drew up her plans for a similar policy and farm colony in Ontario based on Dendy's successes.

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[20] Canadian historians have written extensively on MacMurchy. See: McLaren, 31-45; Dowbiggin, 162-167; Simmons, 67-100. See also, Kathleen McConnachie, "Methodology in the Study of Women in History: A Case Study of Helen MacMurchy, M.D.," *Ontario History* 75:1 (March, 1983): 61-70 and Dianne Dodd, "Helen MacMurchy, MD: Gender and Professional Conflict in the Medical Inspection of Toronto Schools, 1910-1911," *Ontario History* 93:2 (Autumn 2001): 127-149. See also William H. Brown, "Making Representation: Dr. Helen MacMurchy and the 'Feebleminded' in Ontario, 1906-1919" (PhD thesis: University of Toronto, 2005).

[21] Dowbiggin, 162. On Dauphinee, see Thomson, "'Through no fault of their own'," 51-73.

Mary Dendy's visit to Toronto in 1909, therefore, presented a very rare and very important opportunity for Helen MacMurchy to convince local school officials of the need for special classes for 'mentally defective' boys and girls. On 17 June 1909, a week before the International Council of Women's congress opened, MacMurchy took Dendy on a one-day expedition into three Toronto public schools. The pair set out to locate as many 'defective' schoolchildren as they could find. They made the somewhat dubious claim of inspecting 1,300 schoolgirls and schoolboys in a single day. The women discovered eleven worrisome cases of children who were "defective minded."[23] MacMurchy then arranged for Dendy to speak to the elected citizens responsible for public education in Toronto. The day after she and MacMurchy visited the schools, Dendy addressed Toronto Board of Education (TBE) school trustees at a board meeting on the subject of "weak minded children attending public schools." "The worst case was that of a lad of fifteen years," Dendy told the Toronto trustees, "who, though having had the best instruction, had gained no knowledge." Dendy "expressed the hope that a separate school would be set apart in the Toronto schools for the benefit of those so afflicted" and also praised Toronto on having a feebleminded population "under the European average."[24]

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[22] Jackson, *The Borderland of Imbecility*, 64-67, 218-223; Ted Cole, *Apart or A Part?: Integration and the Growth of British Special Education* (Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press, 1989), 43-47 See also: Mark Jackson, "Institutional Provision for the Feeble-Minded in Edwardian England: Sandlebridge and the Scientific Morality of Permanent Care," in David Wright and Anne Digby eds., *From Idiocy to Mental Deficiency: Historical Perspectives on People with Learning Disabilities* (London: Routledge, 1996): 161-183.

[23] *TBE Minutes 1909*, 18 June 1909, 108. The TBE Minutes incorrectly identify Dendy as "Benby."

Dendy's address had an immediate effect and set in motion the events that led to the creation of Toronto's first special education class. At the conclusion of the school board meeting, trustee Jimmie Simpson notified the Board that he would present a motion asking the Management Committee to counsel trustees on the "advisability of classifying the weak minded and otherwise physically incapacitated children in our public schools, with a view to giving special instruction that such children require."[25] Acting on Simpson's motion the following school year, the principals of 50 schools—practically every single one of the TBE's elementary schools—reported back on 117 'mentally defective' children in their charge. In February 1910, the Board hired MacMurchy to formally examine these children, allocating $300 for the inquiry.[26] With Dendy's initial help, MacMurchy had successfully positioned herself as Toronto's resident expert on the education of 'mentally defective' children. She had also gained a platform from which she could pronounce her views on the supposed 'feebleminded' menace.

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[24] Ibid; "Didn't Appoint 4th Inspector," *Toronto Star* (19 June 1909): 3; Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Fourth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1909.* Toronto: 1910. (Sessional Papers 1910, No. 23): 3-5.

[25] *TBE Minutes 1909*, 18 June 1909, 109.

[26] *TBE Minutes 1910*, Appendix No. 6, Management Report No. 2, 27 January 1910, Adopted as amended 3 February 1910, 33, 37; Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Fifth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1910.* Toronto: 1911. (Sessional Papers 1911, No. 23): 46.

Going to school with eugenics: Classes for 'mentally defective' children in Toronto, 1910-1914

The eugenics movement in Toronto contributed directly to developments that led to the opening of the TBE's first ever separate special education classes for children with disabilities or learning difficulties. Eugenics also contributed to the segregated model for special education. It shaped the curriculum, pedagogy, and other aspects of the classroom experiences in Toronto's first special classes as well. In the spring of 1910, a few months after the TBE had hired her to look into the numbers of 'mentally defective' children in the schools, Helen MacMurchy reported back to the Board with the results from formal examinations of 100 of the 117 supposedly 'feebleminded' Toronto schoolboys and schoolgirls that school principals had discovered.[27] A few months later, in September, TBE authorities acted on MacMurchy's report and opened the city's first special classes for 'mentally defective' children.[28] The Board assigned Miss Lillian Carruthers and Miss Florence Sims to teach the new special education classes.[29] Sims was a veteran Toronto teacher experienced in working with difficult children. In 1890, Sims began assisting the celebrated nineteenth-century Toronto schoolmistress, Hester How, in her educational missionary work at gritty, downtown Elizabeth Street PS (later Hester How PS). Miss How began this work in 1881, taking responsibility the city's first truant classes for youngsters working as newsboys and bootblacks, and for other street children.[30] In 1910, Sims taught half-day special classes for 'mentally defective' children at Elizabeth Street PS and at nearby George Street PS. She travelled between the two schools on foot each noon hour. Lillian Carruthers, who soon became an outspoken crusader for better school conditions for 'mentally defective' children, had a similar arrangement in the west end. Carruthers travelled between special classes at Grace Street PS and at Essex Avenue PS. Toronto's first four special classes, under Carruthers and Sims, were small, enrolling a combined total of just 60 or 70 children.[31] Significantly, these youngsters appear not to have received any other schooling than the half days they attended with Sims or Carruthers.

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[27] *Fifth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1910*, 46-51; "Sad Cases of Dull Children," *Toronto Star* (6 May 1910): 12.

[28] *TBE Minutes 1910*, 5 May 1910, 74; Appendix No. 29, Management Report No. 11, 9 June 1910, Adopted 16 June 1910, 398; *Fifth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1910*, 52.

[29] *TBE Minutes 1910*, Appendix No. 34, Management Report No. 12, 23 June 1910, 425.

The opening of two classes for 'mentally defective' children in Toronto in 1910 paralleled developments in other North American cities where school authorities also had begun to offer this type of class.[32] In addition to eugenics, developments related to the organizational challenges inherent in instructing disabled and difficult children in late nineteenth and early twentieth schools, also contributed to the rise of special classes for 'mental defectives.' The classes for 'mentally defective' children resembled in a few important ways the ungraded classes that were found in urban school systems across the continent as early as the late 1870s.[33] In the common school era of the 1830s and 1840s, reformers who experimented for the first time with schooling for the masses discovered that they could make schools much more efficient by grading them by age and educational attainment. A single teacher could be placed in charge of a single schoolroom containing a single group of students, all of whom were about the same age and had a similar level of school experience. Graded schools were well established as the public school norm by 1870. Grades 1, 2, 3 and upward to Grade 12 and 13, replaced an earlier system of large settings that housed together pupils of inconsistent ages and levels of schooling.[34] Yet, even under a more efficient graded system there were still pupils who were hard for educators to fit into the grades. The ungraded classes accumulated these students. Working children, recently arrived immigrants, children whose behaviour challenged officials, and some children with disabilities or learning difficulties as well, were lumped together into ungraded classes. Hester How's classes at Elizabeth Street PS, for the instruction of the city's "roughest boys," were one example of the ungraded model.[35]

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[30] Hardy and Cochrane, 90-91. On Sims, see also Hardy and Cochrane, 247. See also: James L. Hughes, "Hester How," *The School* 4:4 (December 1915): 300-305.

[31] Toronto District School Board Archives. (TDSBA). *TBE Handbook 1911*, 41-42, 44; *TBE Minutes 1912*, Appendix No. 69, R.H. Cowley, "Report on the Public Schools of Toronto," 7 June 1912, 585.

[32] See Lazerson, 27-28; *Osgood, For 'Children Who Vary from the Normal Type,'* 127-128; Thomson, "'Remove from Our Midst These Unfortunates'," 135-139.

[33] Robert Osgood, *The History of Special Education: A Struggle for Equality in American Public Schools* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008), 41-44.

Ungraded classes, historian Robert Osgood argues, were the precursor to modern special education classes. Early ungraded classes, however, were only rarely designated specifically for children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Ungraded settings that came along later, and enrolled these children specifically, eventually matured into what we would today call special education classes.[36] Toronto's classes for 'mentally defective' children were not, in fact, the only type of special classes the TBE authorities established in the 1910s. As we shall see in the next chapter, a few years after Sims's and Carruthers's classes first opened in 1910, Toronto school authorities opened the first of a new type of special class for another group of young people with disabilities and learning difficulties—'backward' children. Like ungraded classes, classes for 'backward' children were also a response to the challenges of operating schools organized by age and grade.

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[34] David B. Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 43-45.
[35] Hardy and Cochrane, 90-91.
[36] Robert Osgood, *The History of Special Education: A Struggle for Equality in American Public Schools* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008), 41-44. See also, Osgood, *For 'Children Who Vary from the Normal Type,'* 76-92; Kimberly Kode and Kristin E. Howard ed., *Elizabeth Farrell and the History of Special Education*

Eugenics contributed to the segregated model for special classes for 'mentally defective' children. Schoolmen and schoolwomen drew an easy analogy between the supposed distinctiveness of 'mental defectives' as a group and what they saw as an appropriate segregated school setting for this group. As Toronto special class teacher Miss Blackwell quoted in an article on special education: "Nature has put the mental defective in a class by himself, we had better take the hint."[37] Many educators, such as Blackwell, and psychological experts across the continent in the 1910s as well, believed that 'mentally defective' children were a disruptive classroom presence who contributed to pedagogical inefficiency when enrolled in mainstream classes.[38] Segregating 'mentally defective' schoolchildren, Toronto teacher Mrs. Kerr argued, was one more way to give

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(Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children, 2002), 26-33; Winzer 78; Seymour B. Sarason and John Doris, *Educational Handicap, Public Policy, and Social History: A Broadened Perspective on Mental Retardation* (Westport, CT: The Free Press, 1979), 267-268.

[37] Miss Blackwell, "Auxiliary Classes in the Public Schools," *The Public Health Journal* 5:12 (December 1914): 624.

[38] See: *Fourth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1909,* 16-17; Helen MacMurchy, *To Inspectors, Principals, and Teachers* (Toronto: Ontario Department of Education, 1919), 8; Osgood, *For 'Children Who Vary from the Normal Type,'* 57-59.

the teacher "a chance to do her best work for the largest and most important class of children, the normal" in an strained environment.[39]

'Mentally defective' children were segregated for other reasons. Curricular and pedagogical differentiation was an important factor in segregated special classes, an area of special education in which the eugenics influence was felt as well. The drab assessment that 'mentally defective' boys and girls were capable of learning only basic academic and social skills, a view contributed by eugenicists, shaped curriculum and pedagogy in Toronto special classes for 'mentally defective' children in the 1910s. Some educationists even proposed implementing a distinct special class curriculum that would directly prepare 'mentally defective' children for future institutionalization. "What in the world is the use of any feebleminded child in any institution knowing how to multiply two hundred and fifty-six by twenty-seven?," E.R. Johnstone of the Vineland Training School in New Jersey rhetorically asked special teachers.[40] Indeed, the teaching of concrete concepts, instead of abstract thinking, dominated the pedagogy used with 'mentally defective' youngsters. "Mental defectives cannot be taught, can only be trained by repetition," Mrs. Kerr wrote. "They can only imitate, they can't initiate. Their sense of relationship is poor as also [sic] their sense of reasoning and judgment. They do not readily connect up ideas."[41] Helen MacMurchy encouraged teachers to use "object lessons" and to train 'mentally defective' children's senses instead of their intellects.[42]

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[39] Mrs. Kerr, "Defective Children," *The Public Health Journal* 5:12 (December 1914): 621.

[40] E.R. Johnstone, "The Summer School for Teachers of Backward Children," *Journal of Psycho-Asthenics* 13 (1908): 126. See also: MacMurchy, *Organization and Management,* 127-137.

[41] Kerr, 620-621.

[42] MacMurchy, *Organization and Management,* 131-139, 146-150; MacMurchy, *To Inspectors, Principals, and Teachers,* 9-11.

Lillian Carruthers used Kindergarten pedagogy and manual training extensively in her special education class at Grace Street PS.[43] She incorporated dance into daily lessons "because dancing is not only good exercise in itself, but it circulates the blood through the brain—a particularly good thing for mentally defective children."[44]

Factors beyond the school also influenced special class children's educational experiences. Parental views on 'mental defect' and special education were important factors in determining which boys and girls actually attended classes for 'mentally defective' children. Indirectly, eugenics figured into parents' options and their choices about the education and care of children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Some parents sought out a special class settings for their children.[45] Their reasons, like the motives of parents who sent their children to custodial institutions for people with intellectual disabilities, were highly complex.[46] Many parents undoubtedly believed that they were acting in their child's best educational interest by requesting admission to the special class. Other parents sought coping strategies to help care for a disabled child. One father of "a mental deficient" expressed these, and other feelings, in a letter to the editor of the *Toronto Globe*. The man's letter pleaded with Toronto's medical officer of health,

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[43] See *TBE Minutes 1913*, Appendix No. 8, Management Report No. 2, 30 January 1913, Adopted 6 February 1913, 53.

[44] "The Defectives Neglected While City and Province Disagree Over Their Duty," *Toronto Star* (9 May 1912): 3. On special class curriculum, see also: Osgood, *For 'Children Who Vary from the Normal Type'*, 138-142.

[45] See: *TBE Minutes 1915*, 30 December 1915, 221.

[46] See Nic Clarke, "Sacred Daemons: Exploring British Columbian Society's Perceptions of 'Mentally Deficient' Children, 1870-1930," *B.C. Studies* 144 (Winter 2004-2005): 61-89; Jessa Chupik and David Wright, "Treating the 'idiot' Child in Early 20th-Century Ontario," *Disability & Society* 21:1 (January 2006): 77-90; Veronica Strong-Boag "'Children of Adversity': Disabilities and Child Welfare in Canada from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century," *Journal of Family History* 32:4 (October 2007): 420-427. See also, Janice Brockley, "Rearing the Child Who Never Grew: Ideologies of Parenting and Intellectual Disability in American History," in Steven Noll and James W. Trent Jr., *Mental Retardation in America: A Historical Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 130-164.

Dr. Charles Hastings, to help open a special school for 'mentally defective' children in the city.

> Will Dr. Hastings try to get a school? Do you, sir, or does Dr. Hastings know the heartless and hopeless problem an only son is who is a mental deficient? ... For ten years my home has been wrecked and our hearts broken ... To send a boy to Orillia [Asylum for Idiots] who is merely a deficient ... is in effect equal to all the pangs and sorrows of a sentence to prison for both child and parents.[47]

Other mothers and fathers were unimpressed by special classes.[48] In a wider culture where intellectual disability was often stigmatized, a child who attended a special class for 'mentally defective' children could reflect negatively on the whole family. The popularization of eugenics through family studies, such as H.H. Goddard's *The Kallikak Family: A Study in the Heredity of Feeblemindedness*, which appeared in 1912, cast doubts on the genetic and therefore moral past of any family with a child or other member with a disability.[49] Thus Toronto psychiatrist C.K. Clarke recommended his colleagues in the field avoid issuing an affronting label parents might take as "a serious reflection upon their own creative powers."[50] However, parents who shunned the classes, especially working-class and immigrant parents, also had to contend with the common view that parental ignorance of modern health practices lent a hand in disabling children.[51] Eugenics was central to this perspective. Toronto Chief Medical Inspector, Dr.

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[47] Letter to the Editor. "The Mental Defectives," *Toronto Globe* (7 February 1921): 4.

[48] Osgood, *For 'Children Who Vary from the Normal Type'*, 130-133.

[49] Trent Jr., 133-135, 163-165.

[50] Centre for Addiction Mental Health Archives (CAMHA). Clarke Institute of Psychiatry/Toronto Psychiatric Hospital Fonds. C.K. Clarke Dr. C.K. Clarke Series. "Life and Works of C.K. Clarke, M.D. Psychiatry in the Schools," (ca. 1922), 1.

[51] See, for examples, *TBE Annual Report 1912*, Medical Inspector's Report, 22; *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Medical Inspector's Report, 17. See also: Mona Gleason, "Size Matters: Medical Experts, Educators, and the Provision of Health Services to Children in Early to Mid-Twentieth Century English Canada" in Cynthia Comacchio, Janet Golden, and George Weisz, eds. *Healing the World's Children:*

W.E. Struthers for instance, quoted the British eugenicist Sir James Barr, who said that: "What children usually die of is their parents, and what a nation usually dies of is lack of men."[52]

The unsuccessful move from class to colony: the possibilities and limitations of eugenics in education

Eugenics found its way into Toronto's early special education classes for 'mentally defective' children in a variety of subtle ways. Helen MacMurchy's more obvious efforts in the 1910s to connect the TBE's special classes to a policy for permanently segregating the city's 'mentally defective' population in farm colonies, however, demonstrate the limitations of eugenics in public education—limitations that mostly had to do with scale. MacMurchy saw the TBE's first four classes for 'mentally defective' children as a first step towards a more comprehensive system of education, care, and control that would supposedly lead eventually to the natural and complete disappearance of Toronto's 'mental defectives.' As the institution that would segregate 'mental defectives' from society, a farm colony was essential to MacMurchy's vision. Special classes in the public school were linked directly to the farm colony, helping to forge an important part of the institutional, as well as the intellectual, chain between eugenics and public education. However, MacMurchy was never completely successful at firmly closing all the links in that chain. Her efforts, and ultimately her failure with the farm colony plan, demonstrate how very difficult it actually was to make truly solid

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Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Child Health in the Twentieth Century (Montreal & Kingston: Queen's University Press, 2008): 181-82.

[52] *TBE Annual Report 1911*, Medical Inspector's Report, 10.

institutional connections between public schools and institutions designed specifically to segregate 'mentally defective' individuals.

Special classes for 'mental defectives' were one component of MacMurchy's farm colony. She believed that if special classes like the ones that Miss Sims and Miss Carruthers taught were repeated all over the city, that eventually the classes would collectively serve as a clearing house system. Local health authorities could use the clearing houses to systematically identify 'mentally defective' schoolchildren for custodial farm colonies, and to prepare them to enter those institutions.[53] Similar proposals that positioned special classes as clearing houses for custodial institutions appeared in several other places in North America around the same time, meeting limited success.[54] In England, however, Mary Dendy successfully forged the link between special education and institutional farm colonies through her Sandlebridge Institution.

The farm colony that MacMurchy envisioned for Ontario incorporated a mixture of care and control of 'feebleminds' in a "simple, happy, and thrifty village community."[55] It was based on a model that could be found "at practically every progressive and modern Institution for the Feeble-Minded," MacMurchy wrote, including at Dendy's Sandlebridge School and at other English institutions, as well as at the Vineland Training School in New Jersey, and at the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-Minded at Waverley.[56] MacMurchy proposed that Toronto's colony span one or two farms, with residential cottages for 1,000 to 2,000 inmates, as well as other essential structures: a church, a schoolhouse, and workshops.[57] The proposed farm colony was to be distinct from the Ontario Asylum for Idiots, an institution established in 1873 to house the province's most severely intellectually disabled people.[58] The farm colony's most important function was supposed to be prophylactic. It would "prevent[] the greatest evil of our present neglect of the feeble-minded, namely, the birth every year of a new and large generation of feeble-minded children, the offspring of the present generation of feeble-minded persons."[59] In fact, MacMurchy favoured sterilization over segregation, a position she held as early as the late 1900s. But the sterilization option was unpalatable to governments and voters in every province except Alberta and British Columbia, the two provinces that did eventually pass eugenic sterilization legislation, in 1928 and 1933 respectively.[60]

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[53] *Third Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1908*, 39-40.
[54] See Sarason and Doris, 266; Trent Jr., 144.
[55] Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Seventh Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1913*. Toronto: n.d. (Sessional Papers 1915, No. 23): 52.
[56] *Sixth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1912*: 50.

Throughout the 1910s, MacMurchy remained committed to a custodial institution specifically for 'mental defectives' and took a number of steps to realize that goal. In 1912, she helped found the Provincial Association for the Care of the Feebleminded (PACFM). The group articulated a 'feeblemindedness' policy platform that included clearing house special education classes for 'mentally defective' children in the public schools, registration of 'mental defectives,' and a farm colony. Around the same time, MacMurchy also convinced Toronto psychiatrist Dr. C.K. Clarke to restart a psychological testing clinic at Toronto General Hospital in order to provide a way of diagnosing 'feeblemindedness' locally.[61] Clarke used that clinic as well to popularize fears about the rapid growth in the number of 'feebleminds' in Toronto.[62]

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[57] Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Ninth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1915.* Toronto: n.d. (Sessional Papers 1915, No. 23): 28.
[58] See Simmons.
[59] *Sixth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1912*: 52.
[60] McLaren, 39-45, 96-106.

The farm colony idea gradually gained wide public support. The National Council of Women (NCW), the local Bureau of Municipal Research, the Anglican Diocese of Toronto Social Service Department, and the Toronto Home and School Council threw support behind the plan in the 1910s.[63] At the 1916 Canadian Conference of Charities and Corrections convention in Toronto, the TBE and the Toronto Advisory Committee on the Care of Mental Defectives teamed up on a conference exhibit on 'feeblemindedness.'[64] The conference conveners also circulated a petition that asked the provincial and federal governments for a farm colony, special classes, and a Royal Commission. The petition attracted an impressive 2,046 signatories, including prominent Torontonians in the fields of social welfare, medicine, and education, as well as important clergy and municipal officials. The signatures of Toronto schoolteachers, school principals, school inspectors, and trustees dot the petition.[65]

Certainly, MacMurchy's farm colony plan found many supporters within Toronto's public school bureaucracy. In 1910, the TBE initiated system-wide medical inspection. Over the next few years, Toronto school medical services expanded rapidly under the direction of Lina Rogers and W.E. Struthers.[66] Struthers, who became Chief Medical Inspector of city schools in 1911, energetically supported the farm colony plan and eugenics in education. "Eugenics and euthenics will find their most important and practical application in the field of intelligent supervision of the health and development of the school child," Struthers wrote in 1913. Custodial institutions were a sensible and humane policy for 'mentally defective' children, Struthers believed, essential "for the protection of the State, the good of the race, and for their own happiness." After a one or two year evaluation period in a special education class, Struthers contended, 'mentally defective' children as young as nine years of age—children in which Struthers claimed "the seeds that produce the moral pervert find particularly suitable soil"—should pass into institutional care, "until they cross the Great Divide."[67]

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[61] Simmons, 73-79; *Ninth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1915*, 8-9.
[62] See "The 'Incorrigible,' the 'Bad,' and the 'Immoral'; Valverde, 108.
[63] *Sixth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1912*, 56; City of Toronto Archives (CTA). Toronto Bureau of Municipal Research Fonds. Series 973, Subseries 2. "Are All Children Alike?" Bureau of Municipal Research, White Paper #4. 28 May 1915; Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Tenth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1916*. Toronto: n.d. (Sessional Papers 1916, No. 24): 32-33; Kari Dehli, "Women and Class: The Social Organization of Mothers Relations to Schools in Toronto, 1915-1940" (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1988), 300-301.
[64] Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Eleventh Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1915*. Toronto: n.d. (Sessional Papers 1917, No. 23): 62-63.
[65] CAMHA. Griffin-Greenland Fonds. File V. Mental Retardation (1507). "Petition, March 1916. From Canadian Conf. of Charities + Correction to Prime Minister of Canada RE: 'feeble-minded'."

School medical inspection, Struthers must have also realized, was essential to special education generally and to the farm colony plan especially. The plan took a step forward in 1910 when Toronto introduced a school medical service. Routinized inspection permitted Toronto school officials to systematically identify 'mentally defective' and other schoolchildren.[68] MacMurchy, not surprisingly, put forward her name for a school medical inspector's position. She was awarded one of the first two positions created in 1910, but soon found herself at the centre of a controversy. MacMurchy thought school medical inspection should be in the domain of public health, a vehicle for health reformers to pursue policies such as her farm colony plan. James Hughes, the TBE's head school inspector, believed that school medical inspection should be subordinated to school officials' control. Hughes and MacMurchy, who had equal reputations for occasionally mercurial actions, predictably clashed immediately. Hughes won the day, calling in his political clout to force MacMurchy out of her job.[69]

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[66] Heather MacDougall, *Activists and Advocates: Totonto's Health Department, 1883-1983* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1990), 186-188.

[67] *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Medical Inspector's Report, 4; *TBE Annual Report 1912*, Medical Inspector's Report, 20; *TBE Annual Report 1911*, 44-45.

[68] *Fifth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1910*, 28. See also, Thomson, "'Remove from Our Midst These Unfortunates'," 128-139.

Fortunately, for MacMurchy, however, Hughes was in the twilight of his career in 1910. Under Hughes' successor, R.H. Cowley, who fully took over as TBE Chief Inspector in 1913, the Board took a few more steps towards setting the stage for the farm colony plan.[70] Cowley supported permanent institutional care for some 'mental defectives.' In a 1912 report on Toronto schools for the Ontario Department of Education Cowley wrote that "The interests of society require that ['mental defectives'] be duly relegated to custodial asylums, when adequate private guardianship cannot be assured." Toronto school officials would willingly operate special classes as "clearing-houses" for 'mentally defective' youngsters, Cowley confirmed—if the province or municipality established a farm colony.[71]

Ontario provincial authorities also took action on special class policy in the 1910s that supported eventual farm colonies. In 1914, MacMurchy joined a provincial committee that re-drafted the Auxiliary Classes Act, the special class legislation Ontario had passed three years prior. MacMurchy used her influence on the committee to build a stronger legal bond between the farm colony and the public school special education classes. The new Act came into effect 1 May 1914 and expanded considerably on the rudimentary 1911 Auxiliary Classes Act.[72] The 1914 Act authorized school boards to operate "a suitable residence and home" for any 'mentally defective' children in their jurisdiction and empowered school board trustees to acquire property outside that jurisdiction to do so, a crucial clause for urban systems seeking to set up farm colonies. Remarkably, the 1914 Act made any child admitted to a school board's custodial institution a ward of the school board until the young person's twenty-first birthday. Finally, and significantly, the Act also stipulated that school boards could establish special education classes only for 'mentally defective' children and not children "whose mental capacity is incapable of development beyond that of a child of normal mentality at eight years of age" —that is so-called 'idiots' or 'imbeciles,' who local officials would continue to send to the Ontario Asylum for Idiots at Orillia.[73] The use of "child or normal mentality at eight years of age" referred to the emerging Binet-Simon intelligence tests, which employed the concept of mental age to assess a child's mental ability. A mental age of eight later came to represent an IQ of 50. For decades most North American school jurisdictions, including Ontario, used an IQ of 50 as the minimum required to enrol in public schools.[74] Finally, the shrewd MacMurchy also ensured that the 1914 Act favoured her appointment as provincial inspector of auxiliary classes. The province obliged and offered her the post.[75]

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[69] See Dodd.

[70] *Tenth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1916*, 34-39; *TBE Minutes 1916*, Appendix No. 7, Report of Advisory Committee Re Care of Mental Defectives in Toronto, n.d., 24-38.

[71] *TBE Minutes 1912*, Appendix No. 69, Report on the Public Schools of Toronto, Chief Inspector Cowley, communicated to TBE by Minister of Ed 7 June 1912, 585; TDSBA. Vertical Files (hereafter VF). Special Education. R.H. Cowley, "Report on Provision for Mentally Defective Pupils in the Public Schools of Toronto," 27 January 1914. See also: R.H. Cowley, "Mentally Defective Pupils in the Public Schools of Toronto," *The Public Health Journal* 5:4 (April 1914): 223.

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[72] In 1911, the Board requested provincial legislation authorizing its new classes for 'mentally defective' children. Allan M. Dymond, a provincial lawyer at the Queen's Park legislature wrote a purposefully broad act that would allow Toronto school officials to fill in the details and develop policy as they went along. Gerald T. Hackett, "The History of Public Education for Mentally Retarded Children in the Province of Ontario 1867-1964," (Ed.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1969), 92.

[73] Hackett, Appendix E, The Auxiliary Classes Act, 1914, 391-392.

However, for all the promotion that MacMurchy carried out, and all the rhetorical and real support the farm colony plan received, its actual implementation remained elusive throughout the 1910s. For most of the decade the farm colony was hopelessly gridlocked by a jurisdictional dispute between the municipal government, the public school board, and provincial government. All three bodies shared a vision of special classes for 'mentally defective' children serving as clearing houses for a farm colony. But every time that the province, the city, and the public school board tried to turn that vision into reality, they could not manage to see past how they would divide up the financial and administrative responsibilities for a new, expansive, and very expensive state institution.[76] Indeed, as historian James Trent Jr. has shown, the argument that 'feeblemindedness' was rampant eventually undermined policy proposals in the United States to institutionalize 'feebleminded' populations. The apparently large numbers of 'feebleminded' individuals made the undertaking appear too vast and expensive for policymakers who had limited resources and limited institutional infrastructures.[77] This certainly seems to have been the case in Ontario, and perhaps in British Columbia as well, where a similar farm colony plan for Vancouver appears to have failed around the same time.[78]

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[74] Simmons, 91.

[75] Hackett, 95.

[76] See: TDSBA. VF. Special Education. Memorandum, "Re Education of Defectives," Superintendent of Education [John Seath] to The Minister of Education, 22 December 1913; Cowley, "Mentally Defective Pupils in the Public Schools of Toronto,"; J.O. McCarthy, "Municipal Responsibility" *The Public Health Journal* 5:4 (April 1914): 234-235; Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Eleventh Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1919.* Toronto: n.d. (Sessional Papers 1920, No. 24): 8, 18-19. For an overview see: Simmons, 76-85.

[77] Trent Jr., 165.

While the farm colony plan stalled, the TBE more or less cast adrift the four classes for 'mentally defective' children that it had opened in 1910. This neglect led to an allegation that surfaced in 1912 that the Board had simply abandoned pupils in the classes. A disagreement over special classes for 'mentally defective' children involving special class teacher Miss Lillian Carruthers, school trustees, and Chief Medical Inspector Dr. W.E. Struthers, ensued. This conflict demonstrates some of the additional difficulties eugenicists experienced when they attempted to apply their science to education. The conflict also demonstrates the professional tension between the educational and medical professions, which often appeared around special education. Dispute over Toronto's special classes for 'mentally defective' children first arose when Carruthers wrote a letter to the editor of the *Toronto Star* criticizing a "gratuitous statement" Board Chairman Dr. Fred Conboy had made about children in Carruthers' classes. Conboy had told an audience at a local convention on 'feeblemindedness' that Carruthers' pupils were incapable of learning, suggesting that the public schools would be justified in giving up on these 'mentally defective' boys and girls. Carruthers retorted in her letter: "From my experience of almost two years with these children, I have no hesitation in stating that they are all unmistakably educable."[79] Just over a month later the situation became tenser. In an even bolder move, Carruthers sent a second letter to the local papers that accused the TBE's "three-thousand-a-year [salary] Chief Medical

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[78] See Thomson, "'Remove from Our Midst These Unfortunates'," 158-161.

[79] Letter to editor, Lillian Carruthers, "Children in Special Classes," *Toronto Star* (29 March 1912): 5.

Inspector," Dr. W.E. Struthers, of abandoning medical inspection of 'mentally defective' pupils in Carruthers' classes. Carruthers reported that she had been forced to wave down a passing school nurse in the street just to get an inspection for some of her pupils. Carruthers also protested deplorable conditions in her classrooms. The bottoms of the walls in one classroom, which was located in the basement of a Baptist church that the Board had rented to handle the overflow from Essex PS, were "sopping wet," and the classroom had flooded more than once over the winter. At Grace Street PS, Carruthers wrote, her pupils were crammed into two small, enjoined rooms in a rented house nearby the school.[80]

Carruthers's "brass band method" of complaint, as one school trustee described it, certainly created attention.[81] More attention grabbing, perhaps, was Dr. Struthers' glib reply that admitted and justified the neglect. "These are not normal children, and they should be cared for in government institutions," Struthers told the reporter upon hearing Carruthers' allegations that he had been personally negligent. "I shouldn't have to bother with them." Struthers' bluntness in part reflected the frustration that some supporters of the farm colony plan felt about the plan's progress. Yet his remarks also captured a particular view of 'mentally defective' children. Struthers coolly informed a *Toronto Star* correspondent, who admitted his own astonishment at Struthers's comment: "Can we put brains in them? Are we to perform operations on them? If a child is not normal you cannot make it so. There are some very absurd notions prevalent as to this matter."[82] This was a view that Carruthers, as an educator, did not share. She cast herself as a defender of 'mentally defective' children, "whose gentle manners and loving hearts are worth tons of intellect."[83] Yet Carruthers did not differ categorically from Dr. Struthers in her views either. Like Struthers, she also believed in the farm colony (she claimed the "sincerest sympathy" with the cause) and her pedagogical methods, learned at E.R. Johnstone and H.H. Goddard's Vineland institution, stressed a firm line between 'backwardness,' an affliction of sickly and deprived 'normal' students, and congenital 'mental defectiveness' which Carruthers resolutely believed was altogether different than 'normality.'[84] The Board censured Miss Carruthers' loud criticism, but nonetheless sided with her, and medical inspections soon resumed.[85]

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[80] "Those Needing Most Care Are Neglected," *Toronto Star* (9 May 1912): 7. See also: Hackett, 115. Chief Inspector Cowley was also concerned about conditions. *TBE Minutes 1912*, Appendix No. 69, Report on the Public Schools of Toronto, Chief Inspector Cowley, communicated to TBE by Minister of Education 7 June 1912, 585.

[81] "Nineteen Inspectors in Schools, And Yet Complaints Are Made," *Toronto Star* (10 May 1912): 12. *TBE Minutes 1912*, 16 May 1912, 84.

Yet, by 1914, the Board had closed Lillian Carruthers's class at Grace Street PS, the last of the remaining classes for 'mentally defective' children that Toronto school authorities had created just four years earlier. The inability of officials at three levels of government to agree on the farm colony surely affected the closure.[86] MacMurchy, however, was not ready to give up on the farm colony just yet. The PACFM eventually convinced the province to take one last look at the idea in 1918. At the organization's urgent request, W.H. Hearst's Liberal government called a Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Mentally Defective and Feeble-Minded in Ontario, under Justice Frank Egerton Hodgins.[87] Hodgins issued recommendations in 1919 that included changes to the province's special education system. He wanted local officials to expand the number of special classes as part of a provincial 'feeblemindedness' policy. Hodgins stressed "that the future solution of the major part of this great problem ['feeblemindedness'] lies in the schools."[88] He also supported farm colonies, special classes as clearing houses for 'mentally defective' children, the creation of school board mental clinics staffed by professional psychiatrists and nurses, routine school mental examinations for students entering schools and for students who were not promoted to the next grade, and laws that would replace permissive legislation with compulsory regulations forcing school boards to establish special classes. He urged the province to enact laws forcing parents to submit their children to testing and reassignment to special education classes as well.[89] The Royal Commission heard from TBE Chief Inspector R.H. Cowley, who reported on behalf of a special TBE committee that the Board was still willing to operate a day school for 'mental defectives,' if the provincial government chipped in with "custodial institutions when their training was completed."[90] Hodgins's timing for his final report, however, was not good. He delivered his findings in October

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[82] The Defectives Neglected While City and Province Disagree Over Their Duty," *Toronto Star* (9 May 1912): 3.
[83] Lillian Carruthers, "Children in Special Classes," *Toronto Star* (29 March 1912): 5. See also, "Glass of Warm Milk for Weakly Pupils," *Toronto Star* (17 January 1913): 14.
[84] Letter to editor, Lillian Carruthers, "Children in Special Classes," *Toronto Star* (29 March 1912): 5. See also: Lillian Carruthers, "How Numerous Are Subnormal Pupils?" *Toronto Star* (9 November 1912): 8. Carruthers spent the summer of 1911 in New Jersey taking courses at the Vineland Training School. *TBE Minutes 1911*, Appendix No. 42, Management Report No. 10, 25 May 1911, Adopted 1 June, 1911, 399.
[85] "Nineteen Inspectors in Schools, And Yet Complaints Are Made," *Toronto Star* (10 May 1912): 12
[86] *TBE Minutes 1914*, Appendix No. 23, Management Report No. 4, 26 February 1914, Adopted 5 March 1914, 157; "Strong Plea Made for Mentally Defectives," *Toronto Globe* (6 March 1914): 8.

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[87] Simmons, 85.

[88] Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Report on the Care and Control of the Mentally Defective and Feeble-minded in Ontario, by the Honourable Frank Egerton Hodgins.* Toronto: 1919. (Sessional Papers 1920, No. 24, Vol. 5, Appended): 99.

[89] *Report on the Care and Control of the Mentally Defective and Feeble-minded in Ontario, by the Honourable Frank Egerton Hodgins*, 18, 94-95, 98-99; Simmons 98-99.

[90] *Report on the Care and Control of the Mentally Defective and Feeble-minded in Ontario, by the Honourable Frank Egerton Hodgins*, 95. See: *TBE Minutes 1919*, 15 May 1919, 127.

1919. A month later, E.C. Drury's United Farmers of Ontario toppled Hearst's Liberal government. The new Minister responsible for the 'feeblemindedness' portfolio, no-nonsense provincial secretary H.C. Nixon, had little time or patience for social reformers such as Helen MacMurchy. Drury's government slipped Hodgins's recommendations into a proverbial drawer, where they joined MacMurchy's by then failed farm colony proposal.[91]

Helen MacMurchy must have been disappointed with the ultimate demise of her farm colony plan. Without the farm colony, she had once warned, special education classes for 'mentally defective' children was an incomplete policy that would merely "improve Feeble-Minded boys and girls so that they are more likely to marry when they are dismissed from school, or at any rate to become parents!"[92] Yet even though the farm colony plan did not come to fruition, and even though special educators, such as Lillian Carruthers, might not have agreed with the harsh views of Helen MacMurchy or W.E. Struthers on 'feebleminded' schoolchildren, eugenics helped to forge special education in the 1910s. Teachers, eugenicists and school authorities could agree upon the basic necessity of separating children with intellectual disabilities from their peers and segregating them in special settings. Long after the farm colony plan died, and even as the direct influence of eugenics later waned in special education, segregation remained a foundational principle of special classes as we know them. Eugenics also shaped curriculum and pedagogy in the special classes, and affected the climate in which parents made decisions about how to educate and care for intellectually disabled children.

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[91] Simmons, 98-99.
[92] *Sixth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1912*, 17.

Eugenics in education was enormously complicated, but was nevertheless an important part of the early special education system in Toronto.

Chapter 2. 'Laggards' in Toronto's Schools: Progressive School Reform and Special Classes for 'Backward' Children, 1912-1920.

Eugenics, as we saw in Chapter 1, helped to shape early special education policy in Toronto public schools. Urban school reform, specifically the emergence and consolidation of bureaucratic schooling, was a second important force that shaped early special class policy. This chapter looks in particular at Toronto's special classes for 'backward' children and the close relationship of those classes to progressive school reform in the 1910s. As the chapter shows, special classes for 'backward' children served a different group of children, and a different purpose than the classes for 'mentally defective' children that we examined in Chapter 1. Toronto's chief school medical inspector, Dr. W.E. Struthers summed up the difference between 'backward' children and 'mentally defective' children, and the significance of that difference, in 1911: "The mentally backward child can be educated, trained, and developed into a useful, self-supporting, responsible citizen; the mentally defective child never."[1] As we saw in the last chapter, in 1910 eugenicists and a few school authorities created classes for 'mentally defective' children in Toronto public schools. These classes were supposed to serve as clearing houses for a custodial institution, although the plan for a custodial farm colony for 'mental defectives' never got off the ground. Toronto's special classes for 'backward' children, the first of which opened in 1912, were to serve a different purpose. These classes were remedial and were designed to return struggling schoolchildren to mainstream classes after a period of intensive catch up work. Classes for 'backward' children were also an important feature of local school officials' strategy for addressing the problem of 'retardation' in city schools. 'Retardation,' a term that educationists invented in the late 1900s and early 1910s, was used to refer to pupils older than the proper age for the grades they were in. Toronto school officials' handling of the Queen City's 'retardation' problem in the early 1910s further turned special education policy towards separate special classes, and, eventually, by 1920 towards a separate stream for children with disabilities and learning difficulties. The chapter also examines special education in Toronto schools in light of the experiences of the children who enrolled in the city's classes for 'backward' children between 1912 and 1920. Toronto's special classes for 'backward' children offered girls and boys individualized, remedial instruction that occasionally opened opportunities for these youngsters to move from special to regular classrooms. However, circumstances—especially poverty—limited the degree to which all children in Toronto, including 'backward' children, could access educational opportunities through of the city's growing special education system.

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[1] *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Annual Report 1911*, Medical Inspector's Report, 43.

School reform and the rise of a system of separate special classes

Special education, which on its own was a school reform, was also one element in a pattern of reforms that were related to the bureaucratization of public school systems across North American urban centres, including Toronto, over an extended period. For this reason it is necessary to properly situate special education in the context of bureaucratic school reform. David Tyack and other educational historians have argued that a sequence of school reforms that unfolded gradually over a lengthy period, from approximately 1850 to 1940, transformed North America's urban school systems into bureaucracies. Bureaucracy, they argue, was a specific model of school administration, with three particular features or characteristics: centralization of authority and control; standardization of educational practice; and program specialization and a general functional differentiation of the purposes of public schooling.[2] Toronto schools were reformed along bureaucratic lines in stages during the careers of two chief school inspectors—James L. Hughes, who served the city's public schools from 1874 to 1914, and Robert H. Cowley, who took over from Hughes and remained at the helm of the Toronto public system until 1927. Many of the origins of Toronto's special class system may be found buried in the folds of these two men's careers as school reformers.

One of the first things that reformers did to make city school systems into bureaucracies was to transform the structures of authority and control that school systems used. After 1850, as cities grew rapidly in size, urban schools quickly became much larger and much more complex to manage.[3] The Toronto school system that James Hughes inherited in 1874 was a case in point. The city's public schools were bursting at the seams, in no small part because of new provincial compulsory attendance rules that required a minimum of four months' school attendance each year for all children between the ages of seven and twelve.[4] School enrolment in Toronto nearly doubled between 1869 and 1878, from 6,434 to 11,487 pupils. Daily attendance in same period rose from 80.2 percent of all students enrolled, in 1869, to 90.2 percent, in 1878.[5]

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[2] See: David B. Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974) and David B. Tyack, "Bureaucracy and the Common School: The Example of Portland, Oregon, 1851-1913," *American Quarterly* 19:3 (Autumn 1967): 476-480; Michael B. Katz, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America* (New York: Prager, 1971), 3-104. See also, Marvin Lazerson, *Origins of the Urban Public School: Public Education in Massachusetts, 1870-1915* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971). On bureaucratization in Canada specifically, see: Alison Prentice and Marta Danylewycz, "Teachers, Gender, and Bureaucratizing School Systems in Nineteenth Century Montreal and Toronto," *History of Education Quarterly* 24:1 (Spring 1984): 75-100; R.D. Gidney and D.A. Lawr, "The Development of an Administrative System for the Public Schools: The First Stage, 1841-50," in Neil McDonald and Alf Chaiton eds., *Egerton Ryerson and His Times* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978), 160-183; R.D. Gidney and D.A. Lawr, "Bureaucracy vs. Community? The Origins of Bureaucractic Procedure in the Upper Canadian School System," *Journal of Social History* 13:3 (Spring 1980): 438-457; B. Anne Wood, *Idealism Transformed: The Making of a Progressive Educator* (Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985).

[3] See Katz, 66-67; Tyack, *One Best System*, 30-39; Lazerson, *Origins of the Urban Public School*, 1-35.

City school officials faced almost daily the challenges of enormous urban and educational expansion. Yet no one person in the system had enough authority to confront those challenges head on because school administration in this period was so decentralized.[6] R.H. Cowley certainly knew first hand the frustrations of a decentralized school system. Cowley's early experiences as a school inspector in Carleton County, outside of Ottawa, revealed to him the same sort of administrative difficulties school officials in urban areas encountered on a much larger scale. Cowley reported that he and his rural colleagues across Ontario had to deal yearly with "about a hundred different Boards of Trustees." Cowley had to repeat a hundred separate rationalizations of the same policy just "to bring about those changes and improvements which are regularly required by the progress of the times."[7]

In order to deal with the challenges that decentralization posed, school reformers in the late nineteenth century made a series of changes intended to restructure loosely organized public schools into tightly centralized and hierarchized bureaucratic school systems, run from the top down. Reformers consolidated school governance and eliminated small ward- or section-based school boards.[8] In cities reformers redistributed educational labour and they centralized administrative authority over the schools in one office. In Canada this office belonged to the chief inspector. In 1874, James Hughes, who was only 29 years of age, was appointed Toronto's chief inspector of public schools. Hughes used the authority his office granted, and his considerable imagination as a reformer, to remake the schools according to a new plan that would rid the system of the chaotic and outdated practices that he, and other school reformers like him, believed caused the schools to fail to meet the needs of a changing society.

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[4] Robert Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 20.
[5] Haley P. Bamman, "Patterns of School Attendance in Toronto, 1844-1878: Some Spatial Considerations," *History of Education Quarterly* 12:3 (Autumn, 1972): 400-402.
[6] See Katz, 66-67; Tyack, *One Best System*, 30-39; Lazerson, *Origins of the Urban Public School*, 1-35.
[7] Robert Stothers, *A Biographical Memorial to Robert Henry Cowley* (Toronto: Thomas Nelson, 1935), 89.

Standardizing educational practices across the schools of single city system was one of the ways that bureaucratic reformers like Hughes made order out of confusion.[9] To promote conformity to a single standard, Hughes, like other reformers, scoured Toronto public schools for non-standardized course syllabi and replaced these with uniform curriculum and examinations for use across all city schools. He replaced jumbled agglomerations of pupils with classes graded by age and educational attainment. Hughes standardized teacher training and sought improvements to the city's ramshackle public school buildings. [10]

Program specialization—the functional differentiation of schooling—was the third element of bureaucratic reform, in addition to the centralization of authority and standardization of practice. As we saw in the last chapter, in the common school era of the 1830s and 1840s, pupils of inconsistent ages and levels of schooling were often instructed together in large undifferentiated settings. Reformers created age-graded schools as a way of using specialization to streamline instruction. Swayed by what they saw as the many of advantages of specialization in a more rationalized, bureaucratic system, reformers further differentiated the functions of public schools by adding such innovations as ungraded classes (for students that they could not fit into graded schools), kindergartens for very young children, and evening schools for working children.[11] Hughes implemented the latter two programs in Toronto in the 1880s. In fact, Toronto's kindergartens, which opened in 1883, were some of the world's first.[12]

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[8] Tyack, *One Best System*, 39-59.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid. These reforms in Toronto are described in E.A. Hardy and Honora M. Cochrane, *Centennial Story: The Board of Education for the City of Toronto* (Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1950), 68-99. On Hughes's career and life, see also Bruce N. Carter, "James L. Hughes and the Gospel of Education. A Study of the Work and Thought of a Nineteenth Century Canadian Educator". Ed.D. Thesis, (University of Toronto, 1966).

Schoolwomen and schoolmen such as Hughes who unleashed these reforms in cities around North America from the 1850s to the 1890s deliberately sought continent wide uniformity in urban school system administration. As David Tyack has argued, they wanted to assemble and distribute bureaucratic schooling as a "one best system" of urban education for use in any and every city in North America. They were, in fact, remarkably successful in bringing this system to North America's city school systems.[13]

After 1890 the character of North America's city schools continued to change and school reformers had to shift gears. Reforms to city school systems in the 1890s and afterwards were still bureaucratic in nature. Changes in this period had much to do with the evolving nature of the school's relationships with city children and their parents. Before 1900 significant numbers of school aged children worked. Around the turn of the twentieth century, new attendance laws, new child labour regulations, better school facilities, and changing attitudes about schooling amongst the working class, pulled and pushed thousands of these Canadian and American young people, who would not have attended a mere generation before into the public schools for the first time. Once they were in the schools, they began to attend more often, and they stayed longer than the previous generation had as well.[14]

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[11] See Tyack, *One Best System*, 43-44.
[12] Hardy and Cochrane, 87-91.
[13] Tyack, *One Best System*, 39.

Schoolwomen and schoolmen, such as R.H. Cowley, who came along a generation later than Hughes, looked upon increased enrolment and especially the mounting heterogeneity of the urban school population, including the increased presence of children with disabilities and learning difficulties, and decided that the schools need further reform. This second wave of school reformers, whom educational historian David Tyack calls "administrative progressives," made the further differentiation of schooling in the areas of programming and curriculum a top reform priority after 1890. In this sense, the administrative progressives deepened existing bureaucratic reforms. Administrative progressives especially believed that public school systems had a duty to respond to pupil diversity by even more significantly differentiating the functions of schooling, as well as the school curriculum, than Hughes and the reformers of his generation had done. Schools had to meet more directly, the second reform generation argued, the needs of each and every diverse group of urban children who could be found in city schools. Be they immigrants or native-born, working-class or middle-class, boys or girls, academically-inclined or not very bookish, 'mentally defective' or 'normal,' or of any other pupil grouping that school authorities came across in the schools of the early-twentieth-century city, each group, the reformers argued, needed a specific education adapted to its unique characteristics. Tyack argues that the new administrative progressives "still wanted a one best system, but it was to be a more complex, differentiated organization."[15]

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[14] Tyack, *One Best*, 183-184. On Canada see: Neil Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 155-171 and Stamp, 38-39.

During R.H. Cowley tenure as chief inspector, a period that lasted from 1914 until a few months before the educator's death in 1927, Toronto's public school system compiled a lengthy list of differentiated school programs. The Board added new specialized programs in the 1910s in the form of forest schools, open-air classes, and classes for 'foreign' schoolchildren.[16] Sparkling new buildings with thousands of desks were also constructed to house new specialized technical and commercial high schools. Central Technical School (CTS) opened in 1915 on Harbord Street, where it still stands. The cost to construct CTS (2 million dollars) was, at the time, the largest ever expenditure on a school building in Ontario. The Central High School of Commerce opened a year later.[17]

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[15] Tyack, *One Best System*, 188. See also, 177-198. See as well: Lazerson, *Origins of the Public School*, espec. Chapters 5 to 7. On the spread of the concept of functional differentiation in Canadian public schooling, see: Stamp 82-83 and Wood, 77-78, 86. Examples include Ontario's 1911 Industrial Education Act, which expanded vocational industrial education. English educationists also began to call for differentiated schooling, including special classes, around the turn of the twentieth century, as compulsory education policies took their full effect. See Ted Cole, *Apart or A Part: Integration and the Growth of British Special Education* (Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press, 1989) 11-12.

[16] See: *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Minutes 1912*, Appendix No. 54, Management Report No. 10, 30 May 1912, Adopted 6 June 1912, p. 441; *TBE Annual Report 1915*, Chief Medical Inspector's Report, 6; Neil S. MacDonald, *Open-Air Schools* (Toronto: McClelland, 1918); *TBE Minutes 1913*, Appendix No. 43, Management Report No. 8, 24 April 1913, Adopted 1 May 1913, 412; Appendix No. 48, Management Report No. 9, 8 May 1913, 442. See also: Luigi G. Pennacchio, "Toronto's Public Schools and the Assimilation of Foreign Students, 1900-1920," *The Journal of Educational Thought* 20:1 (April 1986): 37-48.

The two stages of bureaucratic school reform that unfolded gradually between the middle of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century contributed directly to the emergence of segregated special education classes as a school reform in the 1910s. Separate special education classes for children with disabilities and learning difficulties were a specialized program, *par excellence.* As Marvin Lazerson and Barry Franklin both argue, changing school demographics that the administrative progressives faced in many different parts of North America around the turn of the twentieth century contributed to the development of special education as a bureaucratic strategy for dealing with heterogeneous school populations that contained children with disabilities and learning difficulties, who suddenly seemed to appear in schools in ever greater numbers. The emergence in this context of separate special education classes as a reform strategy was by no means inevitable—a fact that Lazerson stresses particularly—as we will also see in a section on alternative models for educating children with learning difficulties below. But special classes were, as Lazerson and Franklin point out, a reform that was consistent with the administrative progressive hold on the North American city schools.[18]

School officials in Toronto created the city's first differentiated educational settings for children with disabilities or learning difficulties in 1910, when they first opened separate special classes for 'mentally defective' children. (We looked at these classes in the previous chapter.) Two years later, Toronto school authorities established a second type of differentiated special class, this time for so-called 'backward' children. The first Toronto class for 'backward' children opened at Queen Alexandra Public School (PS), at the beginning of the 1912-1913 school year. Toronto school authorities authorized two more of these classes early in 1913.[19] Special classes for 'backward' children would proliferate in the 1910s (See Table 2.1). Toronto's specialized orthopaedic, sight saving, speech correction, and hard-of-hearing classes, as well as oral day classes for deaf pupils, were all formed in 1920s. All of these classes fell under the heading of special education as well.

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[17] Hardy and Cochrane, 150; Stamp, 83.
[18] Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education," 27-28. Barry M. Franklin, "Progressivism and Curriculum Differentiation: Special Classes in the Atlanta Public Schools," *History of Education Quarterly*, 29:4 (Winter, 1989), 571-593; Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk'*, 32-40.

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[19] *TBE Minutes 1912*, Appendix No. 100, Management Report No. 18, 31 October 1912, Adopted 7 November 1912, 828; *TBE Minutes* 1913, Appendix No. 13, Management Report No. 3, 13 February 1913, Adopted 20 February 1913, 101; Appendix No. 39, Management Report No. 7, 10 April 1913, Adopted 17 April 1913, 384.

Table 2.1. Toronto auxiliary classes for 'backward' children, 1912-1920.

Type of Class	School	Date board authorized, or first known year open	Last known date open, 1912-1920.
Special	Queen Alexandra	November 7, 1912	Still open in 1920
Special	George St	February 20, 1913	1914
Ungraded	Perth Ave	April 17, 1913	1915
Foreign ungraded	Victoria St	May 1, 1913	1916
Foreign ungraded	Ryerson	May 8, 1913	1915
Ungraded	McCaul St	October 2, 1913	1915
Foreign ungraded	Hester How	October 16, 1913	1915
Ungraded	Brant St	February 19, 1914	1916
Ungraded	Fern Ave	February 19, 1914	Unknown
Newsboys	Hester How	1914	1916
Ungraded	Lansdowne	1915	Still open in 1920
Special	Queen Alexandra	1920	Still open in 1920
Special	Hester How	1920	Still open in 1920
Ungraded	Lansdowne	1920	Still open in 1920

Sources: Toronto District School Board Archives. *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Handbook 1914* to *TBE Handbook 1921*; and *TBE Minutes 1912*, Appendix No. 100, Management Report No. 18, 31 October 1912, Adopted 7 November 1912, 828; *TBE Minutes 1913*, Appendix No. 13, Management Report No. 3, 13 February 1913, Adopted 20 February 1913, 101, Appendix No. 39, Management Report No. 7, 10 April 1913, Adopted 17 April 1913, 384; Appendix No. 43, Management Report No. 8, 24 April 1913, Adopted 1 May 1913, 412; Appendix No. 48, Management Report No. 9, 8 May 1913, 442; Appendix No. 86, Management Report No. 15, 25 September 1913, Adopted 2 October 1913, 819; Appendix No. 92, Management Report No. 16, 9 October 1913, Adopted 16 October 1913, 886; *TBE Minutes 1914*, Management Report No. 3, 12 February 1913, Adopted 19 February 1914, 102.

Solving Toronto's retardation problem: Special education classes for 'backward' children,' 1912-1920

Administrative progressive reform contributed to the rise of a special class system in Toronto in public schools in the 1910s. Another development in public education and school reform, the so-called 'retardation' crisis that garnered significant attention at the beginning of the decade, also contributed to the rise of special classes. In the 1900s, North American educationists discovered that very large numbers of city schoolchildren were 'retarded' in their school progress. That is these children were "older than they should be for the grades they are in," as Leonard Ayres, the leading American expert on 'retardation' put it.[20] In 1909 Ayres published a book that outlined the 'retardation' problem. *Laggards in Our Schools*, seems to have quickly become something like required reading for administrative progressive schoolmen and schoolwomen. In *Laggards*, Ayres showed that the number of students in Grade 1 far exceeded the number in Grade 8, with the proportion of pupils in each grade decreasing as grade levels increased. Many of the youngsters said to be 'retarded' had repeated grades, while a smaller number of others were behind for other reasons.[21] Ayres and other progressives worried that 'retarded' schoolchildren clogged the schools and created a serious drain on educational efficiency. 'Retardation' was costly as well, they pointed out—especially when a child repeated a grade and "the city has to pay for the term's schooling twice over."[22] Ayres and other experts named a long list of causes behind grade repetition and retardation. These causes included: a late start to formal schooling; patchy attendance, which could be due to illness or truancy; physical differences, such as enlarged adenoids, that supposedly inhibited proper learning; and a curriculum not well adapted to the needs of boys, who represented the larger number of 'laggards'.[23] "Many pupils are backward," wrote Toronto's Chief Medical Inspector Dr. W.E. Struthers in 1911 "purely and simply because of defective vision, defective hearing, adenoids, which may also cause deafness, enlarged tonsils, enlarged glands, or general malnutrition and physical weakness."[24] One of Ayres' most significant findings, as far as special educators were concerned, was that 'backwardness' caused by the conditions I have just listed was a problem quite distinct from inherent 'mental deficiency.' 'Backward' children were 'backward' mainly because of causes that could be removed, such as malnutrition. Once these problems were alleviated, 'backward' children would become normal. 'Mentally defective' children were another case altogether. No amount of help, pedagogical or otherwise, could bring them up to a 'normal' standard, many educationists in the 1910s believed.[25]

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[20] Leonard P. Ayres, *Laggards in Our Schools: A Study of Retardation and Elimination in City School Systems* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1909), 3.
[21] Ayres.
[22] Ayres, 91.
[23] Tyack, *One Best System*, 199-202; Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education," 18-20.
[24] *TBE Annual Report 1911*, Medical Inspector's Report, 8.

Laggards in Our Schools attracted a lot of attention from concerned schoolmen and schoolwomen. In part this was because of Ayres's explosive argument that retardation was epidemic in American city school systems. From a low of seven percent 'retardation' in the schools of Medford, Massachusetts, to a high of 76 percent amongst black students in the racially segregated schools of Memphis, Tennessee, Ayres claimed that the median American urban system had a 'retardation' rate of 33 percent. He estimated that there were a shocking six million 'retarded' boys and girls in American schools and pegged the extra annual financial cost of educating these so-called laggards at about $27 million.[26] "Nor is the money waste the only serious result of repeating grades," Ayres added. Ayres argued dropping out, or "elimination," as he and other progressives called it, was one of the most serious side effects of 'retardation.' "The child," Ayres wrote, "who spends much more than the normal amount of time in doing the work in the lower grades finds himself at the age of fourteen, say in the fifth grade instead of the eighth, and, seeing that the prospect of promotion is still remote, drops out of school."[27]

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[25] Ayres, 3; Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk'*, 13-14. See, for example, *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Annual Report 1911*, Medical Inspector's Report, 43.
[26] Ayres, 95; Tyack, *One Best System*, 199-200.

To be sure, 'retardation' was artificial, the product of administrative concerns about pupil accounting.[28] Nevertheless, the efficiency obsession of the progressive age generally, not to mention ballooning urban school costs and overcrowding—as well as Ayres's equally important assertion that 'retardation' went to the core of progressive educators' interest in differentiating curricula, having an "evidently close bearing on the question of the adaptation of the school to the needs of the child"—all but guaranteed that *Laggards in Our Schools* would cause a sensation in administrative progressive circles across North America, which it did.[29] *Laggards in Our Schools* also influenced the special education policies that administrative progressives in Toronto used to address the types of problems that Ayres described.

'Retardation' rose to the top of Toronto's school reform agenda between about 1911 and 1916, as school inspector reports on 'retardation' poured in from every corner of the city. Inspector Rogers, for example, discovered nearly 3,900 'retarded' pupils in his northwest- and west-end inspectorate, with 'retardation' rates running as high as 60 percent at one school, Shirley PS.[30] The Bureau of Municipal Research estimated

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[27] Ayres, 91; Tyack, *One Best System*, 200.
[28] Tyack, *One Best System*, 202.
[29] For quote, see Ayres, 2. See Tyack, *One Best System*, 199-203; Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education," 18-20. On 'retardation' concerns in one Canadian school system, see Wood, 62.
[30] See *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Rogers' Report, 47-48. See also *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Elliott's Report 33-41; *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Armstrong's Report, 55; "Various Cures Suggested for Evils of Retardation," *Toronto Star* 2 February 1916: 7.

Toronto's 'retardation' cost at $278,073 in 1915.[31] Other social reform interests, including eugenicists such as Helen MacMurchy, joined the Bureau's efforts and placed pressure on Toronto school officials to tackle the problem. In the 1910s MacMurchy, like most people, acknowledged the distinction between 'backwardness' and 'mental defectiveness.' However, she was more inclined to believe that a main cause of repeated grades was innate intellectual disability, not the varied causes that Ayres named.[32] The greatest interest and impetus in addressing 'retardation,' however, came from school authorities themselves, including, medical authorities, elected trustees, and Department of Education officials, and, especially, school inspectors.

Toronto school inspectors assembled a lengthy, assorted, and sometimes contradictory, list of causes for the 'retardation' they found in the city's schools. Inspector Elliot blamed the "carelessness of parents," overcrowding in the primary grades, the "in-elasticity of our school programme of study," the promotion system from grade to grade, and—especially—the proliferation of small schools.[33] Inspector Whyte, for his part, surmised that prolonged illness, 'mental defectiveness' (in very few cases), or foreign birth, contributed to the problem of 'backward'' children in the schools of his district.[34]

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[31] City of Toronto Archives (CTA). Fonds 1003, Series 973, Subseries 2. Item 4. "Are All Children Alike?" Bureau of Municipal Research, White Paper #4. 28 May 1915.

[32] "Various Cures Suggested for Evils of Retardation," *Toronto Star* 2 February 1916: 7; "Schools Make Good Fight, Says Bureau," *Toronto Star*, 19 February 1917: 2; Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *Fifth Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1910.* Toronto: 1911. (Sessional Papers 1911, No. 23): 51-52.

[33] *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Elliott's Report, 39-41.

[34] *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Whyte's Report, 48-49.

From mainstreaming, to remedial classes, to a separate stream: The development of Toronto's classes for 'backward' children, 1913-1918

Educationists did not always agree on the origins of 'retardation,' Marvin Lazerson argues. Yet, "however the problem of retardation was defined, its links to special education were direct."[35] In Toronto in the 1910s, the city's 'retardation' problem framed a developing policy discussion about special education. Three policy models for addressing 'retardation,' and for meeting the supposed needs of 'backward' children, competed in the ten year period between 1910 and 1920. These three models were: mainstreaming, remedial classes, and a separate stream for 'backward' children. Toronto public schools started out using a mainstreaming approach, which was employed until about 1912. School officials then shifted to an approach that used separate special remedial classes, from about 1912 to 1920. They made this change as pressures from the 'retardation' crisis mounted and administrative progressive school officials explored separate special classes as a solution. Finally, public school authorities dropped the remedial component and turned the city's special classes into separate stream. R.H. Cowley laid the groundwork for this final shift in 1916, but the necessary conditions for the change were not present until after World War I (WWI). While the present chapter examines the emergence of Toronto's special classes for 'backward' children after 1910, Chapter 3 looks at the reorganization of Toronto special classes into a separate stream after 1920, a development made possible by the then new availability of techniques that permitted intelligence testing on a wide scale. Not one of these developments that changed the Toronto public schools' approach to instructing children with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties between approximately 1910 and the mid-1920s was inevitable.[36] Yet the contours of Toronto school officials' debates in the 1910s about how best to educate 'backward' children, and how to solve the city's 'retardation' problem, which this section looks at, illustrate how and why the model of separate special classes prevailed over viable alternatives to become an integral component of urban schooling in the Queen City.

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[35] Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education," 19.

In fact, before the 1910s—and before separate special classes became the dominant model—a surprisingly wide variety of alternatives to special classes appear to have been used in North American public schools to educate children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Historians have yet to fully explore these policy alternatives—although over one hundred years ago, the Brooklyn Teachers' Association (BTA) did investigate them through a school survey.[37] One important alternative to segregated special classes that the BTA documented, for example, was the "Batavia System of Individual Instruction," which was named after the Western New York town that first tried it in 1898. The plan used larger classes and two-person team-teaching to meet the needs of 'backward' children. One teacher led the majority of the class through the curriculum while another teacher simultaneously worked more individually and intensively with the minority of "slow children" in the class, ensuring that they followed the curriculum and kept pace with the rest of the class. "Bring the laggard on. That is the solution of the whole matter. That ends the clogging," declared John Kennedy, the Batavia schoolman who invented the system.[38] One hundred and thirty-five respondents to the BTA's survey, most of them American school superintendents and school principals, had experimented with the Batavia System in their jurisdictions.[39]

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[36] Michael Katz, and other educational historians, demonstrate that in urban public education's formative stage in nineteenth century a variety of organizational models existed and competed for supremacy. Bureaucracy, as we have already seen, emerged triumphant. A similar type of competitive environment, pertaining to special classes and to a different set of organizational models, existed in the formative stages of Toronto's special education policy in the 1910s. See: Katz, 5, 57-58; Tyack, *One Best System*, 39-59.

[37] S. Hartwell, "The Grading and Promotion of Pupils," *Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the National Education Association* 48 (Winona, MN: National Education Association, 1910): 298.

What I characterize as a sort of mainstreaming was the first of three competing organizational models used in Toronto to educate 'backward' children (in addition to remedial classes and a separate stream of special classes) that we will examine. This approach involved supplementing regular classes with remedial instruction outside of school hours. In Toronto, school inspector G.H. Armstrong was the leading proponent of mainstreaming 'backward' schoolchildren. In 1913, Armstrong first advanced what he called "a better solution" to the TBE's 'retardation' problems than the model "found in ungraded classes." Armstrong wanted to strengthen the teaching of 'backward' children in the regular classroom instead of removing these children to separate, special classes. He argued that poor pedagogy was actually behind 'retardation.' "The tendancy [sic] of most teachers to concentrate attention upon the bright children of the class, adapting the lessons to contribute to the progress of those who readily reflect credit, and ignoring largely the slow and unkindled children..." was the "common cause" responsible for 'retardation,' Armstrong stated. Instead of differentiating school programs to respond to 'backwardness,' Armstrong asserted, poor pedagogy "should be reversed, the teacher should concentrate on the fringe of the class, those who are behind, and who see not the way, ignoring to a large extent the clever and the normal, who will find the way almost alone." The last half hour of the school day, from 3:30 to 4pm, and part of the lunch period, Armstrong noted, were available "for individual work with backward children." Armstrong advocated dismissing the rest of the class to their homes or to the schoolyard during these times.[40] He also argued, three years later in 1916, that cutting class sizes would give teachers of regular classes more ample opportunities to work with 'backward' children individually. Moreover, he expressed his view that Toronto public schools were already winning the battle against 'retardation' by addressing some of the problems that lay behind it, such as "wooden or unscientific teaching, irregular attendance, underfeeding of children, [and] physical defects capable of removal...." Once school officials had fully addressed these problems, Armstrong wrote, "the backward child will seldom be found. Herein is the remedy; not special or ungraded classes."[41]

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[38] John Kennedy, *The Batavia System of Individual Instruction*, (Syracuse: C.W. Bardeen, 1914), 240. See also: James H. Van Sickle, Lightner Witmer, and Leonard P. Ayres, *Provision for Exceptional Children in Public Schools*, 1911 Bulletin No. 14 (Washington: United States Bureau of Education, 1911), 37-38.
[39] Hartwell, 295-296.

Actually Armstrong's mainstreaming approach to 'backward' children's education incorporated methods that Toronto schools had employed to instruct struggling schoolchildren since the nineteenth century. From 1896, and perhaps even earlier than that, the practice in Toronto was for teachers to offer struggling children remedial instruction from 3:30pm, when the final bell rang for the other children, until a second dismissal at 4pm.[42] Toronto held onto this method of teaching struggling schoolchildren for over a decade at least. School authorities in the city turned down plans for separate classes for children with learning difficulties four different times between 1894 and 1910. In 1894, James Hughes visited London, England, and witnessed first-hand the London School Board's early—and then practically unprecedented—efforts to educate children with disabilities or learning difficulties in separate classes. Upon returning to Toronto, Hughes searched the schools for children who might be candidates for such a class in Toronto. Finding only a few qualifying children he let the idea drop.[43] From time to time after Hughes's 1894 exploration, Toronto school trustees brought up, but did not pursue, the idea of separate classes for 'backward' children.[44] Other ideas for educating 'backward' children also made the rounds before 1910. For a time Hughes, and manual training instructors J.W. Richardson and James N. Moffat, suggested (in Richardson's words) that the Board supply "extra special industrial training" in "small industrial schools" for "those retarded pupils who are unconsciously indicating that the book training they are receiving is not suited to them."[45] In fact, Hughes experimented with sending a small number of selected boys who had difficulty learning in the mainstream classes for extra manual instruction in 1907.[46]

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[40] *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Armstrong's Report, 55.

[41] *TBE Annual Report 1916,* Inspector Armstrong's Report, 38. We know little about Armstrong, or why he preferred this mainstream model. A former school principal, Armstrong was a bachelor who hailed originally from Athens, the rural Eastern Ontario town where he was born around 1858. See: "G.H. Armstrong Dies. Ex-School Inspector." *Toronto Star* (16 April 1938): 27.

[42] *Minutes of the Public School Board for the City of Toronto 1896*, 19 March 1896, 46.

However, mainstreaming and other approaches, such as additional manual training for boys, quickly fell by the wayside in administratively progressive city school systems, such as Toronto's. The separate special class approach was quickly crowding out the competition even as Inspector Armstrong made his appeal for mainstreaming. Indeed, mainstreaming was a poor fit for urban school systems such as Toronto's, where school authorities placed considerable emphasis on curricular and programming differentiation and on efficiency. With the support of the school bureaucracy behind this model, separate special classes triumphed over mainstreamed approaches in the 1910s.

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[43] Ontario. Legislative Assembly. *First Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1907.* Toronto: n.d. (Sessional Papers 1907, No. 63): 8.

[44] *First Report Upon the Care of the Feeble-Minded in Ontario, 1907*, 8-9. See: *Minutes of the Public School Board for the City of Toronto 1898*, 17 March 1898, 39; *Minutes of the Public School Board for the City of Toronto 1901*, 7 November 1901, 168; *Minutes of the Public School Board for the City of Toronto 1903*, 16 October 1903, 135.

[45] *TBE Annual Report 1911*, 33-34. *TBE Annual Report 1912*, 27-28.

[46] *TBE Annual Report 1907*, 42; *TBE Minutes 1907*, Appendix No. 59, "Board of Education," 5 September 1907, 442. See also: James L. Hughes, "Report on Manual Training Presented to the Toronto Public School Board," December 20, 1900, 4, 7, 13-15. CIHM microfiche series, no. 08825.

The Board opened its first separate special remedial class for 'backward' children in the fall of 1912 at Queen Alexandra PS, under teacher Miss Bessie Bowling.[47] (See Table 2.1.) Bowling's class was remedial, as were the other special classes for 'backward' children like it that the TBE established at different schools. These classes were designed to address 'backward' children's learning problems through individual instruction, with the aim of bringing these children up to grade level as quickly as possible so that they could rejoin the regular classes. "This class should be relatively small," Toronto school inspector W.H. Elliott wrote, "and its pupils should remain only so long as is necessary for them to develop sufficient power to proceed with the work of the grades from which they were taken."[48] The Board opened a total of fourteen 'special' or 'ungraded' classes (as school authorities also sometimes called these classes) between 1912 and 1920 (See Table 2.1). Some of these classes were for 'backward' children who were experiencing learning difficulties, or who had become 'retarded' for a variety of reasons. Other 'ungraded' classes were remedial as well, but more narrowly focussed to meet the specific needs of immigrant youngsters who were learning English for the first time before entering mainstream classes, and newsboys, who worked city streets during the day and attended school only part-time. Remedial special classes for 'backward' children were the most common form that special education took in Toronto in the 1910s, especially after the failure of the farm colony plan and the demise of the special classes for 'mentally defective' children in 1914.

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[47] *TBE Minutes 1912*, 17 October 1912, 169; Appendix No. 100, Management Report No. 18, 31 October 1912, Adopted 7 November 1912, 828; Appendix No. 106, Management Report No. 19, 14 November 1912, Adopted 21 November, 1912, 833.

[48] *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Chief Inspector's Report, 43-44. See also, *TBE Minutes 1914*, Appendix No. 107, Management Report No. 20, 29 October 1914, Adopted 5 November 1914, 982-983.

Toronto's system of separate special education classes garnered important support in the 1910s from sources beyond the local school bureaucracy. The Chief Medical Inspector of Toronto schools, Dr. W.E. Struthers, as well as Ontario's Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, Dr. Helen MacMurchy, supported separate classes for 'backward' children on medical and public health grounds. They believed that the classes were a crucial aspect of the medical inspection department's fight to stamp out disease and to "save children from defect, deformity, disability, and death."[49] Dr. Struthers argued that 40 percent of 'retardation' in Toronto was attributable to easily treated physical problems, such as enlarged tonsils and adenoids, poor vision, or malnutrition.[50] In 1912, the first full year of medical inspection, doctors acting under the school board's auspices removed adenoids from 1,105 Toronto schoolchildren and did 1,305 tonsillectomies to boot.[51] Struthers wrote that "The change" these surgeries aroused "from dull, slow, colorless, stupid-looking boys, with discharging noses, sleepy eyes, round shoulders, contracted chests, and puny bodies, to clean, alert, erect, active, bright-eyed and intelligent-looking boys is a striking picture, not soon to be forgotten by those who have had the pleasure of observing it."[52]

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[49] *TBE Annual Report 1911*, Medical Inspector's Report, 7-8; *TBE Annual Report 1912*, Medical Inspector's Report, 5.

[50] *TBE Annual Report 1911*, Medical Inspector's Report, 7-8. See Ayres, 123-131, who warned against attributing too much of 'retardation' physical defects.

[51] *TBE Annual Report 1911*, Medical Inspector's Report, 22-3.

Also supporting separate special classes were two top Ontario Department of Education civil servants, Deputy Minister of Education R.H. Colquhoun, and John Seath, the Superintendent of Education. In late 1913, Colquhoun and Seath visited schools in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, and returned praising these cities' remedial classes. 'Backward,' or "retarded," children in the three coastal American cities, Seath wrote, received remedial instruction and "...have the future of pupils of normal intelligence, and are placed in a specific class in order that they may be given individual attention and at the same time relieve the regular classes."[53]

However, despite the expansion of separate classes for 'backward' children in the 1910s, educationists soon began to question the remedial aspect of those classes. The utter magnitude of 'retardation' in city public schools, which Chief Inspector Cowley fully uncovered through a school survey in June 1915, made a few remedial classes seem like an inadequate solution the city's retardation problem. Cowley's survey revealed that an astonishing 10,822 of the 57,638 students in Toronto elementary schools (nearly 20 percent of the entire elementary school enrolment) had failed their year in 1914-1915. Cowley's survey also examined the sources of 'retardation' in Toronto public schools. More than half of the students who failed in 1914-1915—5,706 boys and girls in all—were "not promoted for reasons of mental standards and attainment" (i.e. they were

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[52] *TBE Annual Report 1912,* Medical Inspector's Report, 10-11.
[53] Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA). Vertical Files (VF). Special Education. Memorandum, "Re Education of Defectives," Superintendent of Education [John Seath] to The Minister of Education, 22 December 1913.

‘slow,’ or they had failed to meet academic benchmarks). Another 1,829 children were not promoted because “ill health and physical defects” had prevented them from completing the year’s work. Finally, 3,048 children were frequent truants who were not in school often enough to earn a passing mark. Cowley found that ‘mental defectiveness’ explained failure in only about 1.07 percent of cases, affecting just 116 pupils who were destined to repeat a grade.[54]

With a statistical overview of Toronto’s evidently large ‘retardation’ problem in hand, Cowley outlined a plan in his 1916 annual chief inspector’s report that was to address the public school system’s predicament. The imposing size of Toronto’s retardation problem—over 10,000 retarded pupils—must have compelled Cowley to consider options that went beyond individual remedial instruction, which could evidently not have reached such a large group of young people. Significantly, Cowley also refined the classification system for ‘backward’ children. No longer did he consider practically all ‘backward’ children merely to be ‘normal’ children who needed individual remedial help to catch up with their peers, as Ayres’s study and earlier work on ‘retardation’ had suggested. Instead, Cowley’s report presented a continuous scale of intellectual deficit that further subdivided the ‘backward’ category into four groups: slow children, non-bookish children, and children on the edge of ‘feeblemindedness,’ and actually ‘feebleminded’ boys and girls. The first group, called the slow children, were late-bloomers—boys and girls who possessed slowly developing, but ‘normal’ intelligence. The second group were “object-minded pupils to whom books and words and arithmetical abstractions make little appeal." They had 'normal' intelligence like the first group, but were "lacking ability in academic lines." The third group of children, who were "of low mentality," were difficult to classify. Cowley admitted that a few of these youngsters were probably 'mentally defective,' while others, although "not mentally weak; they are mentally restricted or unaroused." Finally, there were the definitively 'mentally defective' students.[55]

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[54] *TBE Annual Report 1915*, Chief Inspector’s Report, 36-38.

Cowley's reclassification of 'backwardness' was related to an important transformation in how people looked at learning difficulties during and after the rise of the concept of IQ and of mass IQ testing in public education in the late 1910s and early 1920s. We will discuss that transformation in the next chapter. For the now it is important to note that Dr. Lewis Terman, the father of mass IQ testing in public schools, argued that low native intelligence was practically the singular cause of all learning difficulties. Thus whereas Ayres and others had a few years earlier cited multiple causes for 'backwardness,' many of which remedial instruction could address, Terman argued that 'backwardness' was innate, and that it was not influenced by efforts to remove it through methods that would have included individual, remedial instruction.[56]

R.H. Cowley, like many educators, was influenced by this changing view of 'backwardness' and learning difficulties. Cowley contemplated abandoning remedial instruction in special education and replacing this model with a stream of separate special classes where 'backward' children would remain permanently. Cowley was also faced, by 1916, with the full reality of the city's 'retardation' crisis. There were over 10,000 'retarded' children in 1916 and only a handful of remedial special classes. Cowley issued an important new recommendation, the third and final organizational change to Toronto's special class system in the 1910s. Toronto's special education system would shift slightly. From its roots as a remedial adjunct to the schools, the special class system would be reinvented as a new separate track, one that would address the needs of Toronto's slow and non-bookish schoolchildren and would stream these children permanently into a special program with a differentiated curriculum. "While probably it is in the interests of a considerable number of these pupils not to be urged on more rapidly at school," Chief Inspector Cowley wrote, "there is also the question as to whether it would not be in the interest of many of them to be provided with a course of school work different from much of that which constitutes the standard syllabus." Cowley further contended that it was inefficient and unfeasible to devote extra individual attention to such a large number of 'backward' children in the school system.

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[55] *TBE Annual Report 1916,* Chief Inspector's Report, 66-67.

[56] See: Ayres, 1; Lewis M. Terman, *The Intelligence of Schoolchildren* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1919), 24-25.

> The conditions under which public schools must do their work prevent that a degree of attention be given to individual pupils which in some cases is essential to progress. Except in the lower grades, public schools must be conducted on the principle of class or collective teaching, it being possible to give but a small portion of the teacher's time to any individual.[57]

What the schools should offer in the way of individualized instruction, Cowley now said, was a lower student to teacher ratio in the elementary grades and a differentiated streaming plan with curricula adapted to the supposed academic needs of various groups of schoolchildren, including 'backward' children.[58] As special education policy, streaming was on its way to replacing remedial instruction.

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[57] *TBE Annual Report 1916*, Chief Inspector's Report, 66-67.

In practice, the Board delayed implementing streamed classes for 'backward' children until 1920. The 'retardation' crisis that had captivated schoolmen and schoolwomen in the first half of the decade faded in importance by decade's end.[59] WWI and the smouldering controversy over Regulation 17 and the teaching of French in Ontario schools, turned educationists' thoughts to other pressing concerns than special classes.[60] A lack of sturdy provincial legislation also slowed, at least temporarily, the expansion of special classes. The Auxiliary Classes Act, 1914, reflecting Dr. Helen MacMurchy's influence, dealt almost entirely with farm colonies for 'mentally defective' children and for the most part ignored 'backward' children altogether. Until the Ontario Department of Education issued new regulations in 1919, the province provided little guidance on classes for 'backward' children and, more significantly, no funding.[61] Finally and most importantly, in 1916 the Toronto public school system lacked the mass IQ testing capacity necessary to sort children into streams on a wide scale. A few remedial special classes for 'backward' children remained open in 1920 (see Table 2.1) and, at some Toronto schools, staff continued to use older approaches to instructing 'backward' children, such as extra help after school.[62] These efforts, however, were the last gasps of alternative methods of educating children with learning difficulties.

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[58] Ibid.
[59] *TBE Annual Report 1917*, Chief Inspector Cowley's Report, 60; "Less Retardation in Toronto Schools," *Toronto Star* (26 October 1917): 9.
[60] See Stamp, 90-97; Hardy and Cochrane, 130.
[61] Gerald T. Hackett, "The History of Public Education for Mentally Retarded Children in the Province of Ontario 1867-1964," (Ed.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1969), Appendix J, 399-401.

Attending remedial special classes for 'backward' children in Toronto, 1912-1920

Intensive, individualized, remedial instruction was the centrepiece of the educational experience in Toronto's classes for 'backward' children from about 1912, when the first class opened, to about 1920 when streaming finally arrived. The main purpose of instruction of special classes for 'backward' children in Toronto in the 1910s was to elevate these youngsters to the same grade level as their peers of the same age. The organization, as well as pedagogy and curriculum in special classes for 'backward' children in the 1910s offered Toronto youngsters second chances, and opportunities to move laterally from the special class to the regular class. Remedial instruction also presented school authorities with attractive solutions to a number of educational problems that appeared in the context of early-twentieth-century compulsory attendance laws. The special classes for 'backward' children represented one means officials used to attack the schools' 'retardation' problem, by identifying, isolating, instructing, and elevating up to grade level children who fell behind academically.

Toronto's classes for 'backward' children in the 1910s were supposed to bring 'retarded' schoolchildren up to grade level, theoretically by using individualized, remedial instruction. The idea of special education as permanent stream for 'slow' children, with a less academically rigorous curriculum, was usually not reflected in Toronto special education classes of 'backward' children until the early 1920s. The remedial approach was based on particular outlook on the nature of 'retardation,' which educationists in the 1910s believed was not caused mainly by innate intellectual deficit. Educators in the 1910s believed that 'backward' students could catch up. They needed help doing so because, educators argued, 'backward' children lacked the foundation that other children built through mastering academic skills at lower grade levels. "If a pupil does not understand the arithmetic or composition required for the third book work," special class teacher Edith Sanders asked, "what is the use of trying to teach him fourth book arithmetic and composition?"[63] Moreover, educators, such as Toronto school inspector W.H. Elliot, were also aware that individual children's abilities varied across academic skills sets, which meant that some students who were proficient in most subjects could become backward in one subject, impeding their progress through the grades. "Children are not all born alike. ... Some show a strong tendency towards mathematics, while they are correspondingly weak in spelling or art. Others to whom mathematics is an impossibility, show a marked ability in literary or artistic work."[64] Instruction in the special classes for 'backward' children narrowed in on the individual's specific difficulties and helped 'backward' boys and girls improve in their weakest subject areas.[65] Individualized instruction was a real priority in the classes, something that the policy of making classes for 'backward' children smaller than the regular classes reflected.[66] Occasionally, educationists advocated even more specialized approaches or curriculum for 'backward' classes, such as the use of Kindergarten methods.[67]

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[62] *TBE Annual Report 1918*, Inspector Bryce's Report, 100.

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[63] Edith A. Sanders, "The Backward Pupil," *The School* 2 (1913-1914): 632.

[64] *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Elliott's Report, 41. See also: TDSBA. VF. T.B.E. Depts. Special Education, Auxiliary Classes, History. Memorandum "Re Education of Defectives," Superintendent of Education [John Seath] to The Minister of Education, 22 December 1913. Addendum, "Statement Regarding Classes for Backward and Foreign Children, n.d. [1914]."

[65] See: *TBE Annual Report 1918*, Inspector Bryce's Report, 100; *TBE Annual Report 1914*, Chief Inspector Cowley's Report, 15.

Classes for 'backward' children also helped Toronto educators to address the needs of children who failed to make academic progress because they were frequently absent from school. Absence due to ill health or truancy delayed schoolchildren's progress through the grades and contributed to 'retardation' in the 1910s.[68] Even though school attendance gradually improved in the 1910s in Ontario, anticipating strengthened compulsory attendance laws that the legislature passed between 1919 and 1922, Toronto nonetheless continued to experience a good deal of truancy until the 1920s.[69] Sensationalized descriptions of errant and uncontrollable truants—"dirty little wretches, with hair uncombed and clothes all torn," in one author's account—were a part of Canadian urban social reform literature and reform groups, such as the Toronto Home and School Council, took a very serious interest in reclaiming truants through better enforcement of attendance laws.[70] In reality, absence from school was most often a matter of circumstance or unavoidable obligation. A study organized by the Toronto Home and School Council estimated that, at one selected Toronto public school enrolling 1,385 students in Grades 1 to 8, over 2,300 pupil days were lost in three weeks in March

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[66] *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Elliott's Report, 43-44; *TBE Minutes 1914*, Appendix No. 107, Management Report No. 20, 29 October 1914, Adopted 5 November 1914, 982.

[67] *TBE Minutes 1913*, Appendix No. 86, Management Report No. 15, 25 September 1913, Adopted 2 October 1913, 819.

[68] *TBE Annual Report 1916*, Chief Inspector Cowley's Report, 65.

[69] N. Sutherland, 165-166; Stamp 107-108. For Toronto attendance and non-attendance see, *TBE Annual Report 1916*, Chief Inspector Cowley's Report, 73; Bertha Collins, S. Richardson, and Peter Sandiford, "A Study of Non- Attendance of Pupils at School (Part 1)," *The School* 7:5 (January 1919): 314-317 and Collins et. al., (Part 2), *The School* 7:6 (February 1919): 356-361.

[70] Margaret Bell, "Toronto's Melting Pot" *Canadian Magazine* (July 1913): 234-236. See Kari Dehli, "Women and Class: The Social Organization of Mothers Relations to Schools in Toronto, 1915-1940" (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1988), 271-292.

1918.[71] More than 1,300 pupil days were lost to illness, the largest cause of absence from school. The rest were lost to a combination of factors, including such prominent causes as: "poverty in the home" (some parents could not afford "proper boots and clothing" for their children); the obligations of youngsters who had to mind younger children while their parents worked, were busy, or were ill; and boys' and girls' waged work. The Toronto study turned up two children of school age who were not enrolled in school at all.[72] There were likely many more children of school age who worked long hours and missed many classes. Into the twentieth century, children's paid and unpaid work was crucial to many families' support.[73] As late as 1908, a United Garment Workers organizer investigating Toronto discovered "hundreds of children" toiling in the city's needle trades.[74] Special education, including individualized remedial instruction in classes for 'backward' children, was one of the strategies that Toronto school authorities used to address the academic fallout from truancy.

Evidence that I compiled from a single special class for 'backward' children at one of the three schools whose student record collection I studied, The Ward PS—as well as other evidence from official reports—shows that special classes for 'backward' children in the 1910s actually fulfilled their function as remedial centres. The classes enabled many youngsters to re-enter the educational mainstream relatively easily. "In many instances pupils," Inspector Bryce reported in 1918, "after spending a few weeks in this special class, have returned to the grades to which they previously belonged and have shown themselves able to keep pace with the class."[75] A closer study of student records available for a small number of pupils who enrolled in a class for 'backward' children at The Ward PS in 1919-1920, shows that the majority of these pupils stayed only two terms (in a four term school year) before returning to the regular classroom. (See Table 2.2.)

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[71] One pupil day represents one pupil missing a single day of school.

[72] See: Collins et al., Part 1; Collins et al., Part 2.

[73] See: John Bullen, "Hidden Workers: Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Ontario," *Labour/Le Travail* 18 (Fall 1986): 164-175; Craig Heron, "The High School and the Household Economy in Working-Class Hamilton, 1890-1940," *Historical Studies in Education* 7:2 (1995): 219-233; Michael J. Piva, *The Condition of the Working Class in Toronto—1900-1921* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1979), 104-106.

[74] Ruth Frager, *Sweatshop Strife: Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Jewish Labour Movement of Toronto 1900-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 17-20.

Table 2.2 Number of terms enrolled. Special classes for 'backward' children, The Ward PS, 1919-1920.

	N = children
One term	1
Two terms	8
Three terms	1
Four terms	1

Source: Toronto District School Board Archives, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z.

More importantly, upon exiting the special class all but one child in the class received a promotion to the grade *above* the one from which the child had entered the special class.[76] A 1914 survey of several Toronto classes for 'backward' children reveals that 28 of a total of 142 children who enrolled in those classes returned to regular classrooms during the year school year. Eighty-seven of the 142 children enrolling over the course of the year remained enrolled in June. (However, it is not clear at what point children in this last group entered the classes. Some may have been enrolled only a few months or weeks, and would likely have later returned to regular classes as well.)[77] The relative ease with which 'backward' youngsters returned to the mainstream classes after a stint in Toronto's special classes for 'backward' children in the 1910s effectively ceased when special classes became a separate stream in the 1920s.

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[75] *TBE Annual Report 1918*, Inspector Bryce's Report, 100.

[76] Information is available on only 11 of the 24 children who attended the class for 'backward' children at the Ward PS in 1919-1920. Attended one term: TDSBA. "The Ward PS" Office Record Card (O.R.C.), Drawer Mc-Si. 'Nettie G.' O.R.C. Attended two terms each: "The Ward PS" O.R.C Drawer A-D. 'Annie F.' O.R.C.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer E-I, Rose L. O.R.C.; TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M, "The Ward PS Admission-Discharge-Promotion Cards (A.D.P.) Drawer A-L, 'Sarah L.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z. 'Mary Z.' O.R.C.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z. 'Alec L.' O.R.C.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M, "The Ward PS Admission-Discharge-Promotion Cards (A.D.P.) Drawer M-Z, "The Ward PS" A.D.P. Drawer 1923-24. 'Goldie B.' O.R.C., A.D.P. (1), A.D.P. (2); "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D. 'Max S.' O.R.C.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Mc-Si. 'Abraham T.' O.R.C. Attended three terms: "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Mc-Si. 'Joseph A.' O.R.C. Attended four terms: "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D. 'David K.' O.R.C.

In the 1910s, however, success in overcoming 'backwardness' did not usually translate into achieving a high level of education. Circumstances, more than scholastic aptitude or achievement, dictated what happened to special pupils at the conclusion of their studies. Annie F., who attended the class for 'backward' children at The Ward PS in 1919-1920, left school at age fourteen in September 1923. Equipped with a Grade 4 education she took a job in the city. By 1925, Annie held a position alongside her sister Minnie at a Toronto leather goods manufactory.[78] Several of Annie's classmates from the class for 'backward' children at The Ward PS, like Annie, went to work after leaving school as adolescents. Their young age and their impoverished lives as the children of working-class immigrants suggest that necessity, rather than school ability, was important in the decisions of these youngsters, or their parents, to cut off formal education. Annie F.'s father was a labourer. Classmates Louis H., and Goldie B., had fathers who were Jewish immigrants from Russia. Louis's father worked as a rag dealer in Toronto and

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[77] *TBE Annual Report 1914*, Chief Inspector's Report, 15.

[78] *Passim* 'Annie F.' O.R.C.; *Passim* 'Minnie F.' O.R.C.; TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, "The Ward PS" A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Willie F.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

Goldie B.'s father was a pedlar.[79] None of the children's fathers had jobs that were likely to have provided an income sufficient to support a family in Toronto.[80] The father of Annie L., another former pupil of the Ward PS class for 'backward' children, had been a rag pedlar, but he died when Annie was young. In 1928, Annie left school just after her sixteenth birthday to help her single mother support her and her two sisters and one brother.[81] Sarah L., who attended a class for 'backward' children in 1919-1920 and whose father was a rag dealer from Russian Poland, was an exception. She continued her formal education, enrolling in a secondary school programme at one of Toronto's technical schools in September 1927.[82] Students who had attended special classes for 'backward' children at the Ward PS in 1919-1920 seem to have done about as well as their working-class and immigrant peers in the mainstream classes. A 1920 study of school leaving in Toronto, by psychologist E.A. Bott, found that across the schools and neighbourhoods of Toronto nearly 70 percent of Toronto youngsters who left school for work did so at age fourteen and that about as many children left for work as the number who qualified for secondary education.[83] Remedial education offered some outlet for 'backward' schoolchildren to access educational opportunities, primarily by providing second chances to boys and girls who struggled academically or fell behind for other reasons. However, the significant impediments to accessing opportunity through schooling that existed for almost all working-class children just as surely limited 'backward' children's opportunities as well.

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[79] *Passim* 'Annie F.'; *Passim* 'Goldie B.' O.R.C, A.D.P.; TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M, "The Ward PS" A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Louis H.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[80] See Piva, 30-43 and Tables 8, 10, 11;

[81] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C Drawer A-D, "The Ward PS" A.D.P. Drawer A-L., 'Annie L.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[82] *Passim* 'Sarah L.'

[83] E.A. Bott, "No. 1. A Point of View," and "No. 2. Juvenile Employment in Relation to Public Schools and Industries in Toronto," *University of Toronto Studies: Volume IV Studies in Industrial Psychology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Library, 1920), 31-32, 38-40.

Conclusion

In the 1910s Toronto's special classes for 'backward' children underwent a rapid evolution in three stages. Early in the decade, school authorities around North America discovered the problem of 'retardation.' As administrative progressives, they solved this problem with differentiated classes for 'backward' children. At first, the new special classes for 'backward' children offered remedial instruction and the opportunity to rejoin regular classrooms. This opportunity stood in contrast to the chances the schools presented to 'mentally defective' children, who, as we saw in Chapter 1, were consigned to their own stream characterized by low-level academic work preparing them for institutionalization. However, permanent streaming soon emerged as a strategy for educating 'backward' children as well. By 1916, Chief Inspector R.H. Cowley had discovered the full extent of Toronto's retardation problem and he laid out a plan that pointed the city's special education policy towards special classes for 'backward' children as a unique stream within the educational system. What Cowley lacked in the late 1910s, however, was an effective means for sorting 10,000 'backward' children into streamed classrooms. However, the publication of Lewis Terman's *The Measurement of Intelligence* in 1916, signalled that help was on the way in the form of new mass intelligence testing techniques and new blueprints for school organization. As we shall see in the next chapter, in the 1920s intelligence testing redefined learning difficulty and helped school systems to further develop streamed programs for 'backward' children.

Section 2, Consolidating the Special Education System, 1920-1945:

Chapter 3. "Inequalities of children in original endowment"[1]: IQ testing and Toronto special education in the 1920s

In the 1920s, Toronto school authorities expanded and consolidated the system of special classes in the city's public schools. Expansion began with the city's special classes for children with intellectual disabilities or learning difficulties—known in the 1920s as 'auxiliary' classes. Auxiliary classes had their beginnings as classes for 'backward' children in the 1910s. In 1920, Toronto's fledgling special class system had only five auxiliary classes.[2] By the end of the 1920-21 school year, there were already thirteen auxiliary classes, enrolling approximately 271 pupils.[3] Ten years later, by the 1930-31 school year, 872 young people were enrolled in 53 auxiliary classes.[4] During the 1920s, the Toronto Board of Education (TBE) also expanded its special education service by adding special vocational schools for adolescent special class pupils and new separate programs for children with physical disabilities and children who were deaf. (We will look at these programs in the three chapters that follow this one.) Many factors contributed to the consolidation of Toronto special education in the 1920s. The mass intelligence testing of North American schoolchildren in that decade was one of the most important.

In 1919, school inspector N.S. MacDonald assessed the progress Toronto public schools had made against the city's 'retardation' problem. He noted that the TBE had applied the recommended "remedies," such as "better attendance laws, flexible grading and promotion, and improved medical inspection." Yet, "the number of retardates," MacDonald wrote in his inspector's report, "remains to-day much the same as when the campaign began." MacDonald's report in 1919 borrowed heavily—in many cases verbatim, and entirely without attribution—from Dr. Lewis Terman's book, *The Intelligence of Schoolchildren*, which appeared in March of that year.[5] The ideas about intelligence testing and intelligence quotient (IQ), as well as the actual IQ tests, that Terman helped to develop, made significant contributions to special education in Toronto in the 1920s. In *The Intelligence of Schoolchildren*, Terman questioned a decade's worth of measures to curb 'retardation' in public schools. "We are justified in raising the question whether the most important cause of retardation has been located, and whether it is one that can be removed," he wrote.[6] Terman's studies of intelligence and IQ turned 'retardation' on its head and drastically redefined educationists' understanding of learning difficulties. Terman argued that "innate differences in intelligence are chiefly responsible for the problem of the school laggard."[7] In the 1910s, educationists had named myriad physical, educational, and sometimes inherent mental causes, as the sources of learning difficulty. Consideration of these factors did not disappear from assessments of learning difficulty after 1920. However, by the mid-1920s, due in large part to developments in the IQ testing field, educationists were far more likely to consider inborn intellectual deficit the sole cause of a child's learning difficulty than they had been a decade earlier.

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[1] *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Annual Report 1919*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 91.
[2] See Table 2.1, in Chapter 2.
[3] *TBE Annual Report 1920*, 146.
[4] *Report of the Ontario Department of Education* (hereafter *DOE Report*) *1931*, Appendix H, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 31.

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[5] *TBE Annual Report 1919*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report 90-92. Compare passages from MacDonald's report to Lewis M. Terman, *The Intelligence of Schoolchildren* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1919), 24.

[6] Terman, *Intelligence of Schoolchildren*, 24.

[7] Ibid. This was another passage that MacDonald also replicated word-for-word in his report. See *TBE Annual Report 1919*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 91. See also, Judith R. Raftery, "Missing the Mark: Intelligence Testing in Los Angeles Public Schools, 1922-1932," *History of Education Quarterly* 28:1 (Spring 1988): 77.

This new understanding of learning difficulty became crucial to policy and practice in special education in the 1920s. After 1920, as this chapter shows, Toronto school authorities transformed the city's special classes for 'backward' children, which had served as a remedial adjunct to the mainstream classes in the 1910s, into a wholly separate stream of auxiliary classes for youngsters labelled 'subnormal.' The science of IQ, and the new perspective on learning difficulty that it helped to bring about, had other far-reaching effects on special education in the 1920s as well. The rise of IQ testing, as we shall see in this chapter, reshaped diagnostic and labelling practices in special education, as school officials increasingly judged schoolchildren's suitability for special education on the basis of IQ scores alone. Intelligence quotient and ability also intersected with categories of class, race and ethnicity, and gender to shape special education demographics, leading to the over-representation of poor and working-class students, some racialized and ethnic minority students, and boys, in Toronto's special classes. In crafting unique—and often progressive—curricula and pedagogical techniques for auxiliary classes in the 1920s, educators carefully contemplated IQ, and relied extensively on what they believed IQ scales indicated about schoolchildren's learning capacities and learning styles. Although IQ testing grew in importance in Toronto special education in the 1920s, the direct influence of the eugenicists who were responsible for introducing intelligence testing into the schools actually declined. The chapter's last section looks at the Canadian eugenics lobby, which consisted primarily of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene (CNCMH), and the ebb and flow of its influence on special education in Toronto.

Mental measurement and modern educational history, a North American perspective

One individual in particular was responsible for bringing mass IQ testing to mass education in North America—and he understood the grand magnitude of his own contribution. "There are few if any more significant events in modern educational history than the developments which have recently taken place in methods of mental measurement," Dr. Lewis Terman wrote in 1923 about the testing movement that he helped father.[8] Seven years earlier Terman, a Stanford University professor, had published *The Measurement of Intelligence*. The book outlined Terman's Stanford-Binet revision of the intelligence tests developed by Alfred Binet and Theodore Simon in Europe. Terman's contemporary, H.H. Goddard, introduced North American audiences to the European tests between 1905 and 1909. Goddard understood the importance of Binet and Simon's tests in the diagnosis of 'feeblemindedness.' But it was Terman's adaptations of the tests that revolutionized the educational testing field.[9] Terman's most important contributions were the popularization of the concept of IQ that European scientist William Stern first advanced in the early 1910s (Terman made IQ synonymous with inborn intelligence), and the development of tools for the use of intelligence tests on a mass scale. Terman argued insistently (as Goddard did as well) that intelligence was innate and constant, adding that his Stanford-Binet test measured mental ability accurately and reliably using the IQ scale.[10] Inborn and unchanging intelligence that IQ tests could measure accurately: these were vital premises to the fields of educational testing and special education in the 1920s, ideas that made very strong impressions on special education policy and practice in that decade.

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[8] Lewis Terman, "The Problem" in Lewis Terman et al., *Intelligence Tests and School Reorganization* (Yonkers-on-Hudson, NY: World Book, 1923), 1.

[9] On Goddard, see: Leila Zenderland, *Measuring Minds: Henry Herbert Goddard and the Origins of American Intelligence Testing* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998). On Goddard's initial adaptation and importation of Binet and Simon's work, see Zenderland, 92-98.

Terman's innovations also included standardizing test materials and scoring (important for comparative studies of IQ), and expanding the test's age range. Terman's Stanford-Binet included the first set of intelligence testing norms based on a cross section of the population. Norms established typical means, averages, and extremes, and permitted testers to compare an individual to the population.[11] Terman's American norms were developed from his own survey of the intelligence of an "unselected" group of around 1,000 schoolchildren in the City of Stanford, inland from the south-western part of San Francisco Bay.[12] Actually, this supposedly average group was not really unselected. Terman claimed Stanford was representative of "average social status," or what Terman imagined that to be—as he chose the city quite deliberately to exclude non-white and non-middle-class populations from his ranges.[13] Nevertheless, the Stanford-Binet revision was intended to represent the entire scope of American intelligence, which Terman classified neatly into IQ ranges. Terman thus helped to create a standard intelligence classification system that educationists could easily use in the schools. There were seven ranges in his system, with "100" serving as 'average' intelligence: "'Near' genius or genius" (IQ above 140); "Very superior intelligence" (IQ 120-140); "Superior intelligence" (IQ 110-120); "Normal, or average, intelligence" (IQ 90-110); "Dullness, rarely classifiable as feeble-mindedness" (IQ 80-90); "Border-line deficiency, sometimes classifiable as dullness, often as feeble-mindedness" (IQ 70-80) and "Definite feeble-mindedness" (IQ Below 70).[14]

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[10] Paul Davis Chapman, *Schools as Sorters: Lewis M. Terman, Applied Psychology, and the Intelligence Testing Movement, 1890-1930* (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 28-29; Margret A. Winzer, *The History of Special Education: From Isolation to Integration* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 1993), 271-272; Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1981), 155-180. On intelligence testing see also: Clarence J. Karier, "Testing for Order and Control in the Corporate Liberal State," *Educational Theory* 22:2 (April 1972): 154-180.

[11] Chapman, 28-29.

[12] On the selection of Stanford, see Lewis Terman, *The Measurement of Intelligence* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1916), 52-53 and Chapman, 28-29.

In 1917, a year after *The Measurement of Intelligence* appeared, the United States (US) entered World War I (WWI). The ambitious Terman joined a team of army psychologists who were developing standard mass intelligence tests—the first mass tests ever created—to measure the intelligence of army recruits. Terman was at the forefront of efforts to expand intelligence testing far beyond the small settings where it was used in the 1910s—psychological clinics, where only a few, and usually the most severely disabled youngsters, were examined.[15] After WWI, Terman, and his colleague Robert Yerkes, turned their army tests into mass tests for use in the schools. The National

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[13] On the classification and the incidence of intelligence quotients, see Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 78-104. The entire Stanford-Binet revision may be found in Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, especially Chapters 6, and 8 through 20. See also, Chapman, 27-29.

[14] Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 79. As Terman's inclusion in the intelligence scales of several ranges for children above the average suggests, Terman was also quite interested in education for supposedly 'gifted' youngsters. See Chapman, 101-103.

[15] See Paula S. Fass, "The IQ: A Cultural and Historical Framework," *American Journal of Education* 88:4 (August 1980): 434 and Chapman, 35-37.

Intelligence Tests (N.I.T.) that Terman and Yerkes created were normed like Terman's Stanford-Binet revision. But unlike the Stanford-Binet, which was an oral one-on-one test, the N.I.T. tests were pencil and paper tests, which made them easy to administer on a mass scale. Terman promoted and marketed the N.I.T. tirelessly and with significant success, reaching a wide audience of North American educationists almost immediately. Millions of schoolchildren were tested within a few years of Terman's tests becoming available. With Terman's mass tests school officials gained an apparently sound and definitely more efficient means of testing every child in a school system, and of streaming schoolchildren on the basis of the results. The one-on-one Stanford-Binet test remained popular as well.[16] By the mid 1920s, 215 US cities employed IQ testing of some sort, and 37 of 40 cities with populations over 100,000 in some way grouped their students by ability grouping using the results of those tests.[17]

In Canada, eugenicists and school administrators welcomed intelligence testing with open arms.[18] C.K. Clarke's psychological clinic at the Toronto General Hospital made extensive use of the tests in the 1910s.[19] Canadian psychologist Dr. Peter Sandiford became one of the foremost university-based proponents of IQ and intelligence testing in the country. Sandiford embraced IQ testing for what he believed was its power to accurately forecast intelligence and scholastic and social rank.[20] By the middle of the 1920s, North American intelligence testers and special educators were fully involved in reifying intelligence, measured by IQ, as a concrete and unitary measure of assorted human mental capabilities and as a real marker of group differences.[21]

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[16] See: Chapman, 92-101; David B. Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 207-216; and Gould, 174-183.

[17] Tyack, 207-208.

[18] See Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1886-1945* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990), 60-63. On school administrators, see the rest of this chapter and B. Anne Wood, *Idealism Transformed: The Making of a Progressive Educator* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), 173.

[19] On C.K. Clarke's clinic, see: Jennifer Stephen, "The 'Incorrigible,' the 'Bad,' and the 'Immoral': Toronto's 'Factory Girls' and the Work of the Toronto Psychiatric Clinic," in *Law Society and the State: Essays in Modern Legal History*, eds., Louis A. Knaffa and Susan W.S. Binnie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 405-439.

The IQ testing moment

"I'm not going to do that. I am not so crazy," Emma C. told Toronto school psychologist Dr. E.P. Lewis when he asked her to complete part of an intelligence test. By the time ten-year old Emma spoke these words to Dr. Lewis in the fall of 1927, Emma had already transferred schools seven times in three years and met with Lewis once before.[22] Emma's encounter with the school psychologist, which I explore below alongside other young peoples' stories, underscores the theme of defiance. Non-cooperation was just one of the several persistent realities of IQ testing for youngsters from the 1920s to the mid-1940s. The IQ testing moment, as I call interactions between children such as Emma and adults such as Lewis, is a fascinating window on children's relations with adults, which are an important aspect of their experiences of special education, and their experience of schooling and childhood more generally. Mona Gleason argues that in the historiography on Canadian young people, "how children interacted with medical experts and educational systems designed to increase, safeguard, and promote their health remains largely unexplored." She cites Neil Sutherland's classic, *Children in English Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus*, as one exception that charts children's experiences in these areas.[23] In her own work, Gleason also looks at young people's exchanges with adult experts.[24] This chapter of my dissertation examines in detail the specific encounters between Canadian children and adults in the IQ testing moment at school in the first half of the twentieth century.

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[20] On Sandiford, see: Jennifer A. Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State, 1939-1947* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 68-73. See also: Peter Sandiford, "Technical Education and the I.Q," *Proceedings of the Sixty-Eight Annual Convention of the O.E.A.*, (Toronto: OEA, 1929): 153; Peter Sandiford, "Examinations or Intelligence Tests?," *The School* 7:10 (June 1919): 641-644; Peter Sandiford, "Democracy and Intelligence Tests," *The School* 12:9 (May 1924): 702-705.

[21] Gould, 24.

[22] Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA). "Armoury Park PS" Office Record Card (O.R.C.) Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 8; "Armoury Park PS" Admission-Discharge-Promotion Cards (A.D.P.) Box TDSB 2003-0834b, Box 2 of 2. 'Emma C.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

In the testing moment adults held most of the cards, and the range of children's responses to testing, including apprehension, inattention, and even boastfulness and outright defiance, mainly hint at young people's vulnerability. However, young people, at certain times and in defined ways, still sometimes shaped the IQ testing moment as well. A girl or boy who delivered a strong showing on an IQ test, especially if the adult conducting the examination had not anticipated the child's success, gained a narrow opportunity to improve her or his school circumstances. Children also affected the test process in more indirect ways. Adult psychologists partly relied on children's willing participation to obtain a usable test result, and children who did not perform the test according to script knocked the process off course. As Kathleen Jones similarly argues in her study of American child guidance clinics in the first half of the twentieth century, young people's participation in the clinical process shaped child guidance in decisive ways. The concept of "rapport"—the personal relationship clinicians had to establish with young people—was central to the practitioner's work. Taking seriously such small actions as forgetting, lying, fibbing, and avoiding examinations, Jones argues, shows how children were historical actors. Children were not passive participants in the testing moment. But ultimately they were at a significant disadvantage in that moment against powerful adults.[25] The varieties of Toronto youngsters' responses to testing indicate a complex relationship between powerful adults and the schoolboys and schoolgirls who steered through the IQ testing moment.

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[23] Mona Gleason, "Size Matters: Medical Experts, Educators, and the Provision of Health Services to Children in Early to Mid-Twentieth Century English Canada," in Cynthia Comacchio, Janet Golden, and George Weisz, eds., *Healing the World's Children: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Child Health in the Twentieth Century* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 177. See Neil Sutherland, *Children in English Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976).

[24] See: Gleason, "Size Matters," 176-202 and Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling, and the Family in Postwar Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

Several adults held the position of Toronto head school psychologist in the period between 1919 and 1945. The TBE hired Dr. Eric Kent Clarke as the Board's first school "psychitrist [sic]" in 1919 and signed on his sister, Emma de V. Clarke, a nurse, to assist him.[26] Eric Clarke left Toronto in 1926, at which point the job of testing Toronto schoolchildren fell to Dr. Edmund Percival Lewis. A 43-year-old Toronto physician, Lewis had studied mental hygiene in the US and in England. In 1926, he was employed through the Toronto Department of Public Health's (DPH's) new Mental Hygiene Division, as the psychiatrist in charge of public and separate schools. Founded in 1925, the Division was responsible for the diagnostic side of special education and for youth mental health services in the city. By 1930, under Lewis, the Division employed three

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[25] Kathleen Jones, *Taming the Troublesome Child: American Families, Child Guidance, and the Limits of Psychiatric Authority* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 148-156. Gleason argues that children were seldom capable of "...reject[ing] outright the priorities of adults... ." Yet they felt, and often disliked, "impositions" by adults. Mona Gleason, "Embodied Negotiations: Children's Bodies and Historical Change in Canada, 1930 to 1960," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 34:1 (Spring 1999): 114.

[26] *TBE Minutes 1919*, Appendix No. 140, Report No. I. of the Committee Appointed by the Board Re Auxiliary Classes, 28 July 1919, Adopted as amended 28 August 1919, 873; *TBE Minutes 1920*, Appendix No. 10, "Auxiliary Classes. Special Report Dr. Helen MacMurchy to the Toronto Board of Education" 9 January 1920, 13-14.

"psychologists and psychometrists" (these authorities were likely responsible for administering IQ tests, but not for diagnosing children), two nurses, and social worker.[27] A year later, in 1931, Dr. C.G. Stogdill, a former Toronto special education teacher who subsequently completed his MD, replaced Lewis as the Division's head psychiatrist. Lewis returned in 1941, this time to replace Stogdill, who moved to the nation's capital to hold positions in the Royal Canadian Air Force, the government bureaucracy, and the Ottawa General Hospital and University of Ottawa. However, Stogdill could not stay away from Toronto schools either, and he returned to the DPH's Mental Hygiene Division in 1951 as Chief of Child Adjustment Services. He held that position until retiring in 1969.[28]

Eric Clarke used Terman's Stanford-Binet test when he first began Toronto's mental testing program in 1919. Dr. Lewis continued the practice, sometimes supplementing the Stanford-Binet with other examinations. On occasion, as was the case when Clarke began the testing program, the school psychologists and psychiatrists travelled from school to school and tested individually girls and boys whom the principal, the school nurse, or a teacher, had identified as potential candidates for special classes. The child met one-on-one with the psychologist or psychiatrist. If they were not interviewed in their own school, children at schools around Toronto travelled to The Ward Public School (PS), where the DPH conducted a clinic twice weekly.[29]

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[27] City of Toronto Archives (CTA). Former City of Toronto fonds. Department of Public Health, Nursing Division records. File 38, Folio 3. Gordon P. Jackson, "City Health Services," (Toronto: Department of Public Health, 1930).

[28] Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Archives (CAMHA). Canadian Mental Health Association Fonds, Bio Files People-Misc. Lewis, Edmund Percival (1883-1949); CAMHA Griffin-Greenland Bio files. Charles G. Stogdill. CAMHA. Clarke Institute of Psychiatry/Toronto Psychiatric Hospital Fonds. C.K. Clarke Series. Box 09-16. Dr. Eric K. Clarke Correspondence. Charles J. Hastings to Eric Clarke. 4 January 1926; A. Buie, "Dr. Charles G. Stogdill Appointed Director, Division of Mental Hygiene," *The Bulletin* 8:2 (November 1931): 10; Heather MacDougall, *Activists and Advocates: Toronto's Health Department, 1883-1983* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1990), 194-195; "Dr. Charles Stogdill School Psychiatrist," *Toronto Star* (28 November 1973): C7. CTA. Gordon P. Jackson, "City Health Services," (Toronto: Department of Public Health, 1930).

The IQ tests that Toronto school authorities used involved a series of timed tasks arranged in increasing order of difficulty. For instance, in the Stanford-Binet test, which was the most commonly used test in Toronto, fourteen ranked sets of multiple tasks each corresponded to a 'mental age' that ranged from three years for the easiest set of tasks, to mental age sixteen years, or "superior adult," for the most difficult ones. The IQ score was calculated by dividing the subject's mental age (total credit for correct answers) over his or her chronological age, and expressing the result as a percentage. For example, if a child scored a mental age of 6 and 2/12 years (that, is 6 years and 2 months) and had a chronological age of 6 and 1/12 years (6 years and 1 month), that child's IQ was 101 (6 and 2/12 divided by 6 and 1/12 equals 101 percent).[30] The questions in the first set of tests, corresponding to mental age three, were simple. For example: "Show me your nose. Put your finger on your nose."[31] At the higher age levels, test questions covered logic, mathematics, reading, writing, and other skills.[32] The test's idiom could cause some youngsters difficulty. For example, the Stanford-Binet question "There are three main differences between a president and a king; what are they?" caused schoolchildren at Toronto's Bolton PS to struggle mightily. Scoring was very precise. A clever answer such as this Bolton PS pupil's solution to the above question: "that a king wore a crown and lived in a palace, while a president did neither of these things," received no credit.[33] Only in the 1930s, did the TBE initiate more widespread paper and pencil group IQ testing of its pupils. Pencil and paper tests went into wider use in Ontario after 1939-1940, by which point C.G. Stogdill and Harry Amoss had developed and published a *Canadian Intelligence Examination* that used Canadian norms and a Canadian idiom.[34]

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[29] CAMHA. Burdett Harrison McNeel Fonds, F. 17.1.8. Provincial Psychiatric Clinics: lectures [B.T. McGhie (ed.)] May 1930. E.P. Lewis, "Psychiatric Clinics in the Toronto Public Schools," (19 May 1930).

[30] See Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 121-141.

[31] Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 142.

[32] See Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 142-348.

Anxiety and fear were common responses to the test. For schoolchildren in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, being singled out for an encounter with an adult at school was an anxiety-producing event.[35] In fact, Lewis Terman counselled testers to avoid administering his tests when "mental anxiety or fear" was present, "as in the case of the child who has just been arrested and brought before the court."[36] Overly timid children, if they avoided guessing at test questions, were at a further disadvantage. A correct guess added points to a child's IQ. But no answer was the same as the wrong answer, neither received credit.[37] One shy Toronto eleven-year-old, Daniel P., who took an IQ test in 1928, had to be reassured with positive reinforcement before he would give up answers of more than a few words.[38] Vernon A. was "timid almost afraid" and consequently, Dr.

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[33] C.C. Goldring, *Intelligence Testing in a Toronto Public School* (D. Paed, published, University of Toronto, n.d., [1924]), 142; Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 313-315. See also, Gould, 175-176.
[34] On pencil and paper group testing in Toronto, see, for example, TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0834, Box 1 of 2. 'Ethel A.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 4, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0835. 'Louis W.' O.R.C., A.D.P. See also Gerald T. Hackett, "The History of Public Education for Mentally Retarded Children in the Province of Ontario 1867-1964," (Ed.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1969), 245, 253.
[35] Neil Sutherland, *Growing Up: Childhood in English Canada from the Great War to the Age of Television* (Toronto : University of Toronto Press, 1997), 210. See also, Mona Gleason, "Disciplining the Student Body: Schooling and the Construction of Canadian Children's Bodies, 1930-1960," *History of Education Quarterly* 41:2 (Summer 2001): 196-197.
[36] Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 122.
[37] Goldring, 97-98.
[38] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z. 'Daniel P.' O.R.C.

Lewis wrote, "it was quite difficult to get him to answer."[39] School psychologists were forced to counter youngsters' anxiety by coaxing or warning them.[40] Terman wrote that the psychologist's "first task is to win the confidence of the child and overcome his timidity." He also emphasized that without initial "rapport," the first test scores "are likely to be misleading."[41] The testing moment was so nerve-wracking for a few youngsters that they went to significant lengths to attempt get out of the test. Some feigned illness or even disability. Doris B., for example, tried unsuccessfully to convince the examiner that she could not hear the test questions. "Although there might be a hearing difficulty it is more likely that inability of hearing is being used as a defense mechanism for not doing good work," the examiner wrote.[42] Earnest, academically inclined teenagers experienced anxiety differently, but struggled with it nonetheless. At Bolton PS, girls near the top of the class "were extremely anxious to do well; they knew they had a reputation for good work in school and they felt they must live up to it." One of these girls had so much IQ test anxiety that "she shook so much that she nearly fell out of the chair while being tested."[43]

Sometimes, to the examiner's great frustration, young people derailed the test through their inattention. Without cooperation, psychologists battled uphill to do their jobs properly. An exasperated Eric Clarke wrote about Katie L. in 1925: "It is hard to keep [Katie's] mind on anything, as she is easily distracted and wants to talk at random of things that have no bearing on the case."[44] Her brother, Jack L., a "shockheaded youngster to whom life is one big joke," caused Clarke equal consternation. "Everything he does," complained Clarke, "is careless, haphazard and inaccurate—ten to one it won't be finished unless he is forced to keep at it."[45] Jack and Katie's equally easy-going sister, Ida L., who reportedly relished in bringing small gifts of apples, peanuts and chocolates to her teacher, was also a nervous test taker. Clarke could not establish rapport with Ida either. "She seemed very pleased with herself that she was brought up for examination. Pays absolutely no attention to what is said to her, but giggles behind her hand instead." (This, we might infer, would have been one child's way of expressing nervousness.) Clarke complained that Ida "Cannot concentrate at all scarcely[.] Cannot remember what is said to her, but must have all instructions repeated several times."[46]

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[39] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 2, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0834, Box 1 of 2. Vernon A. O.R.C., A.D.P. See also: "Armoury Park PS" A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0836. 'Howard H.' A.D.P; "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0836. 'Carol N.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[40] See: TDSBA "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1309, Box 11, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0835 'Mike L.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; "East End PS" O.R.C. Microfilm, Reel 10, 'Max D.' O.R.C.; "Armoury Park PS" A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0835. 'Lily C.' A.D.P. See also: Jones, 72-73.

[41] Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 124-125.

[42] TDSBA. "East End PS" Microfilm, O.R.C. Microfilm, Reel 10, 'Doris B.' O.R.C. See also: "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1308, Box 6, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0836. 'Norma E.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[43] Goldring, 97-98.

Overly self-assured test-takers also caused psychologists problems. Self-assurance sometimes contributed to carelessness, which distorted test scores. Harvey B.'s "performance" on a test in 1937, "was handicapped by over-self-confidence," gained from having taken the same test recently. "He remembered the tests from a previous examination a short time ago, and tried to show off by attacking the problems without listening carefully to the instructions," the psychologist wrote.[47] Other children who were keen test-takers asserted themselves confidently and proved their abilities to the adults present.[48]

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[44] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, A.D.P. "The Ward PS" Drawer A-L. Katie L. O.R.C., A.D.P.

[45] TDSBA. "The Ward PS," O.R.C. Drawer A-D, A.D.P. "The Ward PS" Drawer A-L, Jack L. O.R.C., A.D.P.

[46] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" A.D.P. Drawer A-L. Ida L. A.D.P.

Young people who directly defied the examiner were uncommon, but a few youngsters, such as Emma C., tried to control the testing moment in this manner, with mixed results. Emma's insubordination forced Dr. Lewis back on his heels. He had to take "great care … to make everything seem as natural as possible" so that he could obtain an accurate IQ from Emma. Ultimately Lewis was unsuccessful. He estimated that Emma's IQ was higher than 83, her test result. "The above mental age and I.Q. are probably too low for [Emma C.] because it was felt throughout the examination that she was not co-operating to the fullest extent of her ability," Lewis concluded.[49]

A strong showing on an IQ test, however, could drastically change a child's scholastic fortunes. In this way schoolchildren shaped their own circumstances in the testing moment. In 1929, an IQ test gave six-year-old Fred V. a chance to surmount first impressions that had worked against him. Fred was a small, thin, pale, soft-spoken boy. His parents, like many parents in this period, had fibbed about his age to have him admitted to school a year early. Dr. Lewis remarked how Fred's "appearance is very much against him. If one judged solely from appearances, one would put him much below par both physically and mentally … ." But when Fred was coaxed into conversation he "shows signes [sic] of intelligence." Fred V. managed an IQ score of 99, good enough to convince Lewis to label him "quite up to normal." On this basis, Lewis rebuked Fred's teacher's rather dim assessment of Fred as a child who could not do arithmetic and could barely read or write. Fred V. may well have changed the course of his school career with his solid performance on the IQ test. By 1937, he had passed the difficult high school entrance examination and was ready to attend one of the city's secondary schools.[50]

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[47] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 4, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0835 'Harvey B.' O.R.C., A.D.P. See also: "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 3, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0834, Box 1 of 2. 'Mae S.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[48] See: TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0835. 'Lester G.' A.D.P.

[49] *Passim* Emma C. See also: *Passim* Lily C.

Group tests, which came into wider use in the 1930s and early 1940s, also offered struggling pupils more chances to prove themselves. Often a poor group test score led to a follow-up one-on-one test. Sometimes children who scored poorly on the group test, such as Marjorie S., who could muster only a 68 on an IQ test as a ten-year-old in 1931, managed to improve their scores later with a second chance—even altering initial diagnoses.[51] The testing moment was significant to schoolchildren in the years between 1920 and 1945. Testing was important to adult school reformers as well.

From 'backwardness' to 'subnormality': The rise of IQ and a separate stream for special education, the demise of remedial special education

The science of IQ, along with the proliferation of intelligence testing in school, ushered in new views of learning difficulty in the 1920s. The changing outlook on learning difficulty in that decade contributed to an important reorganization of special education. Transformed perspectives on learning difficulty, and the reorganization of special classes, affected special class students' experiences in the areas of diagnosis and special class admissions, and helped remake the curriculum and instructional models used in special education classrooms. The science of IQ promoted the new view that low intelligence was the predominant cause of learning difficulties. Lewis Terman, for instance, claimed that "innate differences in intelligence" were the primary cause of 'retardation.'[52] Indeed, Judith Raftery and Paul Chapman show that Terman's work shifted educational progressives' views of learning difficulty from 'retardation' to heredity and innateness.[53] In the 1910s, as we saw in the last chapter, authorities such as American 'retardation' expert Leonard Ayres, as well as local school officials in Toronto, attributed retardation to a multiplicity of causes that included physical illnesses, absence and truancy, or educational difficulties.[54] Special education in the 1910s employed remedial instruction to address these causes of 'retardation.' Yet by the end of 1920s, perspectives on learning difficulties and their remediation had changed noticeably. In 1929, for example, Peter Sandiford glibly told educators: "If teachers could add to the native capacities of children they could make fortunes for themselves."[55] Lewis Terman, for his part, wrote in *The Intelligence of Schoolchildren*: "Educational reform may as well abandon, once for all, the effort to bring all children up to grade."[56] Intelligence quotient possessed a commanding predictive power as well, the IQ men claimed. Terman: "We have no hesitation in saying that there is not one case in fifty in which there is any serious contradiction between the IQ and the child's performance in and out of school."[57]

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[50] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0835. Fred V. O.R.C., A.D.P.
[51] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0834b, Box 2 of 2. 'Marjorie S.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

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[52] Terman, *Intelligence of Schoolchildren*, 24.
[53] Raftery, 77; Chapman, 84-85.
[54] *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Elliott's Report, 39-41; *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Whyte's Report, 48-49. See also: Tyack, 199-202; Marvin Lazerson, "The Origins of Special Education," in Jay G. Chambers and William T. Hartman eds., *Special Education Policies: Their History, Implementation, and Finance* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 18-20.
[55] Peter Sandiford, "Technical Education and the I.Q," 151. See also, S.B. Sinclair, *Backward and Brilliant Children* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1931), 5.
[56] Terman, *Intelligence of School Children*, 73. Chapman, 62; Tyack, 209-210.

These notions of IQ's innateness and its supposed power to predict school progress, meant it did not matter much whether a child was 'backward' or 'retarded' because he or she had left school to work, had been ill for an extended period of time, or was unfamiliar with English. These considerations, important to special educators in the 1910s, became afterthoughts to the child's IQ in the 1920s. If intelligence was inborn and inborn intelligence explained school failure and learning difficulties, as Terman and others contended in the 1920s, then there was little need for remedial special education of the sort that the TBE offered in its special classes for 'backward' children in the 1910s. In fact, the changing view of learning difficulties contributed to a reorganization of those classes for 'backward' children, which Toronto school authorities in the early 1920s transformed from a remedial adjunct to the mainstream classes into a wholly separate stream of their own. Toronto school inspector N.S. MacDonald expressed the updated logic behind the new approach to learning difficulties and special education when he wrote in 1919:

> Instead of wasting energy on the vain attempt to hold mentally slow and defective children up to a level of progress which is normal to the average child, or superior child, it would be wiser to take account of the inequalities of children in original endowment and to differentiate the course of study in such a way that each child will be allowed to progress at the rate which is normal to him, whether that rate be normal or slow.[58]

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[57] Terman, *The Measurement of Intelligence*, 103.

[58] *TBE Annual Report 1919*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 91. See also: E.T. Seaton, "Classification and Time-Table in Auxiliary Classes," Auxiliary Class Teachers' Section, *Proceedings of the 64th Annual Convention of the (Ontario Educational Association) O.E.A.* (Toronto: O.E.A., 1925): 179; *TBE Annual Report 1920*, Inspector D.D. Moshier's Report, 116.

Under the leadership of Eric Clarke, who was appointed the TBE's first school psychologist in 1919 (or "psychitrist [sic]," as the position was first called), school authorities in Toronto reorganized remedial special education classes for 'backward' children into a permanent stream for children with low IQs.[59] This reorganization practically eliminated remedial instruction and more or less wiped out the concept of 'backwardness' itself. Reorganization began in earnest in March 1919, when Eric Clarke embarked on a massive intelligence testing undertaking. Over a period spanning the years 1919 to 1921, Clarke and a team of psychologists from the Canadian National Committee on Mental Hygiene (CNCMH) that included his father, Dr. C.K. Clarke, Dr. Clarence Hincks, and E.J. Pratt, visited 70 TBE schools. The men administered Stanford-Binet IQ tests to an unspecified, although certainly large, number of schoolchildren. As the results from their impressive mass testing effort rolled in, Eric Clarke used the data to promote, and to carry out, a reorganization of the city's remedial special classes for 'backward' children into a separate stream of "industrial," or so-called auxiliary classes, for a newly identified group of children—'subnormals.'[60] Clarke defined the new term, 'subnormality,' approximately according to the IQ ranges that Terman set out in *The*

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[59] *TBE Minutes 1919*, Appendix No. 140, Report No. I. of the Committee Appointed by the Board Re Auxiliary Classes, 28 July 1919, Adopted as amended 28 August 1919, 873; *TBE Minutes 1920*, Appendix No. 10, "Auxiliary Classes. Special Report Dr. Helen MacMurchy to the Toronto Board of Education" 9 January 1920, 13-14.

[60] See Eric Kent Clarke, "Survey of the Toronto Public Schools," *Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene* 2:2 (1920): 182-185. The results of the survey were distributed widely to different audiences. See: *TBE Annual Report 1920*, Chief Inspector's Report, 55-60; *TBE Annual Report 1921*, Chief Inspector's Report, 74-77. See also, Eric Kent Clarke, "Mental Hygiene in Toronto Public Schools," *Proceedings of the 59th O.E.A. Conference* (Toronto: 1920): 202-205; Eric Kent Clarke, "Mental Defect and Mental Disease in School Children," *Proceedings of the 63rd O.E.A Conference* (Toronto: 1924): 99-103; Eric Kent Clarke, "Mental Hygiene in Toronto Public Schools," *The Public Health Journal*, 14:3 (March, 1923) 127-133; Eric Keith [sic] Clarke, "Some Phases of the Mental Hygiene Problem," *The Public Health Journal* 14:10 (October 1923): 536-542.

Measurement of Intelligence.[61] Using the Toronto survey results, Clarke concluded that a large number of the city's public schoolchildren—1,422 cases in all—were "subnormal," possessing IQs in the 50 to 75 range.[62]

Paul Chapman, David Tyack, and Marvin Lazerson, have argued that mass IQ testing increased the functional differentiation of American urban schooling, along what school authorities saw as ability lines.[63] Indeed, ability streaming in public schools was one of Terman's goals in developing IQ tests. Terman is most often remembered as an intelligence tester. But he was also a progressive school reformer. A collection Terman edited on school reform, *Intelligence Tests and School Reorganization*, contains his administrative progressive blueprint for school reform—his plans for "adjusting curriculum and methods to the individual differences of children."[64] Differences in achievement did not so much worry Terman. But differences of ability amongst children in the same grade bothered him profoundly. Terman believed that intelligent, less intelligent, and very intelligent schoolchildren who were grouped homogeneously according to age and achievement (therefore grouped heterogeneously by ability) learned ineffectively. By contrast, students grouped homogeneously by ability were "a *sine qua non* of school efficiency."[65] Thus, Terman proposed reorganizing schools using five ability tracks, or streams: "Gifted" "Bright" "Average" "Slow" and "Special." Mass IQ testing was central to this reform proposal, for it justified the new system, and it systematically sorted students for the new streams as well.[66]

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[61] See Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 79-80.

[62] I arrived at the number of cases myself by tallying separate statistics that Clarke reported in 1920 and 1921. It is not clear how Clarke counted and the tally may account for the same children examined more than once. See *TBE Annual Report 1920*, Chief Inspector's Report, 55-57; *TBE Annual Report 1921*, Chief Inspector's Report, 75.

[63] Chapman, 40; Tyack, 206-207; Lazerson, 27-30.

[64] Terman, *Intelligence Tests and School Reorganization*, 4. See also: Chapman, 82-92.

[65] Terman, *Intelligence Tests and School Reorganization*, 7.

On the basis of his discovery of widespread 'subnormality' in the 1919 to 1921 survey of schoolchildren's intelligence that he conducted, Eric Clarke encouraged the TBE to close its three remedial classes for 'backward' children and to replace these classes with a separate stream of auxiliary classes for 'subnormal' youngsters. The classes for 'backward' children, Clarke argued, were in fact "filled with mental defectives, of a low order." As these children were actually 'subnormal,' an inborn condition thought to offer scant possibility for intellectual improvement, Clarke suggested that the classes for 'backward' children "rather defeated their purpose, as the children were in no way suitable for promotion, but rather for industrial classes." He recommended that "industrial classes be substituted" in the place of classes for 'backward' children. Quick to act, Toronto school officials converted two existing classes for 'backward' children, one at Lansdowne PS and one at Queen Alexandra PS, into special classes for 'subnormal' pupils. The one remaining special class for 'backward' children stayed open as an "'Ungraded Class for Backward Children' ... to be used for 'catch-up' work." Clarke further recommended opening an additional 22 new "industrial classes" that would house "many, if not all" the "unfortunate subnormal pupils" his surveys had discovered. The new classes, Clarke confirmed, would constitute a special stream for 'subnormal' youngsters, with a curriculum "that will interest them, and advance their education along lines not heretofore attempted in Toronto." By September

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[66] Terman, *Intelligence Tests and School Reorganization*, 18-20. See, Tyack, 206-212; Chapman, 89-90.

1920, reorganized "industrial" classes were in place in at least six Toronto public schools: Lansdowne PS, Queen Alexandra PS, Jesse Ketchum PS, Strathcona PS, St. Clair PS, and Roden PS.[67] In addition, the reorganization of Toronto's special education system also boasted an important economic motivator. Reorganization qualified the Board to collect the provincial grant for special classes, in accordance with Ontario Department of Education (DOE) regulations. In December 1920 the Board received a $2,103 grant for its classes from the DOE [68]

The determined Clarke encountered and overcame a few obstacles as he reorganized Toronto's special classes. For one, the Board opened several new classes for 'backward' children in 1920, even as Clarke was trying to eliminate this program.[69] Chief Inspector Cowley warned about taking Clarke's reorganization too far too quickly. "The reports of the psychiatrist should be a valuable guide to the educator, not in multiplying special classes but in arranging the individual assistance required to fit as many backward pupils as possible to remain in the regular grades of the school, and thereby share as [is] possible in its normal social life."[70] Meanwhile, Alice Willson, a professor at the Ontario

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[67] Clarke, "Survey of the Toronto Public Schools," 184; *TBE Annual Report 1920*, Chief Inspector's Report, 53-56. See also: *TBE Minutes 1919*, Appendix No. 187, Management Report No. 21, 29 October 1919, Adopted as Amended 6 November 1919, 1126; Appendix No. 195, Management Report No. 22, 12 November 1919, Adopted 13 November 1919, 1163; Appendix No. 207, Report No. 2 of Committee Re Auxiliary Classes, 2 December 1919, Adopted 4 December 1919, 1258.

[68] *TBE Minutes 1920*, Appendix No. 10, "Auxiliary Classes. Special Report Dr. Helen MacMurchy to the Toronto Board of Education" 9 January 1920, 15; *TBE Minutes 1920*, 2 December 1920, 297. *DOE Report*, Appendix H, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 106. The same regulations still allowed children who struggled at school, but who had IQs above 75, to utilize the same special class to catch up and return to the regular classroom. Hackett, Appendix J, 399.

[69] *TBE Minutes 1920*, Appendix No. 121, Management Report No. 12, 23 June 1920, Adopted as Amended 2 July 1920, 790; Appendix No. 191, Management Report No. 19, 10 November 1920, 18 November 1920, 1231.

[70] *TBE Annual Report 1919*, Chief Inspector's Report, 64. See also, *TBE Annual Report 1921*, Chief Inspector's Report, 58.

College of Education in Toronto, cautioned that educators' "approval, absolute and unqualified" of intelligence testing and streaming was unwise.[71] Indeed, by the mid-1920s, pockets of outright expert and popular opposition to testing and streaming existed in parts of the US.[72] However, criticisms of IQ testing did not seem to hamper Clarke.

In fact, IQ became, gradually through the 1920s, the basis for functionally differentiating curricula and programs in Toronto public schools, for streaming special education and non-special education students alike, and even (as we shall see) for diagnosing learning difficulties.[73] Judith Raftery argues that Los Angeles teachers in the 1920s rejected IQ testing and that school administrators in that city found testing and streaming more difficult to implement than historians have previously thought. Paul Chapman, for his part, asserts that school administrators were more enthusiastic about testing than school principals or teachers were. Yet, on evidence mainly from the cities of Oakland, CA, and Philadelphia, Marvin Lazerson argues that teachers and principals welcomed testing and ability streaming.[74] In Toronto, several Toronto school principals experimented with ability streaming in the 1920s. The most ambitious of them was John

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[71] Alice Willson, "Intelligence Tests and Classification," *The School* 10 (8, April 1922): 472-474.

[72] Tyack briefly discusses the Chicago Federation of Labour's 1924 criticism that the tests denigrated working people's intelligence. Tyack, 214-215. Jeffrey Mirel shows, in contrast, how, around the same time, the Detroit Federation of Labour expressed no public opposition to IQ testing. Jeffrey Mirel, *The Rise and Fall of an Urban School System: Detroit 1907-1981* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1993) 69. Ann Marie Ryan and Alan Stoskopf argue that American Catholic educators questioned IQ testing in the 1920s. Ann Marie Ryan and Alan Stoskopf, "Public and Catholic School Reponses to IQ Testing in the Early Twentieth Century," *Teachers College Record* 110:4 (2008): 894-922. See also, Gould, 179-180, and Zenderland , 312-315, on the debate between Terman and the American journalist and social critic, Walter Lippman, about IQ's validity in the early 1920s.

[73] The same gradual process unfolded in American urban school systems. See Tyack, 208-216.

[74] Raftery; Chapman, 167-168; Lazerson, 30. See also Gerald Thomson, "'Remove from Our Midst These Unfortunates: A Historical Inquiry Into the Influence of Eugenics, Educational Efficiency as well as Mental Hygiene Upon the Vancouver School System and Its Special Classes, 1910-1969," Ph.D. diss. (The University of British Columbia, 1999), 271. Thomson argues that Vancouver teachers and principals enthusiastically supported testing and streaming.

Wallis, principal of Queen Alexandra PS. In 1921 Wallis obtained a variety of group and individual IQ tests, including Stanford-Binet and Binet-Simon tests, and administered these tests to all 1,300 students at his school. He used the test results to organize pupils into three streams: "classes of slow, average and bright children." Every two classes of "slow" children shared three teachers, which freed "floating' teachers" to offer extra help in those classes.[75] Another major streaming experiment unfolded as part of a CNCMH study of schoolchildren that began in 1925 at Regal Road PS. Principal Richardson and the CNCMH researchers administered IQ tests and streamed some of the children at the school by ability.[76]

Student records offer further evidence, in anecdotal form, of the transformation in the 1920s of Toronto special education classes from a remedial adjunct to the mainstream classes to a separate stream of classes.[77] Until the mid-1920s, auxiliary classes at The Ward PS continued to enrol a few students who received a few months of remedial instruction before returning to mainstream classes. Joseph N. was in Grade 2 in the 1922-1923 school year when he entered the auxiliary class at The Ward PS, where he remained for four months. In June, school officials promoted Joseph from the auxiliary class back to Grade 2.[78] Doris M., for instance, was promoted from Grade 1 to Grade 2 at The Ward PS for September 1922. She moved to the auxiliary class after only two weeks and eventually completed four months there, before re-entering Grade 2 in February 1922. By 1927, Doris M. had reached Grade 8 without repeating another grade.[79] School authorities placed young people who were new to Canada in the auxiliary classes to acclimate them to the schools as well. Martha T., a twelve-year-old girl who had recently immigrated to Canada, received instruction in the auxiliary class at The Ward PS. After two months in the auxiliary class Martha transferred to Grade 3-4, in November 1922. After that she progressed impressively, earning a place in Grade 8 in just two years.[80]

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[75] *TBE Annual Report 1922*, Inspector MacDonald's Report, 83-86; C.K. Clarke, "What is Your Child's IQ?," *Maclean's Magazine* 35:2 (15 January 1922): 13-15, 36-38.

[76] *TBE Annual Report 1925*, Chief Inspector's Report, 93. On the CNCMH's Regal Road PS survey, which was mainly an experiment in child guidance, which I discuss in more detail in Chapter 8, see also Theresa R. Richardson, *The Century of the Child: The Mental Hygiene Movement and Social Policy in the United States and Canada* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989), 118-119.

[77] A more systematic analysis using those records is difficult, due particularly to the high number of student transfers, especially from The Ward PS, and the incompleteness of many student records in the 1920s. The records of students who transferred from an auxiliary class to a new school or a new city remain incomplete from the date the child transferred, making it difficult to accurately establish the duration of time that many special education students actually attended the classes.

However, by the later 1920s, anecdotal evidence similar to that presented above indicates that it became more common for students to enter the auxiliary class for a lengthy, or permanent stay—instead of for remedial instruction. In February 1924, nine-year-old Emily L. was in the middle of her second year in Grade 1 when school officials transferred her to the auxiliary class. Emily remained an auxiliary class pupil from February 1924 until 1931, when she turned sixteen and left school to join the workforce.[81] Mary O. and Mildred O., sisters and classmates in the auxiliary class at Armoury Park PS for four years, eventually graduated to a girls' junior vocational school for adolescent special class students in June 1934. By that time Mary was fourteen years old, and Mildred, fifteen. Both girls had spent more than four consecutive years in an auxiliary classroom, effectively waiting until they were old enough to go to the junior vocational school.[82] A few pupils, such as Alexandra S., who remained for several consecutive years in the auxiliary classes eventually returned to the grades, typically entering Grade 5.[83] These social promotions (based on age rather than educational attainment) relieved pressure on overburdened auxiliary classes and ensured that older special class pupils did not mingle with younger children in the special classes, nor especially, in the grades. School authorities tried to avoid this situation, for: "Nothing is more pathetic than to see the gawky and overgrown Smikes in a school room trying to keep up with the nimble minded little normal children ...," as C.K. Clarke wrote, in Dickensian terms.[84]

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[78] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer unmarked. Joseph N. O.R.C. See also: TDSBA "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M, A.D.P. Drawer A-L, Stanley G. O.R.C., A.D.P.

[79] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z. Doris M. O.R.C. See also examples of other children using the classes for remedial purposes. TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M. Joe P. O.R.C.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Mc-Si. Betty A. O.R.C.

[80] Martha T. did not complete Grade 8. Instead she left to go to work about one month after her sixteenth birthday. TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. Martha T. O.R.C., A.D.P.

[81] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, A.D.P. Drawer A-L Emily L. O.R.C. [1], O.R.C. [2], A.D.P. See also: "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. Ruth M. O.R.C., A.D.P.

As they moved towards streaming by ability, Toronto school officials distanced themselves from classes for 'backward' children. By 1924 the Board reported 658 pupils enrolled in "Training Classes for Sub-Normal Pupils," with no mention of classes for 'backward' children at all. The only remedial programme in place was a summer school, opened in 1923, that attracted around 550 pupils in Grades 5 to 8. The summer school was in session for two hours each weekday morning in July and August, and it enabled about 60 percent of the students who attended to make up their year.[85] By 1925, Ontario

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[82] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1309, Box 11. Mary O. O.R.C.; "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1309, Box 11. Mildred O. O.R.C.

[83] See: TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-130, Box 1, A.D.P. Box 2003-0835. Alexandra S. O.R.C., A.D.P. See also: TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Mc-Si, Michael K., O.R.C.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Mc-Si, Paul G. O.R.C.

[84] CAMHA. C.K. Clarke Fonds, Scrapbook 12-1, C.K. Clarke, "The Development Of Mentally Handicapped Children In Public Schools," *The Canadian Child* (November-December 1921): 2.

[85] *TBE Annual Report 1924*, Chief Inspector's Report, 67.

Inspector of Auxiliary Classes S.B. Sinclair's report no longer distinguished between 'backward' and 'mentally defective' children. In fact Sinclair noted that to avoid stigmatizing young people, there was a "a growing sentiment in favour of using the term backward instead of such terms as feeble-minded when referring to such pupils." This shift in terminology signalled that 'backward' had largely lost its original 1910s meaning as a term for 'normal' children who needed remedial teaching.[86]

The dominance of IQ: Labelling children with learning difficulties in the 1920s

As we might expect, the shift towards the view that low IQ was the dominant cause of learning difficulties—and the use of IQ testing as a tool in special education—greatly affected how young people were labelled and diagnosed for special education classes. Evidence from my analysis of Toronto student records shows that IQ became the dominant factor in the labelling process during the 1920s, replacing the multiple factors that, we have seen, sent students to the special classes in the 1910s. To be sure, mental testers across the period studied in this dissertation used mental testing tools besides the IQ test.[87] But the IQ test was absolutely critical to special education because school officials depended on IQ scores to classify young people for special classes. Diagnosing with IQ also helped to standardize the labelling process after 1920. While Robert Osgood has argued that special educators lacked uniform procedures for labelling well into the 1920s, an examination of admissions to Toronto's special auxiliary classes for 'subnormal' boys and girls in the 1920s shows a visible shift towards the use of IQ as a uniform labelling tool.[88] Certainly a few pupils, the minority it seems, were still admitted to auxiliary classes on criteria other than low IQ. For instance, the principal at The Ward PS transferred George W., who was born in China to the auxiliary class before George had even completed his first day of school in Canada. The reason: "for special help with language," or to help George W. improve his English skills so he could enter the regular school programme.[89] Yet, it seems that, in the 1920s, intelligence testing and IQ boiled practically all learning difficulties down to a single factor: low IQ. Labelling practices reflected this distillation.

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[86] *DOE Report 1925*, Appendix I, "Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes," 47-48. See also: Hackett, 140.

[87] Jennifer Stephen examined the array of mental testing tools that psychologists used in other fields in the interwar period. Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 67-73.

My analysis of the results of 33 IQ examinations that Toronto school psychologists conducted in the 1920s with students at two schools, The Ward PS and Armoury Park PS, demonstrates that IQ dominated as the main factor in diagnosis and admissions to special classes. Table 3.1 shows that the youngsters who received the lowest IQs scores were the most likely to receive the diagnosis 'subnormal' (and sometimes 'borderline'). In turn, children labelled 'subnormal,' as well as a few children labelled 'borderline,' had the highest likelihood of receiving a recommendation for placement in an auxiliary class.[90]

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[88] See Robert L. Osgood, *For 'Children Who Vary from the Normal Type': Special Education in Boston, 1838-1930* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 2000), 130-133.

[90] Linkages between IQ scores and the categories of intellectual ability Terman named in *The Measurement of Intelligence*, are also quite apparent in Table 3.1. See Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 79

[90] Linkages between IQ scores and the categories of intellectual ability Terman named in *The Measurement of Intelligence*, are also quite apparent in Table 3.1. See Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 79

Table 3.1 Correlation between IQ, diagnosis, and placement rec'dation: 33 selected psychological examinations, The Ward PS and Armoury Park PS[1], 1920-21 to 1929-30.

			Diagnosis			Placement rec'dation			
Child	**School**	**IQ**	**S**	**B**	**N**	**A**	**JRV**	**O**	**Oth**
Jimmy E.	Armoury Park	54	X			X			
Annie L.	The Ward PS	65	X				X		
Simon G.	The Ward PS	66	X				X		
Ida L.[2]	The Ward PS	68	X			X			
Daniel P.	The Ward PS	71		X		X			
David P.	The Ward PS	72		X		X			
Alexandra S.	Armoury Park	74		X		X			
Howard G.	The Ward PS	74		X		X			
Charlie N.	The Ward PS	75		X					X[3]
Willie F.	The Ward PS	75	X			X			
Marvin K.[2]	The Ward PS	75		X			X		
Lester E.	The Ward PS	75		X		X			
Charlie B.	The Ward PS	75		X					X[3]
Marvin K.[2]	The Ward PS	76		X		X			
Nicholas S.[2]	The Ward PS	76		X			X		
Hilda G.[2]	The Ward PS	77		X				X	
Ida L.[2]	The Ward PS	78		X					X[3]
Lucy E.	The Ward PS	78		X				X	
Katie L.[2]	The Ward PS	79		X		X			
Vernon A.[2]	Armoury Park	79		X				X	
Nicholas S.[2]	The Ward PS	80		X				X	
Katie L.[2]	The Ward PS	80		X					X[3]
Anthony T.[2]	The Ward PS	83		X				X	
Nicholas S.[2]	The Ward PS	84		X				X	
Jack L.	The Ward PS	85		X					X[3]
Isaac B.	The Ward PS	85		X					X[3]
Anthony T.[2]	The Ward PS	90		X				X[4]	
Albert G.	Armoury Park	92			X				X[5]
Esther M.	Armoury Park	94			X			X	
Fred V.	Armoury Park	99			X			X	
Paula F.	The Ward PS	101			X			X	
Will C.	The Ward PS	105			X			X	
Sam A.	The Ward PS	na		X					X[3]

Legend: S = 'subnormal'; B = 'borderline'; N= 'normal'. A = auxiliary class; JRV = junior vocational school; O = ordinary class

Sources: From Toronto District School Board Archives, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11.

(Notes for Table 3.1)

[1] Records from four schools that the TBE merged into the new Armoury Park PS school building in 1930.

[2] Child tested on more than one occasion.

[3] Placement recommendation deferred until re-examination in one year.

[4] Recommended ordinary class on a trial basis only.

[5] Recommended suitable for a speech correction class.

Reliance on IQ tests in the labelling process had unfavourable effects for many youngsters who were evaluated for special class admissions. In addition to the challenges of the testing moment, which we looked at earlier, other environmental factors—factors such as age and language capability particularly—shaped test performance and therefore shaped diagnosis and placement recommendation as well. David P., for instance, was ten years old when he started Grade 1 in February 1927. His late start to school would have likely disadvantaged him on the IQ test, which drew heavily on the types of thinking skills that schools developed best. Moreover, as a child of Italian immigrant parents, it is unlikely that English was David's first language. This placed him at a further disadvantage on the IQ test. Dr. Lewis measured David's IQ as 75 in June 1927 and recommended him for an auxiliary class, where David enrolled the following September.[91]

Nor did the concept of IQ, or the IQ tests, recognize that the precise nature of learning difficulty could range greatly from child to child, even between two children who achieved the same IQ score. Remedial classes for 'backward' children in the 1910s had recognized variation implicitly by offering opportunities for boys and girls to address specific areas of scholastic deficiency. Reading Psychological Examination Reports for Toronto schoolchildren labelled 'subnormal' in the 1920s, I noticed that these schoolchildren actually exhibited a range of learning difficulties. Each of these component learning difficulties—for example difficulty comprehending verbal instructions, illogical thinking, lack of spatial awareness, lack of manual dexterity, or deficient basic arithmetic—might have on its own explained a child's struggle at school and on the IQ test. What is more, some children who tested poorly on one skill, tested extremely well on another. However, school psychologists in Toronto often folded different learning difficulties into the singular diagnosis of low IQ. A few examples will illustrate how this occurred.

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[91] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. drawer Mc-Si, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. David P. O.R.C., A.D.P.

Willie F., a Toronto schoolboy tested in 1925, for example, struggled verbally and had trouble carrying out the examiner's instructions. According to the psychologist's narrative of the examination, Willie lacked reasoning skills and his general knowledge was spotty.[92] Similarly, IQ testing uncovered that Annie L. and Simon G. both lacked an "idea of form" (that is, a sense of how shapes relate to each other, for example how a rectangle is more like a square than it is like a circle[93]). Both Annie and Simon were more awkward than other children their own age in manipulating the physical test materials, such as cubes, triangles, and other shapes. However, if according to the tests, Annie L. lacked manual and reasoning skills, she nonetheless possessed "fair" general knowledge.[94] Yet, whatever skills supposedly 'subnormal' children such as Willie F., Annie L., or Simon G., managed well with, or struggled with, psychologists linked their learning difficulty to their inborn IQ. Willie F., Annie L., and Simon G., whose IQs were 75, 65, and 61, respectively, received identical diagnoses ("subnormal") and identical recommendations for placement in auxiliary classes for 'subnormal' children, or, in Annie L's. and Simon G.'s cases, for the junior vocational schools for 'subnormal' adolescents. Sometimes the placement recommendations even flew in the face of what the intelligence test itself seemed to suggest about appropriate education for the child. Thus, Annie L. and Simon G., whose "manual dexterity" the psychologist rated "poor," were recommended for a junior vocational school, where the curriculum was decidedly manual.[95]

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[92] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C Drawer A-D, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Willie F.' O.R.C., A.D.P.
[93] On "form" see, for example, Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 152-153.

Moreover, even when youngsters, such as David P., the Italian speaking boy whose language difficulties with the test we looked at above, showed signs of brightness that an intelligence test could not measure, the focus that psychologists placed on IQ caused them to look past these signs. David was a bubbly and outgoing youngster with a sense of humour. In a follow-up examination a year and a half after first examining David, Dr. E.P. Lewis commented favourably on the boy's "contagious smile," his talkativeness, and his willingness to "make a joke out of everything." But these qualities, which are hints of a sharp mind, mattered little, if at all, to Lewis's diagnosis.[96]

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[94] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, "The Ward PS" A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Annie L.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, "The Ward PS" A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Simon G.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[95] *Passim* Willie F., Annie L., Simon G.

[96] *Passim* David P.

As special classes in Toronto changed from being remedial centres for children with learning difficulties in the late 1910s, into a permanent stream for children labelled 'subnormal' by the mid-1920s, intelligence testing and the labels it generated exerted greater and more long-lasting effects on individual boys and girls. Labels, once acquired, stuck with young people, and the results of IQ testing kept children in the separate auxiliary class stream. Children who scored in the 'subnormal' range on IQ tests were likely to be streamed permanently into auxiliary classes. For instance, Emily L., whose IQ was tested three times (with results falling in the 70s, and only once above 75), remained in an auxiliary class at The Ward PS for five years before she reached her sixteenth birthday and authorities at that school mercifully allowed her to leave for work.[97]

To summarize: lower IQs contributed to a greater likelihood of a diagnosis such as 'subnormality.' In turn, a 'low' diagnosis increased the possibility of a special education class. If psychologists were relying heavily on criteria other than IQ to make admissions decisions—as they had done in the 1910s—we would simply not see patterns of correlation between IQ, diagnosis, and recommendation (see Table 3.1) that were so unswerving. By comparison, Barry Franklin showed in a case study of students attending special classes at Atlanta's Lee Street School between 1921 and 1923 that in the absence of widespread IQ testing special classes remained heterogeneous. Even though Atlanta school authorities mandated IQ testing of special class students, the number of students tested at Lee Street School in the early 1920s remained low. As a consequence, the special class remained diverse, enrolling students whose learning problems were linked to multiple factors, such as 'mental defect,' regular truancy, disinterest in school, or supposedly poor parental supervision.[98] When intelligence quotient and intelligence testing came to dominate the diagnostic and admissions process by the mid-1920s, much more emphasis was placed on IQ test results alone, as the Toronto case shows.

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[97] TDSBA. *Passim* Emily L. See also, *Passim* Alexandra S. Janie S., who spent nearly four years in the auxiliary class, posted IQ scores in the 40 to 50 range. School officials eventually excluded her from the public school on the basis of her low IQ scores in 1933. TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Box 2003-1307, Box 4, A.D.P. Box 2003-0834b, Box 2 of 2. Janie S. O.R.C., A.D.P.

Who attended the special classes?: IQ and ability, race and ethnicity, class, and gender

The first IQ studies of schoolchildren in the late 1910s and early 1920s purported to show that working-class children, poor children, and many children with racialized identities had lower IQs than other children. In fact mental testers all over North America in this period were relatively quick to associate 'subnormality,' 'feeblemindedness,' or other such labels signifying below-average intelligence or intellectual disability, with marginalized populations. School authorities as well tended to assume that these marginalized youngsters experienced higher incidences of intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties. Moreover, immigrant children whose first language was perhaps not English, or working-class children who had important responsibilities at home that kept them out of school on a more frequent basis than other children, also experienced problems of school integration. For all these reasons, working-class children, poor children, and children from some racial and ethnic minority groups, were over-represented in Toronto's auxiliary classes for children with intellectual disabilities or learning difficulties. This section uses data from student records to examine the streaming of different groups of young people into special classes for children with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties, from the 1920s to the mid-1940s.

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[98] Barry M. Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk': Childhood Learning Difficulties and the Contradictions of School Reform* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 43-47.

Historically, poor and working-class children, certain ethnic and racial minorities, and (to a lesser extent) boys, have frequently been streamed into special classes, where they have often received an inferior education that was poorly suited to their individual needs as learners. This has left some historians and social scientists who have studied the issue to lament how schools systematically stream large numbers of working-class children, racialized children, and boys into "dead-end" special education programs "with stunted curricula." A common argument is that low-income and non-white children are streamed this way because they are misdiagnosed as disabled.[99] This misdiagnosis argument is critical in nature and is motivated by genuine social justice concerns.[100] Yet an argument focussed on misdiagnosis implies that diagnosis is the only problem with the special class system, and that special programs are quite justifiable for actual children with disabilities—that is those children who are assumed to have been properly diagnosed.[101] But programs that lead nowhere and have a threadbare curriculum are a concern that is quite aside from diagnostic practices. Moreover, a child with a disability or learning difficulty that has allegedly been properly diagnosed no more deserves to be streamed into this sort of educational setting than any other child. Steven Gelb argues that holding fast to the idea that there is proper diagnosis and misdiagnosis "permits the field of special education to avoid grappling with the moral, social, and political issues inherent in its assumptions that students can and should be rank ordered and classified."[102] In my examination of the over-representation of specific groups of children in special classes, I try to look beyond the misdiagnosis argument in order to examine the complex intersections between ability and race and ethnicity, class, and gender, that streaming involved.

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[99] Bruce Curtis, D.W. Livingstone, and Harry Smaller, *The Streaming of Working-Class Kids in Ontario Schools* (Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves, 1992), 99. See also: Sally Tomlinson, *A Sociology of Special Education* (London: Routledge, 1982), 65-67.

[100] In one case, the argument was used in response to the opportunity to abolish streaming under a new social democratic government in Ontario. See Curtis et al.

[101] Douglas Baynton notes that historical scholarship often challenges the "attribution" of characteristics of deficiency or inferiority to marginalized groups as a justification for their unequal treatment. (For example, denying women or racialized groups full citizenship rights by claiming they are intellectually incapable of full citizenship.) But, Baynton says, historians also often overlook "what the attribution of disability might also tell us about disability," namely that it is still acceptable to justify unequal treatment of people with disabilities on the basis of their imputed incapacities. Douglas C. Baynton, "Disability and the Justification of Inequality in American History," in *The New Disability History: American Perspectives,* Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky, eds. (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 50-51.

My analysis of student records for the entire 1920 to 1945 period, from the three schools selected for my research—The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, and East End PS—suggests that working-class and poor youngsters were over-represented in auxiliary classes (renamed opportunity classes in 1937[103]) in Toronto public schools. (See Table 3.2.) In his examination of class and occupation in interwar Toronto, Richard Harris found that the workforce of Toronto was 61 percent working class in 1921. (See Table 3.3.)[104] The percentages of working-class children in auxiliary and opportunity classes at the schools I studied was much higher than 61 percent, suggesting that working-class children were over-represented in the classes. Using data records I discovered that at Armoury Park PS, for instance, working-class children represented approximately 77 percent of the auxiliary, later opportunity, class population across the 1920 to 1945 period. Another 11 percent of children in these special classes at Armoury Park PS came from families where a working mother, often employed in domestic or other service, was the household head. Practically invariably these female-headed families lived in straightened circumstances, and can also be considered poor or working-class.[105] At The Ward PS, approximately 51 percent of the students who enrolled in special classes in the period studied were from working-class families, usually headed by men holding such skilled and unskilled jobs as truck driver, labourer, or carpenter. Although this number was lower than the working-class population of Toronto in 1921, it is important to note that another 34 percent of special class pupils at The Ward PS came from households whose male head was self-employed in a low-remuneration trade, such as rag pedlar or

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[102] Steven A. Gelb, "'Not Simply Bad and Incorrigible': Science, Morality, and Intellectual Deficiency," *History of Education Quarterly* 29:3 (Autumn 1989): 379.

[103] *DOE Report 1937*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 47.

[104] Painting an accurate portrait of class in the schools by sampling parents' occupations can be tricky. See: Joel Perlmann, *Ethnic Differences: Schooling and Social Structure among the Irish, Italians, Jews, and Blacks in An American City* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1988), espec. 25-36; Michael B. Katz, "Occupational Classification in History," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 3:1 (Summer, 1972): 63-88. My analysis of class and occupation uses the occupational classification scheme that Richard Harris, an urban historical geographer, developed in his book on Toronto's urban growth, *Unplanned Suburbs: Toronto's American Tragedy, 1900 to 1950*. I chose to use Harris's study for several reasons. First of all, the TBE did not collect aggregate data on the class of pupils in the public school system.

Without this data there is nothing to compare the special class population against. Harris's study, however, includes a successful occupational classification scheme that is tailored specifically to Toronto and that matches occupations to classes. Harris constructed this classification scheme and citywide data set by sampling municipal tax assessment records for 1922 (households enumerated in 1921). The classification scheme can be used to make some strong inferences about class, occupation, and neighbourhood structure in Toronto in the first half of the twentieth century. For the percentages that Harris found in each group, see Table 3.3.

[105] Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939* (Toronto: Markham, ON, 1988), 54-56. One challenge inherent in adopting Harris's classification scheme (a challenge that Harris acknowledges) is that the occupational profile he derived from tax assessment rolls is based mainly on a count of male "household heads." Consequently, Harris notes, female occupations, as well as women workers themselves, are underrepresented in his sample. Toronto student records, that is ADP and ORC cards, usually recorded the child's mother's occupation. Consequently, I decided to modify slightly the categories that Harris used. Because he felt that he was unable to reach an accurate count, Harris removed women from the total of "classifiable" occupations, the sample that he used to calculated the percentage of Toronto workers in each occupational grouping. Unlike Harris, I count women's occupations towards the total "classifiable" occupations in my tables. I should expect that my modification of Harris's categories creates some discrepancy when I compare demographic data on class from the schools to Harris's overall portrait of Toronto.

junk dealer. All told, well over four fifths of the students enrolled in auxiliary and opportunity classes at The Ward PS came from families where the household head's occupation suggested working-class status or poverty. (See Table 3.2) Approximately 9 percent of auxiliary and opportunity class pupils at The Ward PS came from female-headed households. The composition of special classes in relation to class was only slightly different at suburban East End PS than at The Ward PS or Armoury Park PS. Generally, fathers of children admitted to special classes from East End PS had more greatly skilled, blue-collar jobs than fathers of children at the other two schools. These skilled blue-collar men, such as Carl E.'s father, who was a glassmaker, often had emigrated from the British Isles. They settled in suburbs on the edges of Toronto like the eastern suburb where East End PS could be found.[106] A final indicator of the class composition of auxiliary classes is the relative lack of middle-class children in the special classes. Toronto in this period, according to Harris, was 13.8 percent middle class, while—tellingly—middle-class children were only between approximately 2 and 6 percent of special education pupils at the three schools studied.

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[106] TDSBA. "East End PS" O.R.C. Microfilm, Reel 10. 'Carl E.' O.R.C.

Table 3.2. Class and occupation, students admitted to auxiliary and opportunity classes, The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS[1], East End PS[2], 1920-21 to 1944-45.

	The Ward PS		**Armoury Park PS**		**East End PS**	
Occupational groupings and classes, by family head's occupation	N	**% of clssifbl.**	N	**% of clssifbl.**	**N**	**% of clssifbl.**
Owners and managers	5	2.86%	1	0.79%	0	0.00%
Agents on commission	2	1.14%	7	5.56%	0	0.00%
Self-employed workers, total	59	33.71%	3	2.38%	1	6.25%
self-employed, building trades	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
self-employed, others	59	33.71%	3	2.38%	1	6.25%
Middle class	4	2.29%	4	3.17%	1	6.25%
Working class, total	90	51.43%	97	76.98%	13	81.25%
Blue collar, subtotal	90	51.43%	97	76.98%	13	81.25%
skilled and semi-skilled	44	25.14%	37	29.37%	8	50.00%
Unskilled	33	18.86%	51	40.48%	2	12.50%
building trades	13	7.43%	9	7.14%	3	18.75%
White collar (including clerical), subtotal	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Miscellaneous (unclassifiable)	24	—	13	—	2	—
None (unclassifiable)	14	—	22	—	0	—
Single women, employed in domestic service	14	8.00%	12	9.52%	0	0.00%
Single women, employed in other service	1	0.57%	2	1.59%	1	6.25%
Total unclassifiable	43	—	35	—	2	—
Total	213	—	161	—	18	—
Total classifiable	175	—	126	—	16	—

Sources: Occupational-class classification and table structure[3] from Richard Harris, *Unplanned Suburbs: Toronto's American Tragedy 1900-1950* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), Appendix B, "Table B.1, Major Classes and Subgroups, City of Toronto, 1921," 294; Data from Toronto District School Board Archives, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11; Toronto District School Board Archives, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "East End PS" Microfilm reel 11 and Office Record Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 10.

[1] Includes records from four schools that the TBE merged into the new Armoury Park PS school building in 1930.

[2] East End PS did not have its own auxiliary or opportunity class. Data is for East End PS students sent to auxiliary/opportunity classes at a nearby school.

[3] Counting of women's occupations modified. See footnote 104 above.

Table 3.3. Occupation and class, Toronto workforce and auxiliary/opportunity class and junior vocational/handicraft schools pupils' parents' occupations.

Category	**category % of employed workforce, Toronto, 1921 (Richard Harris, *Unplanned Suburbs*, Table B.1, p. 294.[1]**	**Auxiliary and opportunity class and junior vocational and handicraft school pupils from The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS[2], East End PS, 1920-21 to 1944-45, most common occupations of parents by category.**	**Most common occupations by category, Toronto workforce, 1921. (Richard Harris, *Unplanned Suburbs*, Table B.2, p. 295)**
Owners and managers	*6.9%*	Wholesaler	Manager Merchant
Agents on commission	*5.5%*	Salesman Traveller	Agent Salesman/saleswoman
Self-employed	*12.5%*		
Self-employed, building trades, subtotal	1.9%	na[3] —	na[4] —
Self-employed, others, subtotal	10.6%	Tailor Rag collector Pedlar	Grocer/general store Builder/contractor Tailor/milliner
Middle class	*13.8%*	Banker Business man	Supervisor/foreman Inspector
Working class	*61.3%*		
Skilled and semi skilled, subtotal	30.7%	Driver, truck driver, teamster Presser	Teamster/driver Mechanic
Unskilled, subtotal	11.8%	Labourer various, e.g. janitor, helper	Labourer Helper
Building trades, subtotal	10.1%	Carpenter Painter	Carpenter Painter
White collar, subtotal	8.7%	na[3] —	Clerk Secretary/stenographer
Single women, employed in domestic service[5]	*na*	Housekeeper —	na —
Single women, employed in other service[5]	*na*	Waitress —	na —

[1] Numbers in italics are category totals. Subtotals are not italic. Category totals in italics do not add up to 100, as I have omitted Harris miscellaneous and no occupation categories from this chart.

[2] Includes records from four schools that the TBE merged into the new Armoury Park PS school building in 1930.

[3] I did not find significant numbers in this category.

[4] Harris did not disaggregate these two self-employed categories.

[5] Counting of women's occupations modified. See footnote 104 above.

Neighbourhood can also help to explain the class composition of special education classes. It appears that schools in poor and working-class neighbourhoods were more likely to have special classes. The Ward PS was located in the Ward, Toronto's poorest urban neighbourhood.[107] The area around Armoury Park PS was, according to a study from 1941, primarily a "lower-working-class district."[108] Ethnically, however, the neighbourhood was a British enclave. This particular combination also existed in Cabbagetown, a more well-known Toronto and adjacent working-class neighbourhood that was also similar to the area surrounding Armoury Park PS. The Canadian novelist Hugh Garner described his native Cabbagetown in this period as "the largest Anglo-Saxon slum in North America."[109] The area around the East End PS, made up of suburban houses, was inhabited by families headed by skilled working-class men, such as Carl E.'s father.[110] Many household heads in this school area held semi-skilled, blue-collar jobs.[111] The residents of the area around East End PS were probably a little better off than the families whose children attended Armoury Park PS.[112] A Ford Motor plant, which opened down the street from the school in 1923 with 500 workers, likely employed many people in the neighbourhood surrounding East End PS.[113] The school, however, was too small for an auxiliary class, and pupils from the school who were identified for special education travelled to other nearby schools.

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[107] See: "What is 'The Ward' going to do with Toronto?" (Toronto: Bureau of Municipal Research, 1918).
[108] Nadine A. Hooper, "Toronto: A Study in Urban Geography," (M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1941), 69-70, and Figure 39, Plate 7
[109] Penina Coopersmith, *Cabbagetown: The Story of a Victorian Neighbourhood* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1998), 62. See also Garner's partly autobiographic novel about the neighbourhood. Hugh Garner, *Cabbagetown: A Novel* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1978).
[110] Hooper, , 69-70, and Figure 39, Plate 7. On British immigrants in Toronto and suburban settlement patterns, see Harris, 30-31. On the neighbourhood surrounding these two schools see Daniel Hiebert, "The Social Geography of Toronto in 1931: A study of residential differentiation and social structure," *Journal of Historical Geography* 21:1 (1995), 61-63 and Figure 2, and Harris, 251.
[111] Richard Harris describes similar Toronto working-class, immigrant suburban neighbourhoods with large British populations, such as Earlscourt, which were common in early-twentieth century Toronto. Harris, 31-32.
[112] Cooper, 69-70, Figure 39, Plate 8 of 8.

The decision by school officials to place a special class in a school was related to the size of the school, but also to its location. In his first survey of Toronto schools Eric Clarke dutifully observed that well over half of the 'subnormals' he identified in Toronto schools attended downtown schools that served poor, working-class, and immigrant populations. Seventy-percent of 'subnormals,' Clarke claimed based on his findings, were immigrants themselves, or the children of immigrants, and most 'subnormals' were also poor, the children of "unskilled labour, low wage earners."[114] In the city's "slum areas," Clarke argued—neighbourhoods he said were blighted by chronic unemployment and dependency on charity—"parents of low mentality have been forced to segregate themselves by their financial situation and mental incapacity."[115] A decade later, in 1930, Dr. E.P. Lewis, Clarke's successor as Toronto's school psychologist, reported that schools in areas with "Poor" social conditions had between seven to eleven times as many 'mental defectives' than schools in areas where social conditions were "Good."[116] In this way experts completed, as Jennifer Stephen has shown, the tightly wound association of intellectual ability and class that ran through views of IQ from the 1910s to the 1940s.[117] Given this association, and the placement of special classes in working-class neighbourhoods, it is not surprising that working-class children were over-represented in Toronto's special classes, where admissions were based in large part on IQ scores.

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[113] Harris, 58-59.

[114] E. Clarke, "Some Phases of the Mental Hygiene Movement," 538.

[115] CAMHA. Clarke Institute of Psychiatry/Toronto Psychiatric Hospital Fonds. C.K. Clarke Series. Box 09-14. Eric Kent Clarke, "The Mental Health of the Coming Generation," *Social Welfare* 7 (10: July, 1925): 196.

[116] CAMHA. Provincial Psychiatric Clinics: lectures [B.T. McGhie (ed.)] May 1930, Burdett Harrison McNeel Fonds, F. 17.1.8. E.P. Lewis, "Psychiatric Clinics in the Toronto Public Schools," (19 May 1930): n.p.

Toronto youngsters from certain racial and ethnic backgrounds were also disproportionately represented in the city's auxiliary and opportunity classes from the 1920s to the mid-1940s. Again, IQ studies that linked mental ability to race and ethnicity, in the same way they linked it to class, helped to create the over-representation of specific groups in special education. Eric Clarke's surveys of the intelligence of Toronto schoolchildren in the early 1920s, which formed the basis for the TBE's special class policy, drew heavily on research that claimed to show racial disparities in intelligence. Lewis Terman's research on race and ethnicity and IQ clearly influenced Eric Clarke's perspective. In *The Measurement of Intelligence*, for example, Terman argued that further testing of the American population would reveal "enormously significant racial differences in general intelligence."[118] Alleged correlations of intelligence with race and ethnicity were common in American and Canadian IQ studies of this period.[119] Yet the racialization of intelligence in the pre-World War II period was also complex in a way that the one to one association between working-class or poor social status and low IQ was not. This complexity shaped Toronto auxiliary and opportunity class demographics with respect to race and ethnicity across the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. Often Canadian IQ studies purported to show that immigrant groups were less intelligent than Canadian born children of British descent. Yet, statistical aberrations that challenged this supposed truism regularly appeared in the same studies, creating complexity that bedevilled mental testers and eugenicists.[120] Jews, for example, were one of a small handful of ethnic and racial groups in Canada that were sometimes singled out for having above average intelligence, and for extraordinary scholastic achievements as well.[121] In his peculiar 1926 book, *An Experimental Investigation of the Mentality of the Jew in Ryerson Public School Toronto*, P.F. Munro, the principal of Ryerson PS, concluded that, compared to non-Jewish children at the school, Jewish children were "superior in intelligence."[122] He also noted that Jews were under-represented in the Ryerson PS special classes, relative to the Jewish population of the school as a whole. However Munro also qualified this finding by adding that: "Of the Gentiles [in the special class], two are negroes."[123] Many of the Canadian mental testers who, like Munro, uncovered similar evidence that certain ethnic and racial groups excelled beyond native born whites on IQ tests tried to explain the evidence away.[124] In one survey, of Western Avenue PS in Toronto, the CNCMH officials who conducted the study skipped an explanation altogether and blithely omitted results that showed children of immigrants had higher IQs than children of Canadian-born parents. This finding on immigrant IQs contradicted the CNCMH's restrictionist position on immigration and was most likely omitted for this reason.[125]

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[117] Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 69-70.
[118] See Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, 91-92.
[119] Tyack, 211-213; Gould 188-191. For Canadian examples, see Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 68-73; P.F. Munro, *An Experimental Investigation of the Mentality of the Jew in Ryerson Public School Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1926); Peter Sandiford and Ruby Kerr, "Intelligence of Chinese and Japanese Children," *The Journal of Educational Psychology* 17:6 (September 1926): 361-367.

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[120] McLaren, 60-63.

[121] On Toronto school authorities' views of Jewish schoolchildren's academic exceptionality as a group, see *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Chapman's report, 28-29. While some educators might concede that Jews scored better on intelligence tests and could be highly successful scholars, one of Canada's leading eugenicists, Dr. C.K. Clarke, remained adamant that Jews were inferior. Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991, 106).

[122] Munro, 23.

[123] Munro, 54.

[124] Sandiford and Kerr, 366; McLaren, 62.

The racial and ethnic makeup of auxiliary and opportunity classrooms in Toronto public schools reflected the complex racialization of intelligence. Across the period 1920 to 1945 Jewish and Anglo-Canadian children seem to have been under-represented in admissions to auxiliary and opportunity classes from The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, and East End PS. Italian children, Roma children (called 'Gypsies' at the time), and Chinese children (in the 1920s only) seem to have been over-represented. (See Table 3.4 and Table 3.5.) I reached these conclusions through inference, by comparing data taken from student records against the available data on the ethnic and racial makeup of Toronto schools and neighbourhoods in the 1910 to 1945 period. One source for this data is a school survey that Inspector G.H. Armstrong executed in 1913 on the background of students at The Ward PS and Armoury Park PS. (See Table 3.6) The other source is a 1934 Dominion Bureau of Statistics report on the ethnic and racial makeup of the different city wards where three schools I studied were located (See Table 3.7.)

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[125] E.J. Pratt conducted the survey for the CNCMH in 1921. Compare the unpublished draft of the study found in Pratt's papers with the two published accounts. The omission of the data showing that immigrants had higher IQs than Canadian-born children is quite deliberate. "The Application of the Binet-Simon Tests to a Toronto Public School," Victoria University [of the University of Toronto] Library & Special Collections. Edwin John Pratt Fonds. Box 12: File 77; E.J. Pratt, "The Application of the Binet-Simon Tests (Stanford Revision) to a Toronto Public School," *Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene*, 3:1 (April 1921): 94-116; E.J. Pratt, "Mental Measurements as Applied to a Toronto School," *The Public Health Journal*, 12:4 (April, 1921): 148-155. On the CNCMH's position on immigration see McLaren, 59-61.

Table 3.4. Student race/ethnicity/nationality/religion, auxiliary classes, The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS[1], East End PS[2], 1920-21 to 1929-30.

	The Ward PS		Armoury Park PS		East End PS		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
East. Europ., Jewish	45	48.39%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	45	39.47%
Anglo-Canadian	9	9.68%	8	44.44%	3	100.00%	20	17.54%
Italian	13	13.98%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	13	11.40%
Chinese	10	10.75%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	10	8.77%
American	2	2.15%	3	16.67%	0	0.00%	5	4.39%
Russian	3	3.23%	2	11.11%	0	0.00%	5	4.39%
English	1	1.08%	2	11.11%	0	0.00%	3	2.63%
Finnish	3	3.23%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	2.63%
Scottish	1	1.08%	2	11.11%	0	0.00%	3	2.63%
Polish	2	2.15%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	1.75%
Austrian	1	1.08%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.88%
mixed background	2	2.15%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	1.75%
Na	1	1.08%	1	5.56%	0	0.00%	2	1.75%
Total	93	—	18	—	3	—	114	—

Sources: Data from Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA), Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z. TDSBA, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11. TDSBA, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "East End PS" Microfilm reel 11 and Office Record Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 10.

[1] Includes records from four schools that the TBE merged into the new Armoury Park PS school building in 1930.

[2] East End PS did not have its own auxiliary or opportunity class. Data is for East End PS students sent to auxiliary/opportunity classes at a nearby school.

Table 3.5. Student race/ethnicity/nationality/religion, auxiliary and opportunity classes, The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS[1], East End PS[2], 1930-31 to 1944-45.

	The Ward PS		Armoury Park PS		East End PS		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Anglo-Canadian	29	24.17%	82	57.34%	4	26.67%	115	41.37%
English	5	4.17%	16	11.19%	7	46.67%	28	10.07%
Roma (Gypsy)	21	17.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	21	7.55%
East. Europ., Jewish	15	12.50%	5	3.50%	0	0.00%	20	7.19%
Scottish	3	2.50%	12	8.39%	3	20.00%	18	6.47%
Italian	14	11.67%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	14	5.04%
Austrian	5	4.17%	2	1.40%	0	0.00%	7	2.52%
Chinese	5	4.17%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5	1.80%
Polish	3	2.50%	2	1.40%	0	0.00%	5	1.80%
Ukrainian	5	4.17%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5	1.80%
American	1	0.83%	3	2.10%	0	0.00%	4	1.44%
Greek	0	0.00%	4	2.80%	0	0.00%	4	1.44%
Black, Canadian	3	2.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	1.08%
Czechoslovak	1	0.83%	1	0.70%	0	0.00%	2	0.72%
Indian (S. Asian)	1	0.83%	1	0.70%	0	0.00%	2	0.72%
Irish	1	0.83%	0	0.00%	1	6.67%	2	0.72%
Jewish, Canadian	2	1.67%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	0.72%
Romanian	1	0.83%	1	0.70%	0	0.00%	2	0.72%
Russian	1	0.83%	1	0.70%	0	0.00%	2	0.72%
Danish	0	0.00%	1	0.70%	0	0.00%	1	0.36%
Dutch	0	0.00%	1	0.70%	0	0.00%	1	0.36%
Finnish	1	0.83%	1	0.70%	0	0.00%	2	0.72%
French	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Macedonian	0	0.00%	1	0.70%	0	0.00%	1	0.36%
Newfoundlander	1	0.83%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.36%
Syrian	0	0.00%	1	0.70%	0	0.00%	1	0.36%
Welsh	0	0.00%	1	0.70%	0	0.00%	1	0.36%
Na	2	1.67%	7	4.90%	0	0.00%	9	3.24%
Total	120	—	143	—	15	—	278	—

Sources: Data from Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA), Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z. TDSBA, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11. TDSBA, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "East End PS" Microfilm reel 11 and Office Record Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 10.

[1] Includes records from four schools that the TBE merged into the new Armoury Park PS school building in 1930.

[2] East End PS did not have its own auxiliary or opportunity class. Data is for East End PS students sent to auxiliary/opportunity classes at a nearby school.

Table 3.6. Enrolment by ethnicity or nationality[1], selected Toronto schools, 1913.

	The Ward PS		Armoury Park PS[2]	
	N	%	N	%
Canada	110	17.49%	617	38.06%
England	40	6.36%	356	21.96%
Scotland	2	0.32%	72	4.44%
Ireland	0	0.00%	12	0.74%
U.S.A.	24	3.82%	120	7.40%
Russia[3]	371	58.98%	327	20.17%
Austria	44	7.00%	37	2.28%
Italy	16	2.54%	6	0.37%
Roumania	17	2.70%	29	1.79%
China	2	0.32%	21	1.30%
Other	3	0.48%	24	1.48%
Total	629	—	1621	—

Source: *Toronto Board of Education Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Armstrong's Report, 56.

[1] "Nativity or land of birth." (Source: *Toronto Board of Education Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Armstrong's Report, 56.)

[2] Includes records from four schools that the TBE merged into the new Armoury Park PS school building in 1930.

[3] Likely primarily, if not completely, Jewish. (See footnote 121 below for an explanation.)

Table 3.7. Toronto, Population by Race, Ethnicity, Religion and Ward, 1931. (Selected groups and wards.)[1, 2]

Ethnic Group	Ward 2 (Armoury Park PS) N	Ward 2 (Armoury Park PS) % of total	Ward 3 (The Ward PS) N	Ward 3 (The Ward PS) % of total	Ward 8 (East End PS) N	Ward 8 (East End PS) % of total	City N	City % of total
English	44,388	47.68%	28,487	44.25%	46,529	56.74%	282,759	44.80%
Irish	17,622	18.93%	12,074	18.75%	14,307	17.45%	114,315	18.11%
Scottish	17,277	18.56%	12,516	19.44%	15,189	18.52%	107,943	17.10%
Other British	986	1.06%	693	1.08%	798	0.97%	5,415	0.86%
Subtotal "Br[.] Races"[3]	80,273	86.22%	53,770	83.52%	76,823	93.68%	510,432	80.87%
Austrian	277	0.30%	229	0.36%	44	0.05%	1,403	0.22%
Finnish	458	0.49%	265	0.41%	133	0.16%	3,453	0.55%
"Hebrew"[3]	1,754	1.88%	1,817	2.82%	677	0.83%	45,305	7.18%
Italian	999	1.07%	1,395	2.17%	690	0.84%	13,015	2.06%
Polish	524	0.56%	338	0.52%	73	0.09%	8,483	1.34%
Russian	185	0.20%	239	0.37%	39	0.05%	1,694	0.27%
Chinese	206	0.22%	1,483	2.30%	144	0.18%	2,635	0.42%
Total population	93,099	—	64,383	—	82,008	—	631,207	—

Source: Dominion Bureau of Census (D.B.S.), "Population of the Municipal Wards of the Cities of Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Quebec and Ottawa by Quinquennial Age Groups, Conjugal Condition, Birthplace, Racial Origin, Religion, School Attendance and Literacy, By Sex, Census 1931," D.B.S. Seventh Census of Canada, Bulletin No. XL (Ottawa: 1934): Table 5.

[1] Toronto had eight wards in 1931. I selected Wards 2, 3, and 8 because these were the wards where Armoury Park PS (Ward 2 and part of Ward 3), The Ward PS (Ward 3), and East End PS (Ward 8) were located.

[2] The D.B.S. categorized residents into over 25 separate racial, ethnic, national, and religious categories. The categories that I selected for this table represent most of the same identities most often found amongst special class students from Armoury Park PS, The Ward PS, and East End PS, between 1920 and 1945.

[3] Dominion Bureau of Statistics terminology.

Anglo-Canadian students and Jewish students appear to have been under-represented in auxiliary and opportunity classes, judging from the numbers of these youngsters in the special classes compared to their numbers in school and neighbourhood populations. Anglo-Canadian children, that is boys and girls who were born in Canada of Canadian-born parents of British heritage, represented the greatest number of children from any ethnic or racial group admitted to auxiliary and opportunity classes at Armoury Park PS (1920-21 to 1944-45) at East End PS (1920-21 to 1929-30) and The Ward PS

(1930-31 to 1944-1945).[126] Considering, however, that Anglo-Canadians represented a sizeable majority in Toronto and in the three wards where these schools located (see Table 3.7), it seems likely that Anglo-Canadian children were actually under-represented in the special classes. At The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, and East End PS, in the period from 1920-21 to 1929-30, Anglo-Canadian children represented around 17.5 percent of young people admitted to auxiliary classes. (See Table 3.4.) At the same three schools in the period from 1930-31 to 1944-45, the same group represented around 41 percent (see Table 3.5) of auxiliary and opportunity class admissions. Yet, 80 percent of Torontonians in 1931 had British backgrounds, and many people of British heritage were born in Canada. Looking at individual schools confirms the conclusion that Anglo-Canadian children were under-represented in auxiliary and opportunity classes. For instance, at The Ward PS in the 1920-21 to 1929-30 period, Anglo-Canadian children represented 9.68 percent of auxiliary class admissions. Yet, the school, according to G.H. Armstrong's survey in 1913, was 17.68 percent "Canadian." (See Table 3.6.) The highest percentage of Anglo-Canadian students in auxiliary and opportunity classes at any of the schools in the period studied was 57.34 percent at Armoury Park PS, in the 1930-31 to 1944-45 period. Yet Ward 2, where most of Armoury Park PS school district was located, was made up of over 86 percent residents of British or Anglo-Canadian background.

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[126] I categorized the ethnic or racial background of special education students using several different markers found on student records, including the student's place of birth, father's place of birth (or mother's place of birth, in the case of single mothers), and student's religion. Where a student was born in Canada, I classified the child's race and ethnicity according to the father's place of birth. For example, a child born in Italy is categorized as Italian, as is a child born in Canada to an Italian-born father. In some cases, a child's racial identity was noted, even though there was no space to indicate 'race' on student record cards. I used this information about race where appropriate. Also, a few children's student records noted that they had parents who were each from different ethnic or racial backgrounds. I have listed these children as "mixed background" on the tables. Obviously, the categories that I have constructed for the purpose of analysis do not line up perfectly with how different students may have perceived their own racial, ethnic, religious, or national. But imperfect measures are the best we can hope for with the available evidence and I feel that it is important to make use of this evidence to examine the important question of the over- and under-representation of different groups of schoolchildren in special classes.

It seems likely that Eastern European Jewish pupils were also under-represented in auxiliary and opportunity classes, especially in the period before 1930. For instance, 48.39 percent of the children admitted to auxiliary classes at The Ward PS from 1920-21 to 1929-30 were Jewish. (See Table 3.5.) This number, while large, was nevertheless smaller than the percentage of Jewish students attending The Ward PS overall—58.98 percent, according to G.H. Armstrong's 1913 survey of the school. (See Table 3.6.)[127] For the post-1930 period it is possible that Jewish students switched to being over-represented in special classes at The Ward PS. After 1930, Jewish pupils were 12.5 percent of auxiliary and opportunity class enrolments of the school, a decline of some importance from the 1920s. However, The Ward PS's racial and ethnic population changed significantly as well in the period between Armstrong's 1913 survey and the end of the 1920s. Notably, the shift of Toronto's Jews westward, a resettlement that began in the 1910s, means that the Jewish population of The Ward PS was likely lower in the 1920s or 1930s than it was in 1913.[128] In this context, 12.5 percent Jewish pupils in auxiliary and opportunity classes may have meant over-representation.

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[127] Armstrong did not record the religion of students. However, given what historians have written about Jewish immigration to Canada from the Russian Pale in this period, it is very likely that the vast majority of the 371 pupils Armstrong identified at the school as "Russian" were Jewish. Robert F. Harney and Harold Troper, *Immigrants: A Portrait of the Urban Experience, 1890-1930* (Toronto: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1975), 1-2.

[128] Stephen A. Speisman, "St. John's Shtetl: the Ward in 1911," in Robert Harney ed., *Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834-1945* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985), 117-118.

In contrast to Anglo-Canadian and Jewish pupils, Italian, Chinese, and Roma ('Gypsy') children seem to have been over- represented in Toronto auxiliary and opportunity classes. (See Table 3.5.) Italian-Canadian children represented 13.83 percent of auxiliary class admissions at The Ward PS in the 1920s. The neighbourhood around the school had a somewhat large Italian population in this period, which may help to explain the number of Italian youngsters in the classes.[129] Nevertheless, the thirteen Italian pupils who were registered in special classes at The Ward PS in the 1920s (see Table 3.4) were drawn from what was likely a relatively small pool of Italians at that school. Italians were only 2.54 percent of the total school population at The Ward PS in 1913, according to Inspector Armstrong's survey. Moreover, Italian children, most of whom were Roman Catholic, were eligible to attend the city's separate schools. In 1917, over 200 Italian children were enrolled in downtown St. Patrick Catholic Separate School, which was located not far from The Ward PS.[130] Toronto separate schools also had auxiliary classes of their own, which opened in 1923.[131]

Chinese-Canadian children seem similarly over-represented in the elementary school special education classes—especially before 1930. Similar to the situation with Italians, the neighbourhood around The Ward PS was also home to a vibrant but small Chinatown.[132] Chinese children represented 10.75 percent of students admitted to the auxiliary classes at The Ward PS in 1920s (see Table 3.4), a number that seems large when compared to a small Chinese population, even in the Ward. (See Table 3.6 and Table 3.7.)

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[129] John E. Zucchi, "Italian Hometown Settlements and the Development of an Italian Community in Toronto, 1875-1935," in Harney ed., 121-146

[130] Robert T. Dixon, *We Remember, We Believe: A History of Toronto's Catholic Separate School Boards, 1841 to 1997* (Toronto: Toronto Catholic District School Board, 2007), 107.

[131] Dixon, 132-133.

[132] Dora Nipp, "The Chinese in Toronto," in Harney ed., 147-176

The ethnic, racial, religious, and national makeup of Toronto special education classes shifted in several important respects after about 1930. Generally speaking, auxiliary and opportunity classes enrolled greater proportions of youngsters from Anglo-Canadian backgrounds in the years 1930 to 1945. (See Table 3.5.) The main reason for this shift was likely the changing ethnic and racial dynamics of Toronto. Immigration restriction was imposed in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and the percentage of Torontonians born outside of Canada dropped from 38 percent at the beginning of the 1930s to 31 percent at decade's end.[133]

There were nevertheless many non-Anglo-Canadian children in Toronto's auxiliary and opportunity classes after 1930. Students that I will refer to as Roma (variously also known as "Gypsy," or "Rom") were greatly over-represented in the auxiliary and opportunity classes at The Ward PS in the 1930 to 1945 period. Youngsters from this group comprised 17.5 percent of special class admissions in this period (see Table 3.5), even though Roma were only a minute proportion of the Toronto population.[134] The history of the Roma in Toronto is not well documented at all. A small group of Roma, who were travellers, had made Toronto a regular destination as early as the 1910s, if not earlier than that. By the 1930s, Canadian Roma still travelled although they had become increasingly urban, with a few Roma in the 1930s taking apartments and storefronts in the Ward neighbourhood when their travels brought them to Toronto for part of the year.[135]

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[133] Donald Avery, *'Dangerous Foreigners': European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada 1896-1932* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979): 90-115; James Lemon, *Toronto Since 1918: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company and National Museums of Canada, 1985), 70.

[134] There are no statistics on the Roma population in Toronto in this period, although their population was likely very small. More recent Canadian estimates, from the last decades of the twentieth century (although before a relatively recent new Roma emigration from Eastern Europe) place the entire Canadian Roma population at about 5,000. Matt T. Salo, "Gypsies/Rom," *The Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples* (Multicultural History Society). < http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/mcc/ecp > (Accessed 4 May 2010).

Perceived intelligence was one of the most important lenses through which educators in Toronto assessed Roma children's school needs and suitability for special classes. Toronto Roma children scored poorly on IQ tests, which partly accounts for their presence in large numbers in auxiliary and opportunity classes.[136] School officials also perceived that Roma children lacked school experience, which made Roma boys and girls suitable candidates for special classes in the authorities' eyes. When Roma children returned to school in Toronto after having been on the road elsewhere, Toronto school officials placed them in the same auxiliary and opportunity classes, year after year. Floyd N., for instance, returned to The Ward PS five times between September 1938 and May 1941 and was placed in the same opportunity class each time he re-registered at school.[137] In addition to frequent movements, and a supposed lack of interest in formal schooling, school authorities in Toronto may have also placed Roma children in auxiliary and opportunity classes because they believed that Roma children were 'foreign,' that they lacked of familiarity with English, and that their behaviour would challenge school authorities. These were all common educational and social stereotypes about Roma in this period.[138]

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[135] In Canada most, but not all, 'Gypsies' are "Rom," or commonly known as 'Roma.' Salo. On Roma in Toronto in the first half of the twentieth century, see Harney and Troper, 38; Hooper, 75; Jennifer Bonnell, "Toronto's Underworld: The Don River Valley as a 'Repository for Undesirables'," (unpublished) Conference Paper (Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, Vancouver: 2008), 7-9. < http://www.cha-shc.ca/en/Annual_Meeting_59/items/6.html > (Accessed 4 May 2010). TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Glen Y.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Marilyn Y.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[136] See: TDSBA, "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Alexander G.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Delores K.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; "The Ward PS," O.R.C. Drawer J-M, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Marilyn Y.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[137] See, for example: TDSBA. "The Ward PS," O.R.C. Drawer A-D, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Floyd N.' O.R.C., A.D.P. See also: Mildred D. Hoyt, "Gypsy Gold," *Peabody Journal of Education* 24:1 (July 1946): 45.

In addition to working-class children, and youngsters from some ethnic and racial backgrounds, boys were also often over-represented in Toronto's auxiliary and opportunity classrooms. By the 1920s, some educationists were in fact quite concerned about the numbers of boys in special education programs for children with intellectual disabilities or learning difficulties. (Interestingly, I found no parallel concerns about the over-representation of working-class and poor children, or non-Anglo-Saxon children, in special classes—probably because educationists expected to see these groups in greater numbers in special education classes.) As early as the 1910s, educationists were alarmed about the unequal school achievement of boys and girls. Leonard Ayres, for instance, in *Laggards in Our Schools*, devoted an entire chapter to the subject of higher rates of elimination (dropping out) and 'retardation' amongst boys, whom he noted were thirteen percent more likely to be 'retarded' than girls.[139] Boys' behaviour was offered as one explanation of a supposed boy problem in special education. "The Auxiliary Class has been used in some schools as a disciplinary class to which bad boys—usually boys—are sent," argued Toronto psychologist Dr. E.D. MacPhee, who censured this practice in 1927.[140]

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[138] For views of educators in Toronto and elsewhere on Roma schoolchildren, as well as societal views of Roma more generally that fed these perspectives, see: Paul Bowen, "The Schooling of Gypsy Children in Surrey 1906-1933," *Journal of Educational Administration and History* 36:1 (April 2004): 57-67; Hoyt; Harney and Troper, 38; Salo; John Tylor Lyon, "'A Picturesque Lot': The Gypsies in Peterborough," *The Beaver* 78:5 (October-November, 1998): 25-31. Stereotypes do not represent facts. Evidence in the same sources above, and other sources, suggests that Roma were interested in public schooling by the 1930s, that Roma children returned to school year after year, and that their parents registered them in school when they put down stakes in a new city. See, for example, "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Theodore Q.' O.R.C., A.D.P. See also: George B. Oujevolk, "The Gypsies of Brooklyn in 1934," *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* Ser. 3, No. 14 (1935): 123; Hoyt, 45. Moreover, while it is true that Roma spoke their own languages (the "Vlach" dialects), their worldliness made them master polyglots who were fluent in multiple languages, including English. See Salo. Nor were Roma 'foreigners,' as many of them were born in Canada. See, for example, *Passim* Floyd N.

Not every educationist was as alarmed as MacPhee or Ayres about boys and special classes. Lewis Terman argued in *The Measurement of Intelligence* against the view that gender differences in intelligence were significant enough to warrant serious concern. He contended there was no truth to the view that boys clustered around the two poles of intelligence, 'genius' and 'mentally defective.' Terman's hypothesis was that a tendency for girls to exceed boys in intelligence until age fourteen, was reversed later, as boys supposedly asserted their rightful dominance over the greater share of brainpower.[141] Educators were probably further reassured that—regardless of intelligence —by high school graduation, girls would be channelled into careers in the waged world or as homemakers where they would not compete with men.[142]

Notwithstanding the occasional concerns about boys in special education that some educationists expressed (and notwithstanding their notable silence about girls who struggled academically), it appears that gender actually played a variable role in the demographics of Toronto's special education system in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. It is true that boys were sometimes disproportionately enrolled in special classes. When provincial school officials counted the numbers of boys and girls across Toronto's entire special class system, as they did yearly beginning in 1928-1929, they discovered that boys represented about 60 percent of auxiliary and opportunity class enrolments, and girls roughly 40 percent. This distribution lasted until the late 1930s. After roughly 1937 the gap widened—interestingly, around the time that provincial officials at the DOE changed the name of auxiliary classes to opportunity classes.[143] From approximately the mid-1930s to mid-1940s boys accounted for roughly two-thirds of opportunity class enrolments in Toronto, and girls one third. (See Table 3.8.)

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[139] Leonard P. Ayres, *Laggards in Our Schools: A Study of Retardation and Elimination in City School Systems* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1909), 150-158.
[140] E.D. MacPhee, "Behaviour in Auxiliary Classes," *Proceedings of the 66th Annual Convention of the O.E.A.* (Toronto: O.E.A., 1927), 132. See also, Munro, 22.
[141] Lewis Terman, *The Measurement of Intelligence* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1916), 69-72.
[142] Strong-Boag, 18.

Table 3.8. Enrolment in Toronto Board of Education auxiliary and opportunity classes, boys and girls, 1928-1929 to 1944-45.

	Girls	%	Boys	%	Tot.
1928-29	303	39.82%	458	60.18%	761
1929-30	308	40.53%	452	59.47%	760
1930-31	353	40.48%	519	59.52%	872
1931-32	347	38.64%	551	61.36%	898
1932-33	378	40.38%	558	59.62%	936
1933-34	385	41.22%	549	58.78%	934
1934-35	423	41.88%	587	58.12%	1010
1935-36	385	38.54%	614	61.46%	999
1936-37	327	34.28%	627	65.72%	954
1937-38	324	34.47%	616	65.53%	940
1938-39	336	37.17%	568	62.83%	904
1939-40	313	33.05%	634	66.95%	947
1940-41[1]	na	—	na	—	Na
1941-42	274	36.10%	485	63.90%	759
1942-43	262	34.11%	506	65.89%	768
1943-44	273	35.04%	506	64.96%	779
1944-45	253	33.87%	494	66.13%	747

Source: *Ontario Department of Education Annual Report,* years 1929 to 1945. "Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes."

[1] The DOE did not report special class statistics in 1941 and the Board's enrolment statistics are not differentiated by gender.

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[143] *DOE Report 1937*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 47.

Curiously, however, gender imbalances in auxiliary and opportunity classes appear to have varied by school. (See Table 3.9.) This variation may have been related to the availability of other special (though not special education) programs, specifically specialized vocational programs, that attracted boys from the special classes.

Table 3.9. Auxiliary and opportunity class enrolments by gender. The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS[1], East End PS[2], 1920-21 to 1944-45.

	Girls	% of tot.	Boys	% of tot.	Na	Total
Armoury Park PS	79	49.07%	81	50.31%	1	161
East End PS	6	33.33%	12	66.67%	0	18
The Ward PS	79	37.09%	131	61.50%	3	213
Total	164	41.84%	224	57.14%	—	392

Sources: Data from Toronto District School Board Archives, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "East End PS" Microfilm reel 11 and Office Record Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 10.

[1] Includes records from four schools that the TBE merged into the new Armoury Park PS school building in 1930.

[2] East End PS did not have its own auxiliary or opportunity class. Data is for East End PS students sent to auxiliary/opportunity classes at a nearby school.

Boys outnumbered girls nearly two to one in admissions to auxiliary and opportunity classes at The Ward PS, across the entire 1920-21 to 1944-45 period. Yet at Armoury Park PS, the numbers of boys and girls enrolling in the same type of classes were more or less equal across the same period. The relatively equal number of boys and girls in special classes at Armoury Park PS may have had something to do with a vocational program at nearby Church Street School for "Non-Academic Boys." The program opened in 1934.[144] The Church Street School program, which we will look at later in Chapter 7, was not strictly speaking a special school, although it paralleled special education in important ways. The school may have attracted boys who would have otherwise been eligible for special classes at Armoury Park PS.

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[144] *TBE Minutes 1934*, 18 April 1934, 81; Appendix No. 59, Management Report No. 9, 11 April 1934, Adopted 18 April 1934, 265. See also, Toronto District School Board (TDSBA). Vertical Files (VF). TBE-Schools-Elem.-Church. Private TBE Minutes. 11 April 1934, 63-66.

Learning, teaching, and curriculum in the auxiliary classes for 'subnormal' children in the 1920s

In the 1920s auxiliary classes emerged as a distinctive stream in Toronto public schools. The classes served a group of young people that school authorities set apart primarily by IQ score and ability, but also by class, race and ethnicity, and gender. Special educators designed the unique special program in auxiliary classes to suit what they perceived as the specific educational needs of boys and girls labelled 'subnormal.' Educationists based the pedagogical and curricular blueprint for auxiliary classes at least in part on what the science of IQ appeared to tell them about 'subnormal' schoolchildren's specific and limited mental capacities, their learning styles, and their vocational needs.

Educationists associated a child's IQ score with the child's *capacity* to learn. But they also associated children's IQ scores with *the manner* in which children learned. They ascribed learner traits to children diagnosed as 'subnormal' on the basis of that diagnosis and the IQ range associated with it (IQ 50 to 75).[145] Schoolmen and schoolwomen tended to view 'subnormal' children's intelligence and learning style as concrete in its nature. This allowed them to differentiate the learning of 'subnormals' from the supposedly more abstract thinking and learning styles of 'normal' youngsters. To educationists, the difference between abstract and concrete learning had to do with the degree and the extent of an individual's intelligence. Abstract intelligence represented "the highest form of intelligence," according, for instance, to Peter Sandiford.[146] Sandiford and other experts believed that young people in the 'subnormal' range of intelligence lacked the intellectual capacity to learn abstractly. Harry Amoss, a psychologist and eventually an Ontario Inspector of Auxiliary Classes as well, wrote that the 'subnormal' child "can be taught concepts of concrete things, mountain, lake, quart, mile, etc." But, he added, the 'subnormal' child "will never gain concepts of abstract things that is, doubly abstract concepts, such as honesty, justice, predicate adjective, or repeating decimal."[147] School authorities applied their beliefs about subnormal children's concrete learning to specific schoolchildren's cases. Dr. E.P. Lewis wrote in Martin T.'s Psychological Examination Report in 1928, for instance, that Martin "should be encouraged to make things with his hands for he has more ability in that line than with abstract material."[148] The experts also believed that other related traits distinctly characterized 'subnormal' learning. 'Subnormal' schoolchildren supposedly took a longer time to master knowledge; their attention spans were shorter; they were not capable of learning more than a few things at the same time; they did not relate concepts learned in one subject to the curriculum in another; nor could they transfer knowledge from subject to subject—according to educational experts.[149]

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[145] *TBE Annual Report 1920,* Chief Inspector's Report, 56-57.

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[146] Peter Sandiford, "Technical Education and the IQ," 155. See also, Peter Sandiford, "Subnormal Intelligence as an Educational Problem," *Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene* 1 (April 1919-January 1920): 67.

[147] Harry Amoss, "The Abnormal Pupil," *Proceedings of the 62nd Annual Convention of the O.E.A.* (Toronto: O.E.A., 1923): 423.

[148] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer E-I. Martin T. O.R.C.

[149] E.D. MacPhee, "Behaviour in Auxiliary Classes," *Proceedings of the 66th Annual Convention of the O.E.A.* (Toronto: O.E.A., 1927): 133

Intelligence measurement professionals also thought that IQ helped to establish a children's learning drives. Peter Sandiford believed that 'subnormal' boys and girls were "happy to live a life of mental torpor since mental activity is difficult for them."[150] Yet evidence from student records and other sources shows that many 'subnormal' students tried hard to learn and that many of their teachers worked hard to teach them. One twelve-year-old boy in Mrs. McFadyen's special education class in Kitchener, Ontario, at first repeatedly rebuffed his teacher's efforts to teach him reading, telling McFadyen "Honest, Mrs. McFadyen, it's no use. I've been in school for years, and couldn't learn to read—there's no use now." McFadyen and the boy persevered nonetheless. All of a sudden, the boy became unstuck while reading before the class one day. "In a burst of ecstasy almost, on his part," McFadyen related in her account of the boy's education, "after he had read a somewhat difficult paragraph, he exclaimed, 'Oh, Mrs. McFadyen, I *never* thought I'd be able to read like this; my mother thought I'd *never* be able to read, Oh I am so *glad* I can read,' ..."[151] According to Dr. E.P. Lewis, Joseph P., a pupil at The Ward PS who spoke Ukrainian at home and struggled with English, nevertheless was eager "to 'learn' he says."[152] Lewis also related that Peter H., a pupil at Armoury Park PS who met with him in 1929, "tries to do his best." Annie L., a student at The Ward PS, Lewis wrote "tries hard and does her best, but that is very poor."[153]

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[150] Peter Sandiford, "Subnormal Intelligence as an Educational Problem," 67.

[151] Mrs. McFadyen, "Grouping of Pupils so as to Utilize the Time of Each Profitably," Auxiliary Class Teachers' Section, *Proceedings of the 64th Annual Convention of the O.E.A.*, (Toronto: O.E.A., 1925): 183.

[152] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z. Joseph P. O.R.C.

[153] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0835, Peter H. O.R.C, A.D.P.; *passim*, Annie L. O.R.C., A.D.P.

In addition to linking IQ to learning style, Peter Sandiford and other experts in the field connected IQ and learning style to future occupation, and therefore to class. Sandiford associated supposedly lower order concrete learning with manual or blue-collar jobs and connected abstract learning to "rarer," and therefore more "valuable," professional skills and occupations. "In terms of intelligence," Sandiford claimed, "we say that a person needs a higher I.Q. for the successful learning of sciences, languages and mathematics than he needs for the successful learning of carpentry, plumbing, bricklaying, dressmaking and cookery." Sandiford argued that a minimum IQ of 105 was required to graduate from high school and for that reason the academic secondary schools, which led to the professions, should be restricted to young people possessing IQs of at least 115.[154] Other Toronto educators, such as C.C. Goldring, the Toronto school principal who, in the 1930s, would become Toronto's Superintendent of Schools, similarly linked intelligence to occupational preparation.[155] Once again, Sandiford, Goldring, and others, drew on Lewis Terman's work on intelligence in reaching their conclusions. "Intelligence tests," Terman wrote, "can tell us whether a child's native ability corresponds approximately to the median found in the professions, the semi-professional pursuits, the ordinary skilled trades, the semi-skilled trades, among unskilled laborers, etc., and this information is of great value in planning a child's education."[156]

This set of beliefs about the learning capacities, styles, and future vocations of 'subnormal' pupils contributed to how educators assessed and planned for special class students' instructional needs. Special educators in the 1920s cultivated a particular interest in progressive, hands-on, child-centred pedagogical techniques. These were progressive instructional methods, associated with what sometimes also known as the "New Education" in Canada.[157] Progressive pedagogies involved sense training, manual training, play learning, and a focus on individual instruction and enterprise—approaches that were less often used in mainstream classes, where traditionalist, teacher-centred methods that relied heavily on memorization and group recitation still ruled.[158] Special educators embraced progressive pedagogy for several reasons. They believed that 'subnormal' children had a unique concrete learning style. This learning style happened to be well suited to progressive instructional models. Moreover, throughout the interwar period, progressive, child-centred pedagogies and curricula were the leading alternative to the traditionalist approach that prevailed in most mainstream classrooms, making child-centred approaches attractive to special educators as a differentiated and modern option for their exceptional students. The principal of one of the junior vocational schools, W.J. Tamblyn, supported pedagogical progressivism in his schools because "in the special classes in the hospitals for the educationally sick, there should be the most modern equipment such as there would be in the hospitals for the physically sick."[159] There was also less pressure to embrace traditionalism in special classes because there was an assumption that traditional academic knowledge gained through memorization was of limited use to 'subnormal' boys and girls. Finally, smaller class sizes in the auxiliary classes provided more latitude to teachers, which allowed them to experiment with progressive approaches and to customize teaching to individual pupils. By provincial law, enrolment in the special classes for 'subnormal' children was not to exceed 32 pupils. Toronto auxiliary classes maintained a smaller enrolment than this.[160] If curricular formalism triumphed over progressivism in interwar Canadian schools, as Neil Sutherland has argued, then the special classes represented a unique holdout against some of the traditionalist approaches to education.[161]

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[154] Peter Sandiford, "Technical Education and the I.Q," 155-156. See also: *TBE Annual Report 1921*, Chief Inspector's Report, 57-58.

[155] Goldring, 32-35. See also: E.J. Pratt, "The Application of the Binet-Simon Tests (Stanford Revision) to a Toronto Public School," *Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene* 3:1 (April 1921): 99-100; Sinclair, 18.

[156] Terman, *Intelligence of School Children*, 287.

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[157] George S. Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall, 1986), 189.

[158] Tomkins, 189-200; Neil Sutherland, "The Triumph of 'Formalism': Elementary Schooling in Vancouver from the 1920s to the 1960s," *BC Studies* 69/70 (Spring-Summer 1986): 175-210.

[159] *TBE Annual Report 1928,* Chief Inspector Moshier's Report, 95. Marvin Lazerson argues that "Special education was appealing, moreover, because it was an apparently logical extension of the organizational, curricular, and pedagogical reforms of progressive education." Lazerson, 27.

There was variety in the progressive approaches that special educators in the 1920s employed. Sense training was central to the pre-reading exercises that Jennie Louden gave to her primary grade special class in 1921. Louden's pupils handled and matched sets made of coloured squares of cloth and wooden blocks. This foundational exercise with concrete materials was supposed to train pupils, through the senses of sight and touch, to match colours and shapes. The young students graduated to sorting wooden alphabet blocks, and eventually sorted words printed on cards with an accompanying picture. Throughout this process Louden expressly avoided introducing her students to the sounds associated with letters. Louden believed that the association of sounds to letters was too difficult for most children in her class to learn. She believed that like other special class pupils, they would get by best with a very rudimentary look-say method of reading instruction, where the aim was to get the child to recognize and remember a few important words.[162]

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[160] Hackett, Appendix J, 400. The student to teacher ratio across Toronto auxiliary classes in 1928-1929 was 16:1. *DOE Annual Report 1929*, Appendix G, "Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes," 30.
[161] See Sutherland, "The Triumph of 'Formalism.'" See also Tomkins, 199-200.

Play was another element of progressive special education pedagogy. In Toronto, Dr. Eric Clarke encouraged auxiliary class teachers to break up academic sessions with frequent play periods, because 'subnormal' learners supposedly had difficulty concentrating for long periods of times.[163] Through play 'subnormal' children in Toronto classes were also supposed to learn how to become well-behaved, responsible school citizens. Their structured play included such activities as folk dancing, nature study, playing store (to teach children how to handle money), and dominoes and checkers.[164]

The curriculum in auxiliary classes also included what can be best described as moral instruction, which received extra attention in auxiliary classes and at times even superseded academic learning. "Do not be zealous to teach [the 'mentally retarded' child] reading when he does not know how to use a pocket-handkerchief," one expert advised teachers.[165] Moral instruction emphasized the life skills that educators believed 'subnormals' lacked inherently: manners, respect for authority, proper hygiene, and self-control. Special class teachers in the elementary schools were told to assume that

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[162] Jennie C. Louden, "The Mentally-Retarded Child as a Primary Class Problem," *Proceedings of the 63rd Annual Convention of the O.E.A.* (Toronto: O.E.A., 1924): 106-108.

[163] *TBE Annual Report 1920,* Chief Inspector's Report, 59-61.

[164] Ibid; E.T. Seaton, "Classification and Time-Table in Auxiliary Classes," 181; *TBE Annual Report 1928,* Chief Inspector Moshier's Report, 94. On a similar play-based curriculum in Boston's special classes, see Osgood, 138-142.

[165] Arnold Gessell, quoted in Louden, 109.

'subnormal' pupils needed greater instruction than other students in politeness, respect and deference, awareness of others, and personal hygiene and grooming.[166]

Curriculum and pedagogy in Toronto's auxiliary classes in the 1920s were closely related to vocational goals as well. Concrete learning and manual training, educational approaches that educators believed were best suited to 'subnormal' learners, trained these boys and girls, Toronto school inspector N.S. MacDonald wrote, "to do with their hands which will enable them to become useful members of society as far as they are capable."[167] Boys in Toronto's auxiliary classes worked at simple carpentry with saws, chisels, and paring knives. They also wove rugs, caned chairs, and manufactured baskets, brushes, and wooden children's toys. Girls studied the domestic arts and sciences, including cooking, sewing, and the complex manufacture of sewn items such as hats and dresses. Boys and girls in special classes modelled with plasticine.[168] By 1928, 'subnormal' schoolchildren in Toronto's auxiliary classes followed a special curriculum that was 50 percent academic and 50 percent pre-vocational manual training. The stated purpose of this curriculum was to lead 'subnormal' children directly to admission to the junior vocational schools for 'subnormal' adolescents.[169]

Interestingly, in Toronto's auxiliary classes in the 1920s, young people discovered a progressive pedagogy and a curriculum that, in many ways, could be gentler than the rigid formalist approach found in mainstream classes.[170] In Mrs. McFadyen's Kitchener, Ontario auxiliary class, for instance, the girls formed a sewing circle. McFadyen also permitted them to take out their sewing and knitting when she read aloud to the class.[171] "For many young people," Daniel Rodgers and David Tyack argue in reference to the progressive approach, "the new shops and kitchens were surely more pleasant places to spend part of the day than the academic classrooms." Administrative progressives, who were mainly interested in the efficiencies that differentiated instruction might bring about, probably did not advance these alternative pedagogies mainly for their humane qualities.[172] Nevertheless, children in the special classes took advantage of what progressive pedagogy existed to shape a better school day for themselves. Special education offered at least one benefit that mainstream classes did not.

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[166] E.T. Seaton, "Classification and Time-Table in Auxiliary Classes," 181; "Minutes," Auxiliary Class Teachers' Section, *Proceedings of the 64th Annual Convention of the O.E.A.* (Toronto: O.E.A., 1925): 58-59.

[167] *TBE Annual Report 1921*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 105.

[168] *TBE Annual Report 1920*, Chief Inspector's Report, 59-61. See also: *TBE Minutes 1929*, Appendix No. 178, Report No. 7 of Special Committee of the Board Re. Purchasing and Distribution of School Supplies, Etc., 26 November 1929, Adopted 5 Dec 1929, 1557-1558.

[169] *TBE Annual Report 1928*, Chief Inspector Moshier's Report, 94.

Eugenics at school in the 1920s: Rise and decline in an IQ testing era

In the 1910s, eugenics shaped early special education policies in Toronto. The influence of eugenics continued to be felt in Toronto school policy in the 1920s, especially in special education policy. However, by decade's end, there was some decline in the eugenicists' direct influence on school policy and practices. At first, Toronto eugenicists, and their most important organization, the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene (CNCMH), benefited enormously from the particularly close relationship between eugenics, mental hygiene, and education that developed in Canada in the late 1910s and early 1920s.[173] Intelligence testing was the area of public education where Toronto eugenicists had the greatest influence. Eric Clarke's first survey of Toronto schools was carried out under CNCMH auspices.[174] As Toronto school psychiatrist from 1919 to 1926, Clarke tried to keep up the CNCMH's eugenic crusade to master the 'menace of the feebleminded.' He used school IQ surveys to support such claims as 'subnormal' youngsters were present in "goodly number" in gangs and that they were frequently truant and sexually licentious, "the real instigator[s] of wrong-doing."[175] As part of his reorganization of special classes, Clarke also requested much more authority over these schoolchildren for himself, through the office of school psychiatrist. Clarke characterized the "educationalists" in control of special classes as "a great weakness of the Toronto system." An expanded psychologist's department, Clarke maintained, could help to place 'subnormal' special class graduates in industrial jobs and new "observation centres," would allow psychologists to observe, "from every angle," each potential special class student over an examination period lasting a full week.[176] Yet, despite Clarke's early optimism about the possibilities for expansion, the CNCMH soon became a victim of its own success in promoting mental testing. The educationists that Clarke so disdained embraced mental testing—so much so that they wanted to control testing themselves. By the mid-1920s schoolmen and schoolwomen in Toronto had effectively pushed the CNCMH out of the public schools. By 1923, a new Ontario Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, Dr. S.B. Sinclair, took over intelligence testing from the CNCMH, sending the organized eugenics lobby's direct influence in public schools into decline.

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[170] See N. Sutherland, "The Triumph of 'Formalism'."
[171] Mrs. McFadyen, "Grouping of Pupils," 184.
[172] Daniel T. Rodgers and David B. Tyack, "Work, Youth, and Schooling: Mapping Critical Research Areas," in Harvey Kantor and David B. Tyack eds., *Work, Youth, and Schooling: Historical Perspectives on Vocationalism in American Education* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982), 279-280.

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[173] See Thomson, 59; Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal*, 19; Richardson, *Century of the Child*, 59-74.
[174] *TBE Minutes 1919*, 20 March 1919, 75 and 3 April 1919, 93.
[175] Eric K. Clarke, "Survey of the Toronto Public Schools," 184-185. See also, Emma De V. Clarke, "Social Problems Amongst the Feeble-Minded," *Proceedings of the Fifty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the O.E.A.* (Toronto: OEA, 1920), 328.
[176] CAMHA. Clarke Institute of Psychiatry/Toronto Psychiatric Hospital Fonds. Box 09-15, Series M-4 "Dr. Eric K. Clarke," Eric Clarke, "The Economic Value of a School Psychiatrist," 1; *TBE Annual Report 1920*, Chief Inspector's Report, 57-59; *TBE Annual Report 1921*, Chief Inspector's Report, 77. Clarke compared these clinics to the mental clinics at the federal facility for receiving immigrants at Quebec City, where he had also worked.

Nevertheless, Eric Clarke's position as school psychologist had allowed him to increase the degree of eugenicists' direct intervention in the lives of Toronto schoolchildren and their parents in the early 1920s. Ontario's earliest special education legislation, dating from 1911, permitted the school psychologist or another school official to visit children's homes.[177] Through home visits to special class pupils and candidates in the first half of the 1920s, which E.P. Lewis kept up later, Clarke married surveillance efforts intended to monitor the population of what he and Lewis saw as problematic neighbourhoods, with the diagnosis and education of 'subnormal' youngsters. Clarke and Lewis's home visits placed them alongside other state officials in this period, such as the visiting health nurses from Toronto's Department of Public Health, who were known to visit and to both help and meddle with families in straightened circumstances.[178]

The tone of Clarke and Lewis's reports on the home conditions of a few of the schoolchildren they examined corresponded closely with the social reform and social control concerns of early-twentieth-century eugenicists. In their reports, Drs. Clarke and Lewis seem consumed by everything social reformers feared about low-income neighbourhoods, such as The Ward, and blamed on residents of these neighbourhoods: sexual immorality, crime, improper living conditions, poverty, and working-class immigrants' supposed ignorance.[179] Nicholas S. was one Toronto schoolchild who experienced Clarke's home visits first hand. Nicholas lived in the Little Italy located in The Ward. He first came to Eric Clarke's attention late in the 1921-22 school year.[180] Despite what Clarke saw as the boy's rather numerous intellectual shortcomings, Nicholas actually managed a score of 82 on his first IQ test, which saved him from the label 'subnormal.' But Clarke was not satisfied with examining just Nicholas's mind. Something about the boy caught Clarke's attention, and he inquired about Nicholas's family life, querying: "history of immorality in [the] family. (?)" Thus Nicholas S.'s family entered the purview of moral regulation, where they remained for the next four years, enduring several visits from Clarke or Lewis to their home. In the winter of 1924, Clarke commented on Nicholas and his parents and siblings: "Family live in six-roomed house, five children under 12 years. Italians…" A year later he reported that Nicholas's "home conditions [were] fair."[181] But Clarke was still suspicious that the family was bootlegging (Ontario was dry from 1916 to from 1926[182]) and that the Public Health Nurses, did not "know [the] family very well." These visits persisted even though

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[177] Hackett, Appendix D, 389-390.

[178] CAMHA. E.P. Lewis, "Psychiatric Clinics in the Toronto Public Schools," (19 May 1930): n.p. See also, Kari Dehli, "'Health Scouts' for the State? School and Public Health Nurses in Early Twentieth-Century Toronto," *Historical Studies in Education* 2:2 (1990): 254-255 and Mona Gleason, "Race, Class, and Health: School Medical Inspection and 'Healthy' Children in British Columbia, 1890-1930," *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 19:1 (2002): 99-104.

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[179] Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), 129-146. See also: Bureau of Municipal Research, "What is 'the Ward' Going to do with Toronto?" (Toronto: Bureau of Municipal Research, 1918).

[180] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C, Drawer A-D, "The Ward PS" A.D.P. Drawer A-L., 'Nicholas S.' O.R.C., A.D.P. On 'the Ward' as a Little Italy, see Zucchi, 121-146.

[181] *Passim* Nicholas S.

[182] Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 273.

Nicholas's IQ remained constant, never dipping below 75, and Clarke and Lewis never directly recommended him for a special class. [183]

School psychologists subjected other families whose children attended The Ward PS to similar badgering.[184] A visit at home from the school board psychologist was probably mostly annoying to working-class parents, who had much to do to support their families and little time in which to do it. Over-interested school psychologists were also likely threatening, especially when these visitors representing the state started to ask questions about whether or not a special education student's family was abusing the city's charitable relief agencies, as Dr. Lewis suspected Jack L.'s family was doing.[185] Nicholas S.'s story, or the story of Jack L. and his family, are evidence of the considerable influence on the lives of schoolchildren in the 1920s of school psychologists who were tied directly to the eugenics movement.

Eric Clarke and E.P. Lewis's tales of sordid school 'subnormality' in the 1920s sounded a lot like Helen MacMurchy's stories of 'feeblemindedness' from the preceding decade. These stories were intended to support eugenics policies by showcasing the supposed 'menace of the feebleminded.' At least at first, Clarke, like MacMurchy, was also able to find a willing audience of schoolmen and schoolwomen who were also interested in eugenics. One TBE Trustee in particular, Edith L. Groves, took an avid interest in eugenics. Groves, a former teacher, was a passionate and energetic social reformer who drew overt political support from the Toronto Home and School Council and was a close friend of Helen MacMurchy. Her eclectic interests also included her literary work as a children's poet and playwright and her volunteer work as a "crack shot" secretary of the Ladies' Canadian Rifle Club and an executive member of the Toronto Committee on Mental Hygiene. In 1919, the newly elected Groves was one of the Toronto school trustees designated to respond to inquiries from the Hodgins Commission (Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Mentally Defective and Feeble-Minded in Ontario). Groves' contact with the royal commission proved prophetic. Her involvement inspired her to adopt special education as her particular cause, which she championed as a TBE Trustee from 1919 to 1931, and as the Board's first female chairperson in 1929.[186] One of Groves's first successes was helping to convince the Board to hire Eric Clarke as its first school psychologist in 1919.[187]

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[183] *Passim* Nicholas S.

[184] See TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M. Anthony T. O.R.C.; "The Ward PS," O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z. Isaac B. O.R.C.

[185] *Passim* Ida L.; TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. Katie L. O.R.C., A.D.P.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. Jack L. O.R.C., A.D.P.

However, 1919, the year that marked the arrival of Groves and Clarke, also marked the departure of Helen MacMurchy and, perhaps paradoxically, the beginning of the end of eugenics' direct influence on public schooling in Toronto. MacMurchy left Toronto and the provincial government for a more promising position with the federal

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[186] Mrs. W.E. [Edith L.] Groves, "Address of Welcome to the Auxiliary Class Teachers of Ontario," *Proceedings of the Sixty-Second Annual Meeting of the O.E.A.* (Toronto: OEA, 1923), 260-261. TDSBA. Vertical Files (VF). T.B.E. Biography Groves, Edith; "Officers and Executive of Toronto Committee on Mental Hygiene—Sept. 1923." "Schools Mourn Famed Leader in Mrs. Groves," newspaper clipping, n.d; Helen MacMurchy, "Foreword: Edith Lelean Groves," in E.L. Groves (posthumous) *Everyday Children* (Toronto: The Committee in Charge of the Edith L. Groves Memorial Fund for Underprivileged Children, 1932); CAMHA. Clarke Institute of Psychiatry/Toronto Psychiatric Hospital Fonds. C.K. Clarke Series. Box 10-08, "Toronto Committee on Mental Hygiene"; Kari Dehli, "Women and Class: The Social Organization of Mothers' Relations to Schools in Toronto, 1915 to 1940," Ph.D. diss. (University of Toronto, 1988): 250-251, 295-301. See also, Edith Lelean Groves (posthumous), *Everyday Children* (Toronto: The Committee in Charge of the Edith L. Groves Memorial Fund for Underprivileged Children, 1932).

[187] *TBE Minutes 1919*, Appendix No. 140, Report No. I. of the Committee Appointed by the Board Re Auxiliary Classes, 28 July 1919, Adopted as amended 28 August 1919, 873; *TBE Minutes 1920*, Appendix No. 10, "Auxiliary Classes. Special Report Dr. Helen MacMurchy to the Toronto Board of Education" 9 January 1920, 13-14.

Department of Health in Ottawa. S.B. Sinclair replaced her as Ontario's Inspector of Auxiliary Classes. Unlike MacMurchy, who was a physician, Sinclair was an educator. He had later trained as a psychologist, earning his doctorate in that field. A former elementary school principal, high school teacher, and teacher-educator, Sinclair also considered himself an educational progressive. Like many progressives he was also a eugenicist.[188] Sinclair was naturally enthusiastic about the cutting edge concept of IQ. "Fifty years ago," he wrote in 1923, "a person with only half the intelligence or mental strength of people of normal mentality was said to be 'half-witted.'" In the age of IQ, Sinclair marvelled, that person was recognized as having a scientifically calculated IQ of 50.[189] Sinclair wrote his 1931 book, *Backward and Brilliant Children*, in part to help teachers and other interested non-expert parties to master the canon of intelligence measurement—"the very interesting and valuable research work done by Binet, Terman, Goddard, Fernald, Burt, Tredgold and many others."[190]

Sinclair wanted to take IQ testing out of the hands of the CNCMH and its experts. Before Sinclair came on the scene, the CNCMH had been charging the province a fee for school surveys. People affiliated with the CNCMH, such as Eric Clarke, were reluctant to surrender any testing authority to Sinclair. As physicians, Clarke and the others jealously guarded their professional authority over testing and abhorred Sinclair's idea that he and his assistant, Lucy DeLaporte, or, worse, non-expert teachers, could carry out mass testing of schoolchildren. The upstart idea of teachers administering tests, was in fact

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[188] Hackett 129-130.
[189] *DOE Report 1923*, Appendix I, "Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes," 70.
[190] Sinclair, 2-3.

Terman's fault, Eric Clarke's father C.K. Clarke lamented. Terman's "... stimulation of hosts of amateurs, especially teachers, whose work is harmful, being limited by lack of vision and knowledge, or a proper conception of the significance of the tests" threatened to insert pedagogues into matters of the mind where Clarke believed teachers did not belong.[191]

However, Sinclair's determination to control testing eventually prevailed. In 1923 the Ontario DOE secured for itself the exclusive right to do intelligence testing. This effectively halted the participation of groups such as the CNCMH in school-based testing in Toronto. (Similarly, Gerald Thomson argues that once the Vancouver School Board created its own Bureau of Measurements, in 1927, special education passed from the hands of eugenics lobby groups in that city and into the purview of school officials who used testing and special classes to reorganize schools.[192]) By the late 1920s, the heyday of the organized eugenics movement's direct influence on school policy and their direct involvement in IQ testing in the schools had passed, although eugenicists would continue to indirectly influence trends in education, testing, and educational psychology for some time to come.

Conclusion

In 1926, Toronto school principal Dr. P.F. Munro referred to the intelligence testing movement as "the greatest single contribution to the field of education in our time."[193] The movement's effects on special education were especially profound. The science of IQ transformed educationists' understandings of learning difficulty. The concept of IQ condensed varied explanations of learning problems into one, overarching cause: low native intelligence that was inborn and fixed, and that could be measured with an IQ test. As school authorities in Toronto consolidated the special class system at the elementary school level in the 1920s they replaced remedial classes for 'backward' children with streamed auxiliary classes for boys and girls that IQ tests helped to label 'subnormal.' Streaming was uneven. Working-class, poor, racialized and ethnic minority children (most notably, Italian and Roma children) as well as boys, were often over-represented in special classes, from the 1920s to the mid-1940s. In the 1920s, the science of IQ dominated the labelling process and children who acquired labels such as 'subnormal' felt the consequences of the testing moment long after the test had faded from their immediate experience.

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[191] Hackett, 134-140. See also, Thomson, 95-96, on the CNCMH's role as a national testing agency. CAMHA. Clarke Institute of Psychiatry/Toronto Psychiatric Hospital Fonds. C.K. Clarke Series. Box 12-02. Scrapbook. C.K. Clarke, "The Fourth Maudsley Lecture," Reprinted from *The Journal of Mental Science*, July, 1923, 15-18. Terman had always planned that with some basic training teachers could deliver his tests. Chapman, 80. On the professional threat this posed to psychiatrists see Zenderland, 254-260.

[192] Thomson, 245. See also, Margret A. Winzer, *From Integration to Inclusion: A History of Special Education in the 20th Century* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 2009), 91-93.

Young people, especially young people with disabilities or learning difficulties, felt intensely the enormous changes that IQ testing brought to public education. The IQ testing moment was largely a new experience for boys and girls in the1920s, but it quickly became one of the most important aspects of the education of children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Young people were vulnerable in the testing moment and their trepidation, inattentiveness, and even audacity and disobedience, suggest their lack of control in a situation dominated by influential adults. Yet, at times, and in very specific ways, young people were actors in the testing moment as well. Once actually in an auxiliary class, children encountered a distinctive pedagogy and curriculum customized to the supposed needs of 'subnormal' learners. Leaning on IQ studies that connected learning style to intelligence, educators embraced the notion that 'subnormal' learners learned concretely and were best taught along progressive lines, in preparation for unskilled jobs.

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[193] Munro, 6.

Eugenics was an important feature of the mass IQ testing movement. It influenced special education as well, particularly through intrusive home inspections that school psychologists carried out in the 1920s, and through the sorting and streaming of special class students. However, over time eugenicists lost direct influence on special class policy and practice in Toronto, as educationists gained the tools themselves to test and stream young people by ability.

By the early 1920s, Toronto school authorities had already developed the next step in the school careers of youngsters who they streamed into auxiliary classes. In 1923, public school authorities opened Toronto's first junior vocational schools, where the city's adolescents who were labelled 'subnormal' further experienced the ability streaming and special curriculum that had come to characterize auxiliary classes. It is these schools, and young people's experiences in them, that we turn to next.

Chapter 4. Special Education for Work and Life: Junior Vocational and Handicraft Schools, 1923-1945.

Enrolment at Toronto's Central Technical School reached an astonishing 2,700 students in September 1927. The addition of a thirteenth portable crowded out the last spot of grass on the schoolyard. But the students kept coming. With ever diminishing spare room, Mr. Gillespie, a young "physical culture" teacher who would go on to become Central Tech principal, was dispatched to the school basement. Gillespie rolled up his sleeves, and pitched in to clear a coal stack so that another class could be squeezed into a space near the boiler, in the seams of the bursting school.[1]

The 1920s remade secondary schooling in Ontario. New attendance laws and growing demand for secondary education filled high school buildings. Technical and commercial schools were in especially high demand. By no means did every eligible young person enter the high school in these years. Even by the late 1940s, only 40 percent of fifteen to nineteen year olds in Ontario were enrolled in school. Yet the new demand in the interwar period was high enough that schools had to work frantically to keep up, as Mr. Gillespie discovered in 1927. In the 1920s, the Toronto Board of Education (TBE) opened Eastern High School of Commerce (1925), Western Technical-Commercial School (1928), and composite Northern Vocational School (1930), while also expanding and rebuilding several of the city's academic high schools, the collegiate institutes.[2]

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[1] E.A. Hardy and Honora M. Cochrane, *Centennial Story: The Board of Education for the City of Toronto* (Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1950), 150.

[2] Hardy and Cochrane, 150-154. See also Robert Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 112-117; Cynthia Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence*

Toronto school officials also extended special education into the secondary schools in the 1920s. They did so while also expanding and consolidating special classes at the elementary school, as we saw in the last chapter. In 1923 school officials opened Toronto's first programs for adolescent special class pupils (twelve- to sixteen-year-olds). These so-called junior vocational schools (renamed handicraft schools in 1935[3]) helped create greater secondary school program differentiation, as high school became part of the experience of increasing numbers of young people, including hundreds of "sub-normal adolescents."[4] This chapter covers the development of a policy for junior vocational schools for adolescents in the 1920s and looks at these schools in the context of the shifting interplay of youth, disability, schooling, and work—from 1923 to the end of World War II (WWII). Four main factors contributed to the development of junior vocational and handicraft schools in Toronto: changing secondary school enrolments in the 1920s; the rise of vocationalism in public schooling; workforce changes after World War I (WWI) and a declining juvenile employment market; and, social anxieties about youth in the interwar period. Toronto school authorities initially designed the junior vocational schools for adolescents labelled 'subnormal' (IQ 50 to 75) who had grown too old for auxiliary classes in elementary schools. However, they soon discovered that they could also use junior vocational schools to educate another group of young people that IQ

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and the Making of Modern Canada (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006), 100-101. On enrolment statistics in the late 1940s, see: R.D. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario's Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 13.

[3] *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Minutes 1935*, Appendix No. 24, Advisory Vocational Report No. 3, 12 February 1935, Adopted 21 February 1935, 152.

[4] *TBE Minutes 1923*, 18 January 1923, 16; Appendix No. 28, Advisory Industrial Report No. 3, 6 February 1923, Adopted 15 February 1923, 131; "Sub-normal pupils to be instructed on separate lines," *Toronto Globe* (7 February 1923): 11.

tests had identified—so called 'dull-normal' pupils (IQ 75 to 90), whom school officials considered below average but not intellectually disabled. As a result, junior vocational and handicraft schools came to represent both special education—a program customized to the needs of children labelled as intellectually disabled (the 'subnormal' group)—and the streaming of high school students into vocational programs by ability, IQ, and class.

This chapter also examines young people's experiences in junior vocational and handicraft schools, from the 1920s to the mid-1940s. Officially, junior vocational and handicraft schools promised to prepare adolescents for work and life with a vocational curriculum. As adolescents nearing school-leaving age, the young people eligible for these schools had greater opportunities than other special class pupils to weigh what junior vocational and handicraft schools actually offered and to make decisions that affected their own schooling. A web of factors pulled some young people into the junior vocational and handicraft schools and pushed other young people out. These pull and push factors included family decisions based upon changing workforce and economic conditions; young people's and their parents' perspectives on the vocational curriculum; compulsory attendance rules and their enforcement; and individual family decisions shaped by considerations related to class, immigration and ethnicity, age, and gender.

A new special education policy for the adolescent 'subnormal': Junior vocational schools

Toronto school officials opened two special education junior vocational schools for 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' adolescents in 1923. These gender-segregated schools, for twelve- to sixteen-year-old youngsters, were approved by provincial legislation in

1924. In 1927 the TBE opened a second girls' junior vocational school, bringing the total number of junior vocational schools for boys and girls to three.[5] By 1935, when the Board changed the name of the junior vocational schools to handicraft schools, there were 614 boys and 588 girls enrolled in these special classes.[6] The junior vocational and handicraft schools represent the policy response of Toronto educationists to important changes in educational and social approaches to youth in the decade or so after WWI. Four important changes created the policy climate for Toronto public schools to expand the special education system upwards into the secondary schools.

Changing compulsory attendance laws and fast-rising and diversifying enrolments are the first of four main factors that compelled Toronto schoolmen and schoolwomen to create special schools for 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' adolescents after 1920. New compulsory attendance laws entered the horizon in May 1918 when Premier W.H. Hearst appointed Toronto Anglican clergyman H.J. Cody to the Minister of Education post. Hearst gave Cody a firm mandate to reconstruct post-WWI Ontario society by expanding and extending compulsory education. The School Attendance Act and the Adolescent School Attendance Act were implemented in stages in 1920 and 1921. The most significant feature of the attendance acts—provisions that increased the minimum school leaving age from fourteen to sixteen—took effect on 1 January 1921. Most adolescents

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[5] *Ontario Department of Education (DOE) Annual Report 1924*, Appendix I, Report of the Provincial School Attendance Officer, 50. *TBE Minutes 1923*, Appendix No. 28, Advisory Industrial Report No. 3, 6 February 1923, Adopted 15 February 1923, 131; Appendix No. 55, Advisory Vocational Report No. 6, 27 March 1923, Adopted 5 April 1923, 426; Appendix No. 67, Advisory Industrial Report No. 7, 10 April 1923, Adopted 19 April 1923, 504-505; Appendix No. 183, Advisory Industrial Report No. 18, 11 December 1923, Adopted 20 December 1923, 1251; *TBE Minutes 1926*, 2 September 1926, 189; *TBE Minutes 1927*, Advisory Industrial Report No. 14, 30 June 1927, Adopted 1 September 1927, 883.

[6] *TBE Annual Report 1935*, Appendix No. 24, Advisory Vocational Report No. 3, 12 February 1935, Adopted 21 February 1935, 152; *DOE Annual Report 1936*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 43.

(with exception of a few fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds who could obtain work permits) were now compelled to attend school until age sixteen.[7]

In fact, secondary school enrolment in Ontario was already growing rapidly by the time Cody implemented the new attendance laws, which merely accelerated enrolment growth.[8] In TBE schools enrolment nearly tripled across the secondary panel, ballooning from 7,221 pupils in 1921 to nearly 21,000 pupils in 1929, and easily outpacing elementary school enrolment growth.[9] Secondary schools became dramatically more diverse as enrolment rose. The student body in the 1920s was more female, more working-class, and more immigrant than ever before.[10] Lynne Marks determined that working-class enrolments in Toronto secondary schools grew from nineteen percent of the total roll in 1901, to 33 percent in 1914, and to 45 percent by 1929. Working-class girls, in particular, contributed to mounting blue-collar attendance through their large appetite for commercial courses.[11] Moreover, secondary school pupils in the 1920s stayed in school longer than the previous generation, creating even greater pressures on the schools.[12]

To handle the new enrolment and to deal with its heterogeneity, urban school authorities turned to the familiar administrative progressive technique of functional differentiation that we examined in Chapter 2. In Toronto, officials met the new onslaught of secondary school students with a broadening array of differentiated programming, a policy approach supported by other administrative progressive educational innovations, such as vocational training programs, vocational guidance, and IQ testing. Secondary school expansion and differentiation was especially evident in the new specialized commercial and technical schools that sprang up in the 1920s. In 1921, there were 2,427 boys and girls enrolled in high school technical and commercial programs (full time and part time) in Toronto. Their numbers had increased fourfold by 1929, by which time Toronto's 10,288 technical and commercial school students outnumbered 9,661 academic collegiate institute scholars.[13]

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[7] Stamp, 107-117. See also, Comacchio, 99-106.
[8] Stamp, 106-107.
[9] See: *DOE Annual Report 1921*, "Table N", 216, 224 and "Table P", 248; *DOE Annual Report 1929*, "Table 10", 202 and "Table 16", 308.
[10] Stamp, 111; Comacchio, 99-106.
[11] Clara Thomas (York University) Archives and Special Collections. MRP 240. Lynne Marks, "New Opportunities within the separate sphere," MA major research paper (York University: 1984), 51.
[12] Comacchio, 100.

Amongst the thousands of new secondary school students who passed through the doors of school buildings in the 1920s were a group of young people whom educators believed required special education. Ontario's new attendance laws caused Toronto school officials to contemplate, for the first time, the challenge of educating significant numbers of so-called 'subnormal' adolescents. Toronto school inspector G.K. Powell, for instance, observed in 1920 that whereas up to that point, many 'mentally defective' children left school when they reached age fourteen, "and it is a blessing that they do," now these youngsters would remain in the schools until the age of sixteen. The "impossible task" of educating these pupils, Powell wrote, promised to overwhelm teachers and 'normal' children alike.[14] Searching for a solution, Inspector Powell reached the same conclusion that other Toronto educational progressives, such as Trustee Edith Groves, arrived at as they faced the prospect of 'subnormal' teenagers in Toronto schools. The public education system, they decided, needed even greater differentiation of the secondary school panel, differentiation that would go beyond new technical or commercial schools, if the Toronto schools were to effectively handle 'subnormal' adolescents. "If under the operation of the Adolescent Act, such young people as I have described are compelled to remain at school the work for them must be very different from that of the ordinary class," G.K. Powell concluded. "We must introduce still more 'fads and frills' so that the school may be of use to them and not be merely a prison."[15] Differentiation, an approach that schoolmen and schoolwomen were already using to accommodate working-class students in the high schools in the 1920s, seemed a natural solution to the problem of accommodating 'subnormal' adolescents as well.

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[13] See: *DOE Annual Report 1921*, "Table N", 216, 224 and "Table P", 248; *DOE Annual Report 1929*, "Table 10", 202 and "Table 16", 308. If, as some historians have argued, "vocationalism"—the idea that schooling should prepare young people directly for work—arrived later to Canadian schools than to schools south of the border, then Toronto was surely an exception. See: Marvin Lazerson and Timothy Dunn, "Schools and the Work Crisis: Vocationalism in Canadian Education," in *Precepts, Policy and Process: Perspectives on Contemporary Canadian Education*, eds. Hugh A. Stevenson and J. Donald Wilson (London, ON: Alexander, Blake Associates, 1980): 288; Ivor F. Goodson and Ian R. Dowbiggin, "Vocational education and school reform: the case of the London (Canada) Technical School, 1900-1930," *History of Education Review* 20:1 (1991): 39-60.

Changing enrolments, however, were not the only factor that pushed Toronto educationists towards developing a special class policy for adolescents. Another factor encouraging Toronto educationists to expand the city's special classes into the secondary schools in the 1920s was the rise of vocationalism. Before 1880, educational historians have shown, the public generally did not directly associate what a child learned in school with the occupation that child would eventually pursue. As the twentieth century dawned, this perspective changed and people came to see preparation for work as schooling's natural function, perhaps even its main function. Historians call this new outlook 'vocationalism.'[16] "How best to bridge the way, for thousands of young people, between the public schools and occupational life," as Toronto's Chief Inspector R.H. Cowely put it, was an important challenge to educators in the 1920s.[17]

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[14] *TBE Annual Report 1920,* Inspector G.K. Powell's Report, 122. See also, *TBE Minutes 1923,* 18 January 1923, 16.

[15] *TBE Annual Report 1920,* Inspector G.K. Powell's Report, 121-122. See also, *TBE Annual Report 1922,* Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 83 and Eric Keith [sic] Clarke, "Some Phases of the Mental Hygiene Problem," *The Public Health Journal* 14:10 (October 1923): 541.

Vocationalism bonded with the functional differentiation that the administrative progressives introduced into public schooling. Vocationalism promised to adapt secondary school curricula, and to differentiate school programs, in ways that would address what educators perceived as the varying needs of young people facing employment in the Progressive age's new industrial capitalist (and segmented and de-skilled) workplaces.[18] School-based vocational guidance programs also meshed well with the use of vocational guidance to slot young people into jobs in a supposedly scientific manner as part of the efficiency-minded response of business and the state to economic planning and policy after WWI. "Efficiency," Jennifer Stephen has argued about the post-WWI era, "was the watchword: national efficiency, industrial efficiency, individual and social efficiency."[19] Preparing 'subnormal' adolescent boys directly for industrial employment, and preparing girls for domestic service or marriage, as we shall see, were two major curricular focuses of Toronto's junior vocational schools.

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[16] The transformation in education that was vocationalism is well-documented in the American context. The essays in Harvey Kantor and David B. Tyack's *Work, Youth, and Schooling: Historical Perspectives on Vocationalism in American Education* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982) supply an excellent discussion. An equally important work is Marvin Lazerson and Norton W. Grubb, "Introduction," in *American Education and Vocationalism: A Documentary History* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1974): 1-56. The Canadian historiography includes Dunn and Lazerson; Goodson and Dowbiggin; Nancy Jackson and Jane S. Gaskell, "White Collar Vocationalism: The Rise of Commercial Education in Ontario and British Columbia, 1870-1920," *Curriculum Inquiry* 17 (2, 1987): 177-201; Ruby Heap, "'Schooling Women for Home or for Work?' Vocational Education for Women in Ontario in the Early Twentieth Century: The Case of the Toronto Technical High School: 1892-1920," in *Gender and Education in Ontario*, eds. Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1991), 197-245.

[17] *TBE Annual Report 1922*, Chief Inspector Cowley's Report, 58-59. See also: E.A. Bott, "Studies in Industrial Psychology. I. Point of View and II. Juvenile employment in relation to public schools and industries in Toronto," (Toronto: University Library, 1920), 6.

[18] See Marvin Lazerson, *Origins of the Urban School: Public Education in Massachusetts, 1870-1915* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 97-201 and David B. Tyack, *One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 188-191.

After WWI as well, important changes reshaped the urban labour market, with specific effects for adolescents. These changes pushed young people into schools. In the 1920s, all young people, but especially young people whom the secondary schools had ill-served before WWI—including supposedly 'subnormal' adolescents—had fewer opportunities to leave school for work and more reasons to stay in school longer. Before the war it was relatively easy for adolescents and even younger children to find jobs customized to their age and size. After 1918 juvenile employments went into decline. In Hamilton, Ontario, for instance, as Craig Heron has shown, apprenticeships slumped after WWI; light manufacturing that provided jobs for youngsters was replaced by heavy industry that used adult male labour; and work processes were transformed through mechanization so that young people's traditional jobs, such as fetching and carrying materials, were now done by machines. Moreover adult male immigrants competed for work at young people's wages.[20] The selection criteria for industrial jobs shifted at practically the same time, as vocational guidance took greater hold. Scientific management transferred hiring decisions to rationalized personnel departments. These departments relied more on educational preparation and attainment as an indicator of an employee's suitability than had the foremen responsible for hiring in the years before the management revolution.[21] As Heron shows for Hamilton, work opportunities for working-class teenagers contracted throughout the 1920s. This caused enrolments of these blue-collar youths in the Steel City's secondary schools to expand.[22] In Toronto as well, juvenile employments dwindled in the 1920s. When, in 1930, Toronto's Chief Attendance Officer reported issuing a mere 556 employment certificates giving school-age teenagers permission to work, she attributed the decline to Depression unemployment and to "the successful endeavours of the Board of Education to meet the school requirements of the senior subnormal and non-academic type of child."[23]

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[19] Jennifer Stephen, "Unemployment and the New Industrial Citizenship: A Review of the Ontario Unemployment Commission, 1916," in Robert Adamoski, Dorothy E. Chunn, Robert Menzies, eds., *Contesting Canadian Citizenship: Historical Readings* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2002): 155-177.

[20] Craig Heron, "The High School and The Household Economy in Working-Class Hamilton, 1890-1940," *Historical Studies in Education* 7:2 (1995): 224-225. See also: Stamp, 110-111; Rebecca Coulter, "The Working Young of Edmonton, 1921-1931," in Joy Parr ed., *Childhood and Family in Canadian History* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), 147-149.

Finally, educationists and social reformers were motivated to establish junior vocational schools in response to the supposed moral and eugenic danger that 'subnormal' adolescents, especially girls, seemed to pose. David Tyack and Elizabeth Hansot have argued that a main thrust behind the differentiated programming, such as technical schooling, that the administrative progressives introduced into public schooling between 1890 and 1940 was to "better fit schooling to boys, particularly those who seemed non-academic in inclination or ability."[24] This was certainly the case in Toronto. However, it is important not to overlook how Toronto's junior vocational and handicraft school policy simultaneously addressed specific issues surrounding the education of supposedly non-academic girls. As a policy, school authorities established the Toronto junior vocational schools in part to specifically regulate working-class, so-called 'subnormal' city girls.[25]

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[21] W. Norton Grubb and Marvin Lazerson, "Education and the Labor Market: Recycling the Youth Problem," in Kantor and Tyack eds., 122.
[22] Heron, 246-251.
[23] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Attendance Officer's Report, 186.
[24] David Tyack and Elisabeth Hansot, *Learning Together: A History of Coeducation in American Schools* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1990), 166-167.

As early as the 1880s urban reformers had positioned young women, especially if they lived in the cities and earned wages, as a peculiar social problem. As Carolyn Strange has argued, reforms directed at regulating the sexuality of working 'girls' (a category that included school-age young women in their teens and wage-earning women in their twenties or even early thirties) were an important late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century urban phenomenon. Reformers defined the 'girl problem' as "the vulnerability and moral irresponsibility of young working women in the city," a definition that encompassed fears about how the new waged workforce of young, single women that industrialization had created might affect the gendered social order built on patriarchy.[26] Reformers focussed on how waged work pushed women beyond the supervised domestic sphere and tempted them away from their supposedly natural domestic role as mothers. Reformers saw single womanhood unregulated by male kin as a force for social deterioration.[27] Reformers believed that the junior vocational and handicraft schools for girls could help them to address their 'girl problem.'[28] As we shall see, categories of gender, age, disability, and class met in fascinating ways in special schools for girls.

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[25] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Reports of the Special Industrial Schools, 62.
[26] Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 23. See also, Jennifer Stephen, "The 'Incorrigible,' the 'Bad,' and the 'Immoral': Toronto's 'Factory Girls' and the Work of the Toronto Psychiatric Clinic," in *Law Society and the State: Essays in Modern Legal History*, eds., Louis A. Knaffa and Susan W.S. Binnie (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995): 405-439.
[27] Strange, 5.
[28] See Strange, Stephen, "'The Incorrigible,'" and Comacchio, 17-44.

The junior vocational and handicraft schools, 1923 to 1945: A merger of special education and working-class education

In the twentieth century, schooling for working-class children and schooling for children with disabilities and learning difficulties often overlapped. Working-class youngsters were disproportionately represented in special classes in many different places, including in Toronto's auxiliary classes, as we saw in the last chapter. What is more, secondary schools often offered similar, or even identical, vocational options to working-class children and children with disabilities or learning difficulties alike. Historians and educational researchers have remarked on this overlap.[29] Yet we know relatively little about the historical and policy process through which working-class and special education actually came to overlap in school policy, especially in the pre-WWII period.[30] The example of Toronto's junior vocational and handicraft schools, from their inception in 1923 until 1945, partly illustrates in real terms how and why a merger of special education and working-class education actually took place in early-twentieth-century North American public schools.

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[29] See: Bruce Curtis, D.W. Livingstone, and Harry Smaller, *Stacking the Deck: The Streaming of Working-Class Kids in Ontario Schools* (Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves, 1992), 53-64; James G. Carrier, *Learning Disability: Social Class and the Construction of Inequality in American Education* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986); David J. Connor and Beth A. Ferri, "Integration and Inclusion: A Troubling Nexus: Race, Disability, and Special Education," *The Journal of African American History* 90:1-2 (Winter, 2005): 107-127; Sally Tomlinson, *A Sociology of Special Education* (London: Routledge, 1982).

[30] This process is better studied in the post-war period. See: Adam Nelson, *The Elusive Ideal: Equal Educational Opportunity and the Federal Role in Boston's Public Schools, 1950-1985* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 31-60.

When they first conceived of the policy, Toronto school authorities intended junior vocational and handicraft schools to serve the specific needs of 'subnormal' adolescents, many of whom, as younger children, had attended elementary school auxiliary classes. It was common throughout the 1920, 1930s, and 1940s, for the junior vocational and handicraft schools to enrol around 40 to 50 percent former auxiliary or opportunity class pupils. (See Table 4.1.)[31]

Table 4.1. Former special education status, pupils admitted to junior vocational and handicraft schools from The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS[1], and East End PS, 1923 to 1945.

	Boys	Girls	Total	%
The Ward PS				
Previously attended an auxiliary or opportunity class	34	18	52	48.60%
Did not previously attend an auxiliary or opportunity class	29	26	55	51.40%
Armoury Park PS				
Previously attended an auxiliary or opportunity class	27	27	54	41.54%
Did not previously attend an auxiliary or opportunity class	41	35	76	58.46%
East End PS				
Previously attended an auxiliary or opportunity class	0	2	2	11.11%
Did not previously attend an auxiliary or opportunity class	6	10	16	88.89%
Total				
Previously attended an auxiliary or opportunity class	61	47	108	42.35%
Did not previously attend an auxiliary or opportunity class	76	71	147[2]	57.65%

Sources: Toronto District School Board Archives, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "East End PS" Microfilm reel 11 and Office Record Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 10.

[1] Data up to 1930 is for the four schools merged into Armoury Park PS in 1930.

[2] Total does not include students (N=9) for whom this information is not known.

With the new trends in enrolment, it also seemed to educationists in the 1920s that another group of adolescents, in addition to the so-called 'subnormals,' cried out for a differentiated secondary school program: so-called 'dull-normal' children. "We have made provision for the auxiliary type of pupil by establishing a large number of auxiliary classes for the junior pupils and the two Vocational Schools for the seniors," Toronto school inspector G.W. McGill wrote in his 1928 report. However, McGill added, "There is another equally important group, viz., those pupils having I.Q.s between 75 and 90 ['dull normals'], for who [sic] little is being done."[32] School officials in the 1920s tended to associate 'subnormality' with the working class, believing that the working-class population contributed disproportionately to the ranks of the 'mentally defective.' In the last chapter, we saw, for instance, how as late as 1930 Toronto school psychologist Dr. E.P. Lewis believed that schools in areas where social conditions were "Poor" had seven to eleven times as many 'mental defectives' in their populations than schools in areas where social conditions were "Good."[33] Experts in the mental testing field also associated 'dull-normality' with working-class populations, although they clearly recognized a difference between 'subnormality' and 'dull-normality.' Lewis Terman explained how 'dull-normality' was different than 'subnormality' and 'normal' intelligence:

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[31] The percentage was even higher later on it seems. Walter Koerber discovered that 60.1 percent of the students in a boys' handicraft school's first year program in 1944 had come directly from an opportunity class. Walter F. Koerber, "An Evaluation of Some Methods of and Procedures in the Teaching of Reading to Non-Academic Adolescent Boys," D.Paed. thesis (University of Toronto, 1947), 32-33.

> In [the 'dull-normal'] group are included those children who would not, according to any of the commonly accepted social standards, be considered feeble-minded, but who are nevertheless far enough below the actual average of intelligence among races of western European descent that they cannot make ordinary school progress or master other intellectual difficulties which average children are equal to.[34]

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[32] *TBE Annual Report 1928*, Inspector G.W. McGill's Report, 154.

[33] CAMHA. Provincial Psychiatric Clinics: lectures [B.T. McGhie (ed.)] May 1930, Burdett Harrison McNeel Fonds, F. 17.1.8. E.P. Lewis, "Psychiatric Clinics in the Toronto Public Schools," (19 May 1930): n.p.

[34] See Lewis Terman, *The Measurement of Intelligence* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1916), 92.

Terman believed that there was a higher incidence of 'dull-normality' in California's racialized populations—"Mexicans, Indians, or negroes."[35] Toronto school officials were more likely to link higher incidences of 'dull-normal' intelligence—or 'non-academic' intelligence, as it was sometimes also known—to working-class populations. For instance, in a discussion of the incidence of 'dull-normality' in different Toronto schools rated according to "Social and Economic Conditions," Toronto school psychologist Dr. E.P. Lewis told an audience at the Ontario Educational Association meetings in 1930: "It would seem that there is a definite relationship between unsatisfactory social and economic conditions and this condition of being non-academic."[36]

Because they established this link between IQ and class (or race) educationists tended also to believe that the problems of customizing education for working-class children and of customizing education for 'dull-normal,' children were very similar, if not effectively one in the same. Moreover, educationists also believed that the capacities of children with disabilities and learning difficulties best suited them for low-skill working-class occupations. Recall, for example, Peter Sandiford's argument (which we examined in the last chapter) that young people with low IQs should be channelled into school programs that would prepare them for the trades, while the high schools should be reserved exclusively for boys and girls with above average IQs.[37] It therefore appeared to make a great deal of sense to Toronto school officials to merge special education and working-class education in the secondary schools, especially since secondary programs for both groups of children had very similar vocational aims.

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[35] Terman, 92-93.

[36] See: E.P. Lewis, "The Non-Academic Child," *Proceedings of the 69th Annual Ontario Educational Association (*hereafter, *OEA) Conference* (Toronto: OEA, 1930), 125-126. See also: *TBE Annual Report 1928,* Inspector Munro's Report, 135; *TBE Minutes 1928,* Appendix No. 176, Report No. 1 of Special Committee of the Board on 'Dull Normal' and 'Retarded' Pupils in the Public Schools, 17 December 1928, Adopted 20 December 1928, 1414-1415. Terman, 72-73.

[37] Peter Sandiford, "Technical Education and the I.Q," *Proceedings of the Sixty-Eight Annual Convention of the OEA,* (Toronto: OEA, 1929): 155-156.

A special TBE committee in 1928 argued for streaming for 'dull-normals' on the grounds that they required a differentiated education, but were ineligible for the lowest track, the special education stream. The committee's report to the board read in part: "It seems hard that there should be a large group of our public school pupils who are at once too bright and too dull to be educated! Why would we have to label boys and girls as 'subnormal' in order to procure for them the type of education they most need?"[38] At the elementary school level TBE schools experimented with special streams for 'dull-normal' pupils in six schools.[39] Toronto school officials probably would have been content to stream 'dull-normals' into the same auxiliary classes as 'subnormals' at the elementary school level, as they evidently thought the two groups shared similar characteristics. However, implementing such a policy would have been difficult as children labelled 'dull-normal,' on the basis of IQs in the 75 to 90 range were technically ineligible for auxiliary classes at the elementary school level, according to provincial regulations.

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[38] *TBE Minutes 1928*, Appendix No. 176, Report No. 1 of Special Committee of the Board on 'Dull Normal' and 'Retarded' Pupils in the Public Schools, 17 December 1928, Adopted 20 December 1928, 1417.

[39] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Inspector G.W. McGill's Report, 98-99; *TBE Annual Report 1929*, Inspector P.F. Munro's Report, 182; *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Inspector H.E. Cavell's Report, 118; *TBE Minutes 1930*, Appendix No. 38, Management Report No. 6, 26 February 1930, Adopted 6 March 1930, 212; Appendix No. 182, Final Report of the Special Committee on Public School Curriculum for 1930, n.d. Received by Board 18 December 1930, 1600-1603.

Auxiliary classes were restricted to enrolling children who were "mentally defective," that is 'subnormal' youngsters in the 50 to 75 IQ range.[40]

However, no such restriction on mixing 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' pupils existed at the secondary school level. This opened the door to streaming 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' adolescents into the new junior vocational schools that opened in 1923. Toronto school inspector P.F. Munro expressed school officials' interest in combining the two groups of adolescents when, in 1929, he stated: "I have reached the conclusion that the type of school that would best meet the needs of such pupils ['dull-normal'] is a school planned and equipped after the manner of the [junior vocational schools]."[41] Actually, the Board's 1928 Special Committee assumed that 'dull-normal' adolescents, whom they also said were good candidates for junior vocational schools, were being denied entry to those schools.[42]

In fact, adolescent 'dull-normals' in Toronto soon found themselves systematically streamed towards the junior vocational schools. As Table 4.1 suggests, the ranks of Toronto junior vocational and handicraft schools included a large number of students who had not previously attended auxiliary or opportunity classes—young people who therefore had not necessarily been labelled as 'subnormal.' Indeed, the number of pupils actually attending junior vocational and handicraft schools across the period studied was greater than the number of young candidates for those schools, had school officials selected those children only from the ranks of former auxiliary class pupils. By 1930, for instance, the city's three junior vocational schools, covering three years of schooling each, enrolled 1,012 pupils. This number far exceeded the total of 760 'subnormal' learners found in auxiliary classes in elementary schools (which covered eight grades), who made up a natural pool of students eligible for admissions to junior vocational schools.[43] Moreover, the pool of children diagnosed as 'subnormal' was also declining relative to the numbers of children diagnosed 'dull-normal' across most of the period 1920 to 1945. This decline further suggests that there was ample room for 'dull-normal' students in the junior vocational and handicraft schools. Statistics from the Toronto Department of Public Health (DPH) Mental Hygiene Division show that the percentage of cases diagnosed 'subnormal' (a.k.a. 'mentally defective') relative to other diagnoses declined across the period 1926 to 1945, while 'dull-normal' diagnoses maintained a more constant share of total diagnoses. (See Figure 4.1.)

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[40] Gerald T. Hackett, "The History of Public Education for Mentally Retarded Children in the Province of Ontario, 1867-1964," (Ed.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1969), Appendix J, 400.

[41] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, Inspector Munro's Report, 182. For similar sentiments, see also *TBE Minutes 1926*, 7 June 1926, 144-145; *TBE Minutes 1927*, Appendix No. 196, Report of the Visit to Pittsburgh to Study Work in Connection with Dull Normal Pupils, n.d , 1368.

[42] *TBE Minutes 1928*, Appendix No. 176, Report No. 1 of Special Committee of the Board on 'Dull Normal' and 'Retarded' Pupils in the Public Schools, 17 December 1928, Adopted 20 December 1928, 1417.

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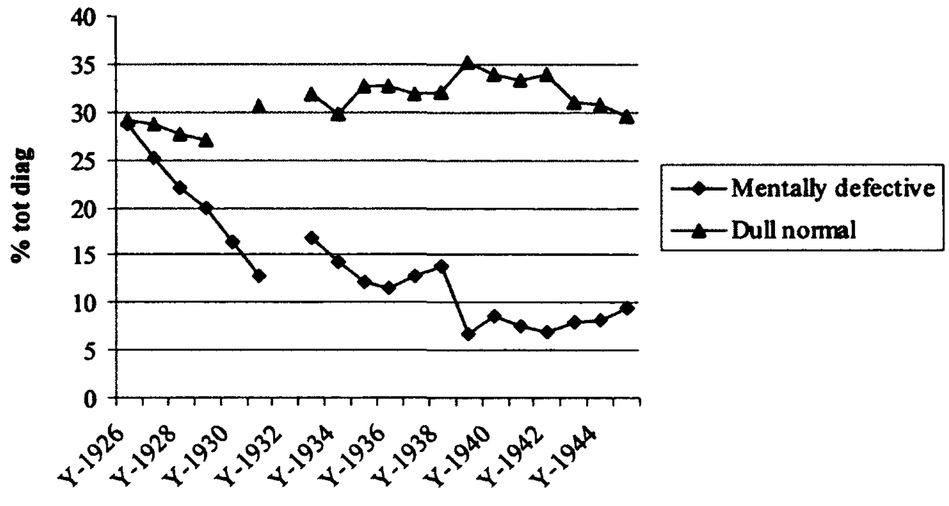
[43] *DOE Report 1930*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 27-28.

Figure 4.1. Toronto Department of Public Health, Mental Hygiene Division. Selected diagnoses, 1926-1945.



Sources for Figure 4.1: City of Toronto Archives. City of Toronto Fonds, Series 365, Department of Public Health City of Toronto, selected monthly reports and annual statements, 1926 to 1945.

Notes for Figure 4.1: Some data missing in reports.

In absorbing 'dull-normals,' the junior vocational and handicraft schools merged two types of education: special education adapted for young people with intellectual disabilities or learning difficulties, that is 'subnormal' youngsters, and education adapted specifically for working-class youth that educators defined as 'dull-normal.' Intelligence classification systems, such as the one Lewis Terman outlined in *The Measurement of Intelligence*, contributed to educationists' perception that 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' adolescents shared common instructional needs by virtue of the fact that these youngsters shared adjacent IQ ranges (50 to 75 and 75 to 90, respectively) in Terman's hierarchy.[44] In addition to believing that 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' adolescents shared similar traits as learners by virtue of their proximate location in intelligence classification schemes, educators also believed that 'subnormals' and 'dull-normals' shared traits because they would enter the occupational hierarchy at the same level.[45] As we shall shortly see, this pre-vocational categorization was reflected in the vocational training and guidance that junior vocational and handicrafts schools offered to young adults. It was relatively easy for educationists to find common educational ground to teach 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' youngsters in the same settings in a school system that was increasingly focussed on preparing children for a future vocational role. What emerged from these multiple convergences of ability and class in the junior vocational and handicraft schools was a particular form of schooling—vocational schooling for supposedly slow-learning adolescents—that folded together educational assumptions based on categories of intellectual ability and disability, and social class.

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[44] See Terman, 92.

Even as terminology shifted from the 1920s to the 1940s, categories of ability, disability, and social class remained attached in junior vocational and handicraft schools. Practically each time the Ontario Minister of Education appointed a new Inspector of Auxiliary Classes in the pre-WWII period, that new inspector set about changing at least some of the terms used to refer to children with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties.[46] When Harry Amoss replaced S.B. Sinclair as provincial Inspector of Auxiliary Classes in 1929, Amoss began rewriting the special class terminology that Sinclair had used. In their 1933 special education manual, *Training Handicapped Children*, which was the authorized training text for Ontario teachers, Amoss and

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[45] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, Inspector Munro's Report, 182; *TBE Minutes 1927*, Appendix No. 196, Report of the Visit to Pittsburgh to Study Work in Connection with Dull Normal Pupils, n.d , 1367-1369.
[46] *DOE Report 1928*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 36.

Assistant Inspector Helen DeLaporte, censured the labels 'subnormal' as well as 'mental defective,' as "offensively discriminative, not to say snobbish," and vowed to see the day when "the use of such terms ... is taboo throughout the schools of the province."[47] *Training Handicapped Children* introduced a new term to replace 'subnormal': 'direct learner.' The terms changed, but there was stability in the categories to which those terms referred. In Amoss and DeLaporte's *Training Handicapped Children*, for instance, 'direct learners' shared the same distribution in the population as 'subnormal' children, and shared as well many of the same characteristics ascribed to the 'subnormal' child of the 1920s, most notably concrete learning style.[48] C.E. Stothers, who replaced Harry Amoss as Inspector of Auxiliary Classes in 1939, continued the use of Amoss's 'direct learner' label. However, he changed the term 'dull-normal' to 'slow-learner.'[49] Despite shifts in terminology, the notion that 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' learners needed differentiated instruction because they learned differently and had specific educational needs remained largely unchanged throughout the entire period that stretched from 1923 to, as we will see, the early years of WWII.

Practical training and successful citizens: Curriculum, pedagogy, and learning in the junior vocational and handicraft schools for boys and girls, 1923 to 1945

In the 1920s, Toronto school authorities assembled a curriculum and pedagogy for elementary school auxiliary classes that blended elements of concrete teaching and learning, progressive teaching, pre-vocational work, and moral training. School authorities' curricular and pedagogical prescriptions for the gender-segregated junior vocational and handicraft schools, from the 1920s to the 1940s, were similarly tailored to what educationists believed were the unique needs of 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' boys and girls, youngsters respectively known as 'direct learners' and 'slow-learners' by the end of this period.

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[47] Harry Amoss and L. Helen DeLaporte, *Training Handicapped Children* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1933), 7.

[48] Amoss and DeLaporte, 12-15.

[49] *DOE Annual Report 1945*, 53. On Stothers's tenure as inspector, see Hackett, 253.

As we saw in the last chapter, special educators in the 1920s developed the idea that 'subnormal' children learned best through concrete methods. They extended this idea to adolescents labelled 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' as well. As we shall see in Chapter 7, on the emergence of specific learning difficulties, by the 1930s there were very important shifts in educationists' ideas about why some children and adolescents did not (or could not) learn. Yet across the period 1920 to 1945 there was considerable continuity in the pedagogical and curricular concepts that Ontario educational authorities drew upon to teach young people with supposedly low intelligence.

Educational science emphasized that slow-learners, such as 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' children and adolescents, learned mainly using concrete approaches. Amoss and DeLaporte's *Training Handicapped Children*, for instance, called on special education teachers to approach categorized intelligence primarily "in its vertical aspect, as measured by the Binet Simon Test, [which] would seem to be a gradient from haphazard particular thinking to purposeful abstract thinking" and to adapt teaching methods for 'direct-learners' according to this hierarchy of lower concrete thought to higher abstract thought.[50] Especially where the category of 'dull-normal' was concerned, educators' ascriptive use of concrete learning styles also reflected the roots of 'dull-normality' in concepts of intellectual ability and social class. Ontario educationists such as Peter Sandiford and C.C. Goldring naturalized concrete, 'dull-normal' intelligence as characteristic of working-class children and their parents.[51] Indeed, the association of working-class student populations with concrete learning styles has been a long-standing aspect of educational discourse. Educational theorist Jean Anyon has argued that working-class schools transmit knowledge in ways that tend to emphasize practical thinking over conceptual thinking, an emphasis that helps to reproduce divisions in the workforce between professionals and managers, who plan work, and workers with less autonomy, who carry out those plans.[52]

Special educators who taught adolescents, like their elementary school special education colleagues, often gravitated to progressive pedagogical techniques. Progressive pedagogy was well adapted to the practical curriculum and practical approach that the junior vocational and handicraft schools used. Practical tasks could easily be embedded in the progressive child-centred, project-driven method.[53] Educators argued that projects created greater opportunities for individual instruction and learning that allowed slower students to progress at their own pace, as Toronto school inspector D.D. Moshier noted,

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[50] Amoss and Delaporte, 118. See also: P.F. Munro, "Reaching the Manual-Minded Child," *The School* 18:6 (February 1930): 471-472.
[51] Sandiford, 155-156; C.C. Goldring, *Intelligence Testing in a Toronto Public School* (D. Paed, published, University of Toronto, n.d., [1924]), 32-35.
[52] Jean Anyon, "Social Class and School Knowledge," *Curriculum Inquiry* 11:1 (Spring 1981): 32.
[53] John William Chester "Learning by Doing Things," *Addresses of the 61st OEA Conference*, Volume 2 (Toronto: OEA, 1922): 164.

"without interfering with the progress of others."[54] Educationists also argued that progressive instruction offered, "concrete material with which to work and thus removes the great disadvantage of thinking and reasoning in the abstract."[55] Finally, educationists believed that the project method, which presented activities as delegated work tasks in a way that often mimicked the foreman-worker relationship, would teach young people the value of a job. Jennie Louden, an elementary school teacher, even recommended starting the 'mentally retarded' child's job training in the primary grades, by giving these children such tasks as sweeping, dusting, cleaning, and sharpening pencils—"and since this may be the life work of many of them, what could be better than to begin at the primary grade to prepare for that life work?"[56] This sort of argument was attractive to special educators and vocational guidance experts who, as we shall shortly see, tried to connect 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' young people to low-skill occupations.

Toronto's junior vocational and handicraft schools used progressive pedagogy from the 1920s to the 1940s. For instance, the curriculum that teachers used at the junior vocational school for girls, in the school's first year of operation, blended domestic arts and sciences with the project method. A vacant house on the grounds of a Toronto elementary school was the temporary location for the girls' junior vocational school in the school's first year, 1924. A class project—turning the vacant home into a functioning model household—represented the main chunk of the girls' junior vocational school curriculum that year. Teachers inspired by the project method designated each girl in the class responsibility for some aspect of the household, from cleaning to cooking. Assigning household tasks in this manner was supposed to build responsibility in the girls.[57] Later on, when the girls' schools were better established in permanent school locations, pupils still followed the project method in domestic science courses. The girls applied what they learned in classes to the daily planning, preparation, and serving of school lunches to staff and students.[58] The girls' junior vocational schools also took the decidedly progressive stance of eliminating corporal punishment.[59]

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[54] *TBE Annual Report 1927*, Chief Inspector Moshier's Report, 78-79. See also: W.E. Hume, "The Opportunity Plan of Instruction," *The School* 18:10 (June 1930): 888-889; "The Dalton Method," *The School* 11:3 (November 1922): 137-138.

[55] Iva R. Marshall, "The Project Method," *The School* 12:4 (December 1923): 292.

[56] Jennie C. Louden, "The Mentally-Retarded Child as a Primary Class Problem," *Addresses and Proceedings of the 64th OEA Conference* (Toronto: OEA, 1924), 109. See also, Chester 164-165.

Vocational training was another essential feature of education in Toronto's junior vocational and handicraft schools. The separation of adolescent pupils at this level into distinct schools for boys and girls reflected the gendered nature of vocational school courses, and the nature of occupations, which in the early twentieth century were exactingly divided along gender lines.[60] Toronto educators designed the vocational preparation curriculum in boys' and girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools to be carefully calibrated to the gender-differentiated needs of pupils, the workforce, and the home.

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[57] Miss [Jane] Little, "Pioneer Work in Adolescent Education," *The Bulletin* 10:3 (March 1934), Reprint of *The Bulletin* 1:1 (15 February 1924), 14.

[58] Grace I. MacKenzie, "Vocational Training for the Adolescent Girl," *Addresses and Proceedings of the 69th OEA Conference* (Toronto: OEA, 1930), 81-83.

[59] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 116. Although as Paul Axelrod has shown, educators were much more reluctant to liberally strap girls than they were boys in the first place. Paul Axelrod, "No Longer a 'Last Resort': The End of Corporal Punishment in the Schools of Toronto," *The Canadian Historical Review* 91:2 (June 2010): 268-270.

[60] See Geraldine Joncich Clifford, "'Marry, Stitch, Die, or Do Worse': Educating Women for Work," 239, and Harvey Kantor, "Vocationalism in American Education: The Economic and Political Context, 1880-1930," 42, in Kantor and Tyack eds.; Tyack and Hansot, 211.

Surely the most imaginative program that educators ever came up with in the 1923 to 1945 period was the chicken-tending course tried out at a boys' junior vocational school in 1926. The course was launched when one resourceful teacher donated "thirty thoroughbred white leghorn chickens" to the school with the idea of using the fowl to instruct boys in the practical art and science of poultry farming.[61] Other courses in the boys' junior vocational program seemed, on the surface, to promise better skills training for city children than the failed chicken farmer's course. Courses in barbering, typewriting, shoe repair, pressing and cleaning, tailoring, and care-taking all appeared from time to time.[62] A 1945 school board pamphlet invited boys to attend the handicraft school in order to acquire "the early training that leads to the fine art of a craftsman" in printing, or to master "Tonsorial Artistry" through the barbering course.[63] Yet, most of the actual courses at the school were general and focussed on low-skill industrial work, reflecting principal W.J. Tamblyn's belief "that the vast majority of our boys can never become skilled artisans in the highly technical trades."[64] Enrolment statistics for different subjects at the junior vocational schools are available from the mid-1920s to the mid-1930s. Every boy who attended the school took general subjects such as English, arithmetic, history, and drawing. However, when the school staff made specialized options available, which was not often, usually only a very small number of boys actually enrolled. In the 1925-26 school year, for example, only sixteen of 161 boys took the plumbing course. In 1929-30, out of a total population of 746 pupils, 426 boys took automotive mechanics and 418 boys took machine shop, which were the two specialized subjects with the largest enrolment. The third most common specialized subject was carpentry, with only 32 boys enrolled.[65]

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[61] *TBE Minutes 1926*, Appendix No. 162, Advisory Industrial Report No. 15, 28 September 1926, Adopted 7 October 1926, 1112-1113.

[62] See *TBE Minutes 1926*, Appendix No. 123, Advisory Industrial Report No. 11, 8 June 1926, Adopted 17 June 1926, 850; Appendix No. 162, Advisory Industrial Report No. 15, 28 September 1926, Adopted 7 October 1926, 1112; Appendix No. 114, Advisory Vocational Report No. 10, 26 May 1926, Adopted 7 June 1926, 795; *TBE Minutes 1930* Appendix No. 36, Advisory Vocational Report No. 5, 25 February 1930, Adopted 6 March 1930, 205.

[63] Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA). Vertical File (hereafter, VF): TBE-Schools-Secondary-Parkview. "A Toronto School of Basic Training" (Toronto Board of Education, ca. 1945).

[64] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, 46.

The curriculum at junior vocational and handicraft schools for girls featured the same core of English, arithmetic, and history as the boys' schools. Classes in the domestic arts and sciences at these schools were generally also in low-skill areas and oriented towards a quick transition from adolescence to adulthood. Girls in the junior vocational and handicraft schools, like female secondary school students practically everywhere in Canada and the United States (US), had fewer choices than boys.[66] Cooking, housekeeping, home economics, laundry (a course with a "two-fold aim"[67]) and sewing and dressmaking were all usually offered at the junior vocational and handicraft schools as general subjects, areas in which every girl took classes in a given year. Specialized options typically included typing, embroidery and lacework, and millinery—subjects closely following the mainstay workforce opportunities available to young women at this time.[68] Course specialization in girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools was very rare. Stenography and banking were offered in intermittent years, but attracted less than half the student body when they were available. A machine-operating course (likely with electric powered sewing machines) existed briefly, only enrolling a dozen girls who had to trek to Central Technical School to use the machines.[69]

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[65] *DOE Annual Report 1930*, 354-361.
[66] Tyack and Hansot, 211; Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939* (Markham, ON: Penguin, 1988), 19-22.
[67] MacKenzie, 84.
[68] See, for example, *DOE Annual Report 1930*, 354-36, or any other DOE annual report statistics on subjects of study in this period. On gendered occupations, see Strong-Boag, 51-62.

A narrow vocational course fit with the gendered "ideal education for girls" that prepared girls "to earn their living and to be good homemakers," as a 1946 pamphlet about girls' handicraft schools advertised.[70] This dual ideal of training for the workforce, and preparation to leave the workforce for the home, reflected what David Tyack and Elisabeth Hansot argue was a "deeply ambivalent" set of feelings that most people had about young women, work, and vocational education. Educators did not want female graduates to become permanent members of the waged workforce, an outcome that would disturb the gendered social order.[71] Instead, Toronto school authorities hoped that female junior vocational and handicraft school graduates would enter either enter domestic service permanently, thus anchoring themselves in someone else's household, or that graduates would work briefly for wages in another area before marrying and retreating from work to home and hearth. One example of how the curriculum supported this dualistic aim was the extensive junior vocational and handicraft school lessons for girls in "plain cookery." These lessons were necessary, one school official wrote, "as most girls are likely to do a considerable amount of cooking after they leave school, either in their own homes or as domestics in the homes of others ..."[72] To be sure, young women enrolled in Toronto's collegiate institutes and technical and commercial schools also took domestic science courses as well, especially after 1937 when the Ontario

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[69] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 121.

[70] TDSBA. VF: TBE-Schools-Secondary-Heydon Pk. Pamphlet (Toronto Board of Education, ca. 1946).

[71] Tyack and Hansot, 210-211. See also, Strong-Boag 42-47.

[72] MacKenzie, 83.

Department of Education (DOE) made these courses obligatory in Grade 9.[73] However, domestic science did not dominate the curriculum in those schools in the same way that it did in the junior vocational and handicraft schools.

Moral training was another notable feature of instruction in girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools from the 1920s to the 1940s, where it suffused the visible and hidden curriculum. By the mid-1930s, as we shall see in Chapter 8, regulatory aspects of junior vocational and handicraft schools were increasingly related to psychological discourses about adjustment as well, as educationists and educational psychologists applied emerging personality theories to all young people in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Educators at the girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools judged their pupils' moral training deficient because the girls' homes did not meet educators' Anglo-Canadian, middle-class expectations. "The majority of these girls come from homes where, because of carelessness or ignorance, there is an utter disregard for sanitation and hygiene," girls' school principal Grace MacKenzie wrote.[74] Special instruction at the junior vocational and handicraft schools for girls attempted to compensate for supposed deficiencies in a school population that was predominantly working-class and contained large numbers of youngsters from ethnic or racial minority backgrounds. (See Table 4.5 and Table 4.6 further below.) Of course 'normal' girls experienced considerable moral regulation at school and in the community in the interwar period as well.[75] However, the moral, environmental, and gendered dimensions of categories of intellectual disability from the 1920s to the 1940s were such that girls with intellectual disabilities experienced more regulation than most other youngsters who attended public schools.

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[73] Tomkins, 121-122.

[74] MacKenzie, 85-86. See also, Hackett, 151; E.D. McPhee, "Behaviour in Auxiliary Classes," *Addresses and Proceedings of the 66th Annual Convention of the Ontario Educational Association* (Toronto: O.E.A., 1927), 129-131.

Junior vocational and handicraft schools were involved in regulating their female pupils' leisure activities. As Carolyn Strange has shown, leisure regulation was a prominent feature of the attack by early-twentieth-century reformers on what they perceived as an urban 'girl problem.' "Above all," Strange argues "healthy amusements were promoted as a means to shape young women into productive workers who would also be fit to take on the physical and moral burdens of marriage and motherhood."[76] Toronto's cheap amusements industry tempted adolescents with what reformers deemed 'unhealthy' leisure: inexpensive movie theatres, amusement parks, vaudeville shows, and dancehalls.[77] By the 1920s, reformers believed that behind these unhealthy pleasure pursuits lurked the lures of prostitution, moral ruin, and concerns about allegedly socially inefficient workers and mothers.[78] The female junior vocational or handicraft school pupil, who was "often attractive in appearance and agreeable in manner, becomes a menace to boys of higher mentality and social position," Grace MacKenzie and Jane Little, the principals of Toronto's two junior vocational schools for girls schools argued. "If these girls can be taught to be self-supporting and respecting, they do not turn to an illegitimate way of earning a livelihood (always open to girls in a poor environment) in a city of this size," MacKenzie and Little wrote.[79]

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[75] Strong-Boag, 11-16.
[76] Strange, 186.
[77] Strange, 117.
[78] Strange, 121-124. See also: Stephen, "The 'Incorrigible'," 413-418; Comacchio, 112-113.

Charitable organizations helped the girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools to regulate student leisure. In 1927 the local Big Sisters offered the services of a social worker to the girls' junior vocational schools to help them plan for their pupils' spare time.[80] Social worker Helen Robinson, a recent graduate of the University of Toronto's social work program who was employed by the city welfare department, transferred to the Big Sisters to work full time with female junior vocational school pupils.[81] It appears that the junior vocational and handicraft schools for girls were the only Toronto schools to be assigned social workers in this period. Principal MacKenzie gave Miss Robinson the special task of planning the leisure of girls who were "potential social problems by arranging recreation in connection with clubs or church societies."[82] The junior vocational and handicraft schools tried to offer supposedly more wholesome alternatives to the cheap picture show or dance hall. These activities included a swimming club at the Central Technical School pool, a weekly gym class at the YMCA, and, thanks to the generosity of the Neighbourhood Workers Association and the Big Sisters, three-week holidays at the Bolton Fresh Air Camp during the summer. In 1930 the city Department of Mental Hygiene took over the social work role from the Big Sisters and Robertson moved on to a new position within that organization.[83]

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[79] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, 62. See also, Strange, 111-114

[80] On the Big Sisters, see Strange, 125-126; Stephen, "The 'Incorrigible'," 425-426. See also, Helen Caister Robinson, *Decades of Caring: The Big Sister Story* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1979). In fact, the girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools were a veritable nexus of state surveillance of the Toronto working class. Doctors, school psychologists, and nurses visited the school frequently the Mothers' Allowance Commission and the The Neighbourhood Workers Association, also regularly consulted with school authorities. MacKenzie, 81.

[81] *TBE Minutes 1927*, Appendix No. 4, Advisory Industrial Report No. 1, 11 January 1927, Adopted 20 January 1927, 6; Robinson, 72-74. See also, "Editorial: Profitable or Unprofitable Leisure," *The Bulletin* 1:3 (November 1924), 3-4; Marjorie Larkin, "A Social Worker Discusses 'Backward' Children," *Special Class Teacher* 13:2 (September 1938): 78-79.

[82] MacKenzie, 81.

The boys' vocational school does not appear to have had access to a social worker, but school officials there also organized structured activities to keep male youngsters busy. Although working-class male youth enjoyed most of the same urban leisure activities as girls, reform attempts to directly regulate sexual behaviour do not appear to have crossed over into the junior vocational and handicraft schools for boys.[84] "Toronto's working-class boy problem," as reformers encountered it, was more likely to involve boys' crimes against property and offences to public order, such as truancy and running in gangs, as well as vice offences such as smoking.[85] However, like girls of the same age, teenage boys were arrested for sexual offences as well—in the case of boys, homosexuality (which was illegal regardless of age or consent) and prostitution.[86] When a few junior vocational school boys got into trouble after school in 1929, school staff decided that extracurricular activities should be mandatory for boys who did not work after school, even though over 60 percent of the 500 or so boys enrolled at the school did have jobs. Extracurricular activities for the boys included supervised gym, use of the school's "swimming tank," and structured activities in the reading-room and assembly hall. Boys could join the school band or one of the healthy house leagues in hockey and basketball (amongst other sports).[87] "Sports tamed the unruly boys," Tyack and Hansot have argued, by keeping them in school and by helping educational authorities to deflect charges that the schools were becoming feminized, "and educators learned in time to tame sports" to manage errant schoolboys.[88]

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[83] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 120; Robinson, 72-74.

[84] On boys, leisure, and regulation, see: Bryan Hogeveen, " 'The Evils with Which We are Called to Grapple': Elite Reformers, Eugenicists, Environmental Psychologists, and the Construction of Toronto's Working-Class Boy Problem, 1860-1930," *Labour/Le Travail* 55 (Spring 2005): 37-68; Steven Maynard, "'Horrible Temptations': Sex, Men, and Working-class Male Youth in Urban Ontario, 1890-1935," *The Canadian Historical Review* 78:2 (June 1997): 191-235.

[85] Hogeveen, 37-68.

[86] Maynard, 191-235.

One of the most interesting ways that school authorities attempted to regulate junior vocational and handicraft school pupils and to compensate for their supposedly deficient home lives was through a group home for some students at the girls' schools. In 1932, the TBE partnered with the Haven, a small, private charitable organization funded by the Federation for Community Service and the Ontario government, to open Ross Cottage. This "boarding home for students" was located on Rusholme Road, a short walk from the one of the schools, and remained in operation there until at least 1945. Ross Cottage was a group home that housed around fifteen adolescent girls, aged thirteen to sixteen years, who attended girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools during the day and (allegedly) "whose environment and home conditions were such that they could never become successful citizens" if they remained in them.[89] In Ross Cottage the girls lived with "a Home Mother, under twenty-four hour supervision" and shared in the home's domestic chores. The Haven managed Ross Cottage and a parallel institution, Lorimer Lodge. The lodge, a "half-way house" for girls with intellectual disabilities 'paroled' from the Ontario Hospitals at Orillia and Cobourg where they had been institutionalized, was located one block from Ross Cottage and remarkably remained open at this location until 1987. Some of the Lorimer Lodge girls attended the girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools as well.[90]

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[87] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 109-110; *TBE Annual Report 1930*, 47.
[88] Tyack and Hansot, 193.
[89] Jane Little, "The History of the Edith L. Groves School," *Special Class Teacher* 18:1 (November 1943): 16; "Ross Cottage Holds 'Open House' Fete," *Toronto Star* (20 May 1935): 29; E.P. Lewis and A. Mildred Jeffrey, "Ross Cottage—A Special Foster Home," *American Journal of Mental Deficiency* 49:3 (January 1945): 377-382.

The supposed transformations that the new environment at Ross Cottage brought on in the girls, Toronto school psychologist Dr. E.P. Lewis wrote in 1945, were "almost miraculous." Typically, admissions (all supposedly voluntary) were intended to last a minimum of one year, but could last as long as three. A medicalized view of low intelligence, layered on an environmental understanding of supposedly typical working-class family problems, lay beneath this policy. Officials hoped that with a lengthy stay at Ross Cottage "that there might be time enough to make some impression on [the girls'] own home." Not surprisingly, Ross Cottage often found itself in conflict with "problem parents" who wished to take their daughters home early. The Children's Aid Society (CAS) referred a significant proportion of the cottage's residents. The CAS argued that in group homes "mentally retarded adolescent girls usually make better progress in groups of their own intellectual level than individually in a foster home."[91] Even after a Ross Cottage resident graduated from vocational school she still found herself subject to "follow-up care," at least in the short run. Follow-up care consisted of the school locating domestic employment opportunities for former residents. The idea was that the employer's home would provide the "wise supervision" that the 'mentally retarded' girl working in a factory and living at home with her parents, the experts thought, was unlikely to receive. Other graduates and former residents were placed in domestic work in various institutions, such as an institution for women who were blind and a girls' school.[92]

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[90] Jane Little, "The History of the ... School," 13-16; "Haven Girls Doing in Work Found for Them," *Toronto Star* (14 December 1934): 32; Jeffrey and Lewis, 377. On Lorimer Lodge, see Mildred A. Jeffrey, "A Follow-Up Study on the Re-Establishment of Mentally Defective Girls in Domestic Science in an Urban Centre Under Colony House Supervision," *American Journal of Mental Deficiency* 48:1 (July 1943): 96-100; Harvey G. Simmons, *From Asylum to Welfare* (Downsview, ON: National Institute on Mental Retardation, 1982), 128; John R. Graham, "The Haven, 1878-1930: A Toronto Charity's Transition from a Religious to a Professional Social Work Ethos," in John Coates, John R. Graham, Barbara Swartzentruber et al. eds., *Spirituality and Social Work: Selected Canadian Readings* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2007), 55-61.

[91] Jeffrey and Lewis, 377-378.

As Joan Sangster has shown, small and large institutions played a central role in regulating girls and women in the first half of the twentieth century. Girls accused of being deviant faced a greater likelihood of incarceration than boys. The courts, and other institutions, almost always made sexuality an issue in regulating supposedly wayward women.[93] In special education policy generally, and in the Ross Cottage plan specifically, gender and sexual regulation intersected with disability. However, the reform plan at the cottage was based primarily on an environmental understanding of the girls' problems.[94] The idea that 'feebleminded' adults and adolescents were hypersexual still lurked in the 1930s, even though educators thought about 'subnormal' girls' sexuality much differently than they had the in 1910s, when Helen MacMurchy's views on heredity, 'feeblemindedness,' and immorality drew wide support. Unlike MacMurchy's proposed farm colony, which we looked at in Chapter 1, Ross Cottage was small, admissions were (ostensibly) voluntary, and inmates did not remain for life. A charity, not the province or the school board, operated Ross Cottage.

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[92] Jeffrey and Lewis, 382.

[93] Joan Sangster, *Regulating Girls and Women: Sexuality, Family, and the Law in Ontario, 1920-1960* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2001), 148-155. See also, Stephen, "'The Incorrigible,'" 422-423, and, for a biographical account, Velma Demerson, *Incorrigible* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2004). Paul Axelrod notes a parallel gendering of types of school misbehaviour and adult responses to that misbehaviour, with girls punished for sexual transgressions. Axelrod, 267-271.

[94] See: S.B. Sinclair, *Backward and Brilliant Children* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1931), 10.

Blunders and stupid mistakes: Vocational guidance, special education, and the 'subnormal' worker

Vocational guidance was another extremely important feature of Toronto's junior vocational and handicraft schools. The institutional focus that had dominated expert notions of what was appropriate in terms of preparation for work and life for 'subnormal' adolescents in the 1910s, by the 1920s gave way to a new workforce focus, bolstered by the emerging view that 'subnormals' could survive in the community.[95] Junior vocational and handicraft schools also used vocational guidance to sort future workers along separate class, gender, and ability lines. Educationists, despite their new orientation towards preparing youngsters with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties to join the community, remained especially concerned about the eventual integration of these adolescents into the industrial workforce and into family life.

Toronto school officials named many reasons why 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' pupils who attended junior vocational and handicraft schools needed vocational guidance especially. Educationists feared that without special training and guidance 'subnormal' adolescents would be unable to compete in the job market with non-disabled workers. A typical employer "would not put up with the blunders and stupid mistakes" of untrained 'subnormal' youngsters when "he could as easily employ young people of normal mentality who would give him less trouble."[96] Vocational guidance also represented a particular response to what experts and educationists perceived as the problems of

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[95] Simmons, 121-128; James W. Trent Jr., *Inventing the Feeble Mind: A History of Mental Retardation in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 204-215.

[96] *TBE Annual Report 1922*, Inspector Powell's Report, 111. See also, *TBE Annual Report 1922*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 83; Bott, 40-41.

industrial turnover and a transient labouring class that they believed consisted of large numbers of workers of low mental ability that the experts sometimes called "occupational wanderers." In a transitioning wage economy, young workers wandered often and easily from job to job. This pattern seemed out of place to vocational guidance experts whose middle-class idea of work presumed that all workers sought life-long careers. Occupational wandering, as Jennifer Stephen has shown, also created unease amongst employment and mental hygiene experts, who believed that young transient workers were industrially inefficient and socially uncontrollable. Experts argued that the inflow of boys into the low-skill, high turnover, dead-end jobs, degraded the overall skill of the workforce, and created an alienated and agitated pool of workers. Female "occupational wanderers" contributed to the 'girl problem' that, as we have seen, concerned early-twentieth-century social reformers profoundly.[97] By sorting students into vocational tracks that were based on ascribed characteristics of class, gender, and ability, and by training adolescents to form appropriate attitudes about finding and keeping jobs, vocational guidance experts hoped to cut down on occupational wandering, particularly amongst the low ability segment of the workforce that they thought contributed to this problem in particular.[98]

Vocational guidance experts guided 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' boys towards waged work, and 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' girls towards domestic service. Marvin

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[97] See Stephen "The 'Incorrigible,'" 413-418 and Stephen, "Unemployment," 156-167; Tyack and Hansot, 183-186; Kantor, 31.

[98] See Bott, 57-59; Florence S. Dunlop, "Subsequent Careers of Non-Academic Boys," (PhD dissertation, Teacher's College Columbia University, 1934) (Ottawa: National Printers Limited, 1935), 21-27. See also, Stephen "The 'Incorrigible,'" 413-418; Stephen, "Unemployment," 156-167; Lazerson and Grubb, "Introduction," 22-23.

K. was a shy twelve-year-old at The Ward PS in 1926 when he discovered how vocational guidance operated for Toronto's adolescent students labelled 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal.' Marvin struggled academically at The Ward PS. But he still enjoyed coming to school and was very proud of his accomplishments as pitcher for The Ward PS baseball team. After school, and into the evening, Marvin often sold newspapers to help his father, a plumber, and his mother to support their family of three boys and one girl. The family, which was Jewish, emigrated from Galicia before Marvin was born. In November 1926, Marvin, a working-class son of immigrant parents, met with school psychologist E.P. Lewis for a psychological examination and an assessment for placement in a special education class. Marvin told Lewis that he wanted to be a doctor or a lawyer when he grew up. Lewis characterized Marvin as "careless" and "lazy" (despite also noting that Marvin took care and pride in his accomplishments as an athlete and worked hard at his newspaper job). He undoubtedly also looked at this boy's IQ (76), his class and ethnic background, and his school record, before suggesting Marvin pursue a trade instead. Marvin, giving his dreams some further thought, conceded to Lewis that instead of trying to become a doctor or a lawyer, he would try to be a furrier. Dr. Lewis recommended Marvin for admission to a junior vocational school.[99]

Many adolescents were channelled by school vocational guidance experts away from career aspirations that experts decided were above the limitations that their mental capabilities supposedly imposed, and above their social station as well. Poor pay and dangerous or dull work, S.B. Sinclair observed, were quite fine for 'subnormals.'

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[99] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" Office Record Cards (O.R.C.) Drawer A-D. Marvin K. O.R.C.

"Putting nuts on bolts all day would drive [a "superior" intellect] to distraction, but [a 'subnormal' person] finds the work quite congenial."[100] The curricular options in junior vocational and handicraft schools, which we have already examined, offer further evidence of the types of vocations to which educationists and guidance experts believed special class graduates were best suited for.

However, finding a pupil like Marvin the right vocation was only half the battle. Vocational guidance was also supposed to teach 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' adolescents middle-class attitudes about work. The junior vocational and handicraft schools trained adolescents, and girls in particular, to cultivate "a proper pride in personal appearance," that is to adopt middle-class manners and standards of hygiene and behaviour, and respect for authority. Learning these things was supposed to help junior vocational and handicraft pupils find a job and keep it.[101] In the Junior Business course at the girls' junior vocational schools in the late 1920s, training in basic office skills came second to the course's three main objectives: "to help the pupil get a position; keep a position, and to make her an economical asset to the community."[102] Adolescent girls were advised that their health, appearance, and comportment were more important than their scholastic training. For instance, in one example found in an authorized school guidance text, a girl found a job earning more than what better educated and older girls typically earned because of her "splendid health, her look of substantial character and her good manner ... when another girl of fifteen, less healthy and less developed, might have failed to find any satisfactory position at all."[103] Junior vocational and handicraft schools literally taught girls how to look 'normal,' instead of looking intellectually disabled. "If these girls are going to keep a job, it is essential that their physical condition be the best possible to compensate for their deficiencies," the principals of two girls' junior vocational schools wrote.[104]

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[100] Sinclair, 14.
[101] MacKenzie, 85.
[102] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 118.

Vocational guidance did help a few youngsters to discover new scholastic and vocational options. One of these young people was Toronto schoolboy Richard W. In June 1941 Richard W. met with school psychologist Dr. C.G. Stogdill to discuss plans for the future. Richard, who was fourteen years old, told Stogdill that he wished to go to a boys' handicraft school "to prepare himself as an aeronautical mechanic." Stogdill seemed to genuinely like Richard and wanted to help him accomplish his vocational goal. Stogdill told Richard that the best way to get into the aeronautical field was to actually attend a different technical program than the handicraft school. Stogdill "put the idea to" Richard "squarely" and Richard who was "quite agreeable" to it was transferred to the other program in the fall, instead of to the handicraft school as he had initially requested.[105]

The decision to attend a junior vocational or handicraft school

As Richard W.'s story suggests, adolescent students—including special class students—had some say in how they were educated, although opportunities for choice were very limited. Parents also had some decision making power where adolescent special class students' education was concerned. Just like countless other parents whose children attended secondary schools during the expansion of secondary schooling in the 1920s, parents of adolescent special education students judged whether or not secondary education was truly worth the sacrifice of adolescents' wages that it often entailed.[106] It is crucial to read the interactions of Toronto young people and their parents with junior vocational and handicraft schools through the lens of the changing value of secondary schooling in the period between the end of WWI and the end of WWII. As the value of secondary schooling changed after WWI, many North American parents and young people came to embrace the premise that secondary school attendance would yield some payoff. Families were increasingly convinced after WWI that going to secondary school would help sons and daughters find jobs. The secondary schools also extended the attractive promise to parents that schooling could regulate young people in a new and more liberal youth culture that was beginning to take root in the 1920s.[107]

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[103] Marjory MacMurchy, *The Canadian Girl at Work: A Book of Vocational Guidance* (Toronto: King's Printer, 1919), 117; MacKenzie, 88-89. See also, Tyack and Hansot, 217.
[104] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 117. See also: *TBE Annual Report 1930*, 47.
[105] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" Admission Discharge Promotion (A.D.P.) Box TDSB 2003-0837. 'Richard W.' A.D.P.

In the period 1923 to 1945, Toronto parents, and the young people who actually attended the schools, developed sophisticated and mixed views of the value of attending a junior vocational or handicraft school. Sometimes young people and their parents stated these views. More often than not evidence of those views is oblique. Junior vocational and handicraft school pupils had more options than younger special class pupils because adolescents could sometimes leave school for work. Exploring adolescent special class pupils' decisions about schooling offers an excellent way of examining and evaluating the effectiveness of special class policies that Toronto school authorities claimed would help to prepare the city's teenagers for work and life. Many adolescents, and their parents, were interested in vocational training that would position sons and daughters to be successful workers and adults. Yet junior vocational and handicraft schools, as young people and adult family members noticed, often seemed to contribute little of real educational value to the work and life preparation of Toronto adolescents. Many adolescents, when they could do so or when they had to do so, steered away from junior vocational and handicraft schools in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. This pattern suggests, at least in part, that the education on offer at those schools was not particularly effective at competing with the other factors that pulled and pushed young people from learning institutions.

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[106] Grubb and Lazerson, "Education and the Labor Market," 127-128.
[107] Ibid; Stamp, 110-111. See also, Comacchio, 99-102.

Of the parents who sent their children to junior vocational or handicraft schools, at least a few likely perceived that the school was worthwhile, a solid investment in their sons or daughters that would improve earning power. The home and school association at the boys' junior vocational school cultivated parent interest in the school's capacity to help teenaged boys get jobs upon graduation. At the first home and school association meeting of the 1929-1930 school year, the school's principal promised parents that school leavers from his school earned more than other boys, with an average monthly salary of $176.[108] Other parents were drawn to the junior vocational and handicraft school's extra-curriculum, which reformers designed to keep adolescents boys and (particularly) girls in line. Some fathers and mothers were probably impressed with the close attention these schools devoted to reinforcing gender norms through curriculum, lessons in conduct, and through vocational guidance.[109] Finally, despite the frequently chauvinistic middle-class overtones of the health curriculum at junior vocational and handicraft schools, particularly for girls, the schools still held out material health benefits to their pupils. These benefits included such things as free food, free eyeglasses, free dental care, and free health treatment at a clinic. Although this special treatment was often justified on the basis that "the mentally retarded child must depend on physical endurance to earn a livelihood,"[110] it was undoubtedly of at least some value to many young women and men who may not have otherwise had access to such services. Lastly, growing enrolment can be seen as a sign of growing student and parent interest in junior vocational and handicraft schools. The growth in enrolment that we saw affected all Toronto high schools after 1920 touched the junior vocational and handicraft schools as well. (See Appendix A, Table II.2.)

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[108] The Junior Vocational School Home & School Club Minute Book, April 1927. [Unaccessioned material]. TDSBA. Box Marked "T.B.E. Records, Archives & Museum, Parkview S.S." First Meeting 1929-1930, n.d., 42-43.

However, enrolment and attendance statistics from Toronto's junior vocational and handicraft schools also hold some clues that suggest that parents and young people did not always accept school authorities' claims that junior vocational and handicraft schools were good preparation for work and life. These statistics might equally suggest that junior vocational and handicraft school pupils had fewer opportunities than students at other schools to benefit from secondary education. Enrolment is one way of examining support for secondary education. Another way to look at support for schools is to examine daily attendance statistics for particular programs. (Daily attendance statistics show the average number of children who attended on an average day as a percentage of the total number of pupils on a school's roll.) Provincial daily attendance statistics, although they sometimes reflect the inaccuracies of rudimentary early-twentieth-century educational accounting, help us to glimpse at everyday educational participation and offer clues about how successfully the schools mitigated the factors that pulled adolescents out of learning institutions. Daily attendance statistics for Toronto junior vocational and handicraft schools from the mid-1920s to the mid-1940 show that, on a daily basis, these schools were typically considerably less well attended than Toronto's collegiate institutes and commercial schools, and to a lesser extent, the city's technical schools. Attendance in junior vocational and handicraft schools for boys and girls was particularly dismal in the 1920s and early 1930s. (See Figure 4.2.)

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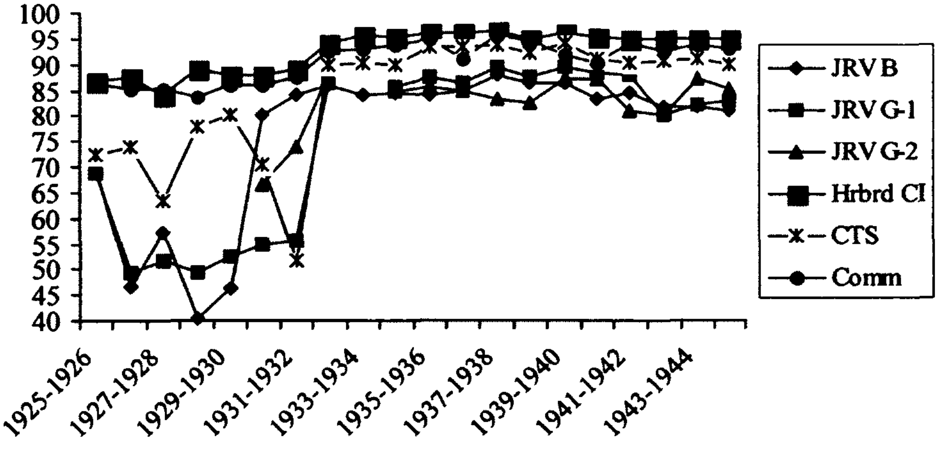
[109] See Stamp, 111.
[110] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 117.

Figure 4.2. Avg. Daily Att, % ctg of tot roll. Yr., sel. secondary schools.



Source: *DOE Annual Report*, 1925 to 1945.
Legend: JRV B = boys' junior vocational/handicraft school; JRV G = girls' junior vocational/handicraft school; Hrbrd CI = Harbord Collegiate Institute; CTS = Central Technical School; Comm = Central Commercial School.

The junior vocational and handicraft schools not only attained relatively poor daily attendance numbers, but they also had to deploy serious powers of suasion to achieve them. "The Juvenile Court and the Attendance Department of the Board of Education give valuable assistance where parents refuse to give these girls an opportunity for education," the principals of the two girls' schools reported in 1929. Other social agencies, such as the Big Sisters (Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant wings), the Mothers' Allowance Commission, and the Children's Aid Society, helped out financially in cases "where otherwise, the girls would have to enter industry to support the home," and these agencies may also may have interfered with parents' free choices by using their considerable influence to persuade parents to send their daughters to school.[111] Similarly, the Juvenile Court offered the Board its detention home to lock up any truant from the boys' junior vocational school, long enough to give him "an opportunity to think seriously of his situation."[112]

Such strict enforcement measures for bringing adolescents into the junior vocational and handicraft schools existed, in part, because of the age of the typical junior vocational or handicraft school pupil. Youngsters who were thirteen to sixteen years old had more latitude to negotiate entry into secondary school special education, and greater maturity, than their younger schoolmates did. The adolescent's position became stronger as she or he approached the school leaving age (age fourteen with a work permit, age sixteen without one). In the fall of 1939, thirteen-year-old Victor Y. stormed into the principal's office at Armoury Park PS and demanded a transfer to a boys' handicraft school. The principal informed him that he would "get no transfer in that frame of mind." Victor promptly told off the principal. He then threatened to fetch Mrs. Y., his mother, who, the principal noted "was to take my hair off." Victor's brazen approach actually earned him a transfer to the handicraft school less than a week after he berated his principal.[113] In similar fashion, Cecil M. threatened to call in his father, Mr. M., if the principal at Armoury Park PS did not accommodate the boy's request for a transfer to a handicraft school in 1937. The principal strapped Cecil six times for being "impertinent" in the incident. But Cecil did manage to secure a transfer to the handicraft school nonetheless.[114] Although Cecil and Victor demanded to be transferred to handicraft schools, not every young person was as eager to attend there as these two boys were.

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[111] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 116-117.

[112] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 110.

Parents usually had greater latitude than young people in setting a youngster's school agenda. While adolescent boys such as Victor or Cecil might themselves confront school authorities, and then threaten to bring in parents, girls negotiated schooling using their parents' help more directly. Ruthie S., for instance, worked with her mother from the beginning to achieve the school placement they wanted. In September 1933, Ruthie was supposed to attend Grade 5 for the fourth time. Ruthie was thirteen-years-old and fed up with being stuck in a grade for younger children. She told the principal at The Ward PS that she was too old for Grade 5 and asked to be moved up to Grade 6. Instead of accommodating that request, school authorities (including her principal at The Ward PS) recommended transferring Ruthie to a girls' junior vocational school. Ruthie and her mother were "strongly opposed" to that move, according to the chief inspector of Toronto schools in 1933, D.D. Moshier, who had become involved in Ruthie's case. In an effort to sway Ruthie and her mother, Moshier drafted a letter to a Toronto physician, who was to meet with mother and daughter to convince them of the junior vocational school's merits. The doctor was unable to influence either mother or daughter. Meanwhile, Mrs. S. had asked the principal at The Ward PS for a transfer for Ruthie to another neighbourhood school. As the situation approached a stalemate, the principal at The Ward PS gave in, informing Moshier that she believed that "it would injure [Ruthie's health] to force her to attend [a girls' junior vocational school]." Reluctantly, but without any real options, Moshier agreed to a transfer for Ruthie to the other neighbourhood school that she and her mother had requested.[115]

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[113] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 3. 'Victor Y.' O.R.C.

[114] Interestingly, this was the second time Cecil M. had gone to a boys' handicraft school. He had returned to Armoury Park PS after attending a boys' handicraft school briefly two years earlier. TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1308, Box 3. 'Cecil M.' O.R.C.

Sometimes parents called on local allies to intervene in placement decisions involving junior vocational and handicraft schools. In 1938 the family of fifteen-year-old Walter D.,, who had recently emigrated from Opatów, Poland, learned of a rumour that school authorities were preparing to transfer Walter to a handicraft school. The family sent for their political representative, school trustee William Dennison. Dennison—who, coincidentally, had stammered as a boy, and later founded a private speech correction school in Toronto in the 1930s—was a rookie trustee in 1938. (Dennison would go on to a long political career that saw him serve as Toronto mayor from 1966 to 1972). Young Trustee Dennison went down to Armoury Park PS, where Walter attended, to sort out the situation on the D. family's behalf. The principal denied the rumour that Walter was to be transferred to a handicraft school, informing Dennison that he had no plans whatsoever to move Walter. With Dennison involved the matter was dropped.[116]

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[115] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Ruthie S.' O.R.C., A.D.P. See also: Armoury Park PS, A.D.P. Box 2003-0836. 'Howard H.' A.D.P.

The lengths that some young people and parents, such as Ruthie S. and her mother, or Walter D. and his family, went to avoid junior vocational and handicraft schools offer some hint that attending the schools may not have been considered worthwhile uses of adolescent time. The relatively low daily attendance rates at the schools are a similar clue. Low average daily attendance also suggests that boys and girls enrolled in junior vocational and handicraft schools were able to find other, more meaningful pursuits during the day, which meant that they worked. Working for wages, and doing unpaid labour in the home while other family members worked for wages, were important parts of the lives of young, working-class Torontonians in this period, and essential to family survival.[117]

Many of the young people who attended junior vocational and handicraft schools in this period were working class, as many students who attended auxiliary and opportunity classes were as well. The parents of boys and girls from The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, and East End PS who attended the city's junior vocational and handicraft schools were in the majority blue collar. (See Table 4.2.)

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[116] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS," O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 4. 'Walter D.' O.R.C. See: "William Dennison: Stammering Farm Lad Became Mayor of Toronto," *Globe and Mail* (4 May 1981): 20; Bob Sutton, "Ex-Mayor Bill Dennison Dies," *Toronto Star* (3 May 1981): A3.

[117] John Bullen, "Hidden Workers: Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Ontario," *Labour/Le Travail* 18 (Fall 1986): 164-175; Michael J. Piva, *The Condition of the Working Class in Toronto—1900-1921* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1979), 104-106. See also, Heron, 219-233.

Table 4.2. Class and occupation, students admitted to junior vocational and handicraft schools, The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS[1], East End PS, 1923-24 to 1944-45.

	Boys		Girls	
Occupational and classes, by family head's occupation	**N**	**% of clssifbl.**	**N**	**% of clssifbl.**
Owners and managers	3	2.65%	1	0.99%
Agents on commission	6	5.31%	5	4.95%
Self-employed workers, total	15	13.27%	10	9.90%
self-employed, building trades	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
self-employed, others	15	13.27%	10	9.90%
Middle class	3	2.65%	0	0.00%
Working class, total	70	61.95%	72	71.29%
Blue collar, subtotal	70	61.95%	72	71.29%
skilled and semi-skilled	38	33.63%	31	30.69%
Unskilled	19	16.81%	28	27.72%
building trades	13	11.50%	13	12.87%
White collar (including clerical), subtotal	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Miscellaneous (unclassifiable)	21	—	16	—
None (unclassifiable)	8	—	5	—
Single women, employed in domestic service	14	12.39%	8	7.92%
Single women, employed in other service	2	1.77%	5	4.95%
Total unclassifiable	29	—	21	—
Total	142	—	122	—
Total classifiable	113	—	101	—

Sources: Occupational-social class classification and table structure from Richard Harris, Unplanned Suburbs: Toronto's American Tragedy 1900-1950 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), Appendix B, "Table B.1, Major Classes and Subgroups, City of Toronto, 1921," 294. (For comments on the use of this source, see Chapter 3 of this dissertation.) Data from Toronto District School Board Archives, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11; Toronto District School Board Archives, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "East End PS" Microfilm reel 11 and Office Record Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 10.

[1] Data up to 1930 is for the four schools merged into Armoury Park PS in 1930.

Rough but useable statistics that the Ontario DOE kept on occupations of the heads of household of all high school students in the province indicate that the junior vocational schools had larger percentages of working-class pupils than other Toronto secondary schools.[118] These statistics are available from the DOE for junior vocational schools from 1926 to 1933 and may be used to examine citywide data on the occupation of parents of junior vocational pupils. (See Figure 4.3, which is a sample from one year, 1933.) The DOE statistics generally show that the junior vocational schools had higher numbers of children whose fathers worked in labouring occupations, or had no occupation at all, than other Toronto secondary schools. The children of middle-class, white-collar, and professional parents (employed as professionals, clergy, teachers, and in "commerce") made up much greater proportions of the school population at academic and technical-commercial schools, such as Harbord Collegiate Institute (CI), Central Technical School, and Central Commerce High School (HS). This was despite the fact that Toronto secondary schools such as Commerce or Central Tech, in particular, had become much more working-class by the 1920s.[119]

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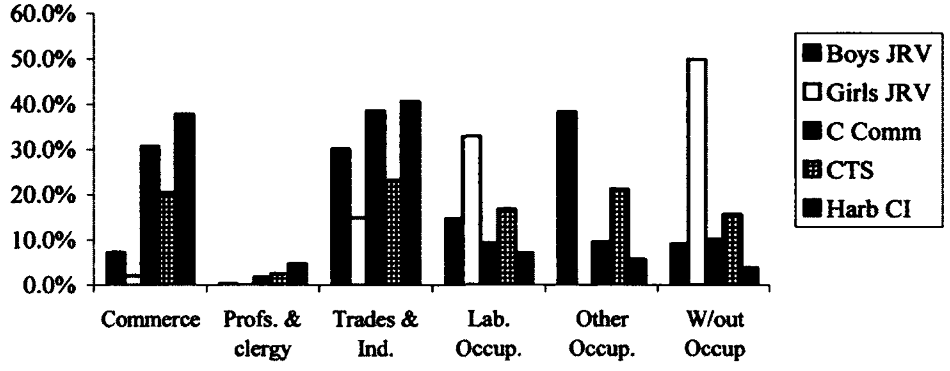
[118] These statistics offer a breakdown of father's occupation under headings that are not as precise as the measures I adapted from Harris' work to categorize students at The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, and East End PS by social class. (See Chapter 3.) There are only eight headings in the DOE tables and it is unclear what occupations fit under which headings. The eight headings are: "Commerce", "Agriculture", "Law, Medicine, Dentistry or Church" (which I call professions and clergy), "Teaching", "Trades and Industries", "Labouring Occupations", "Other Occupations", "Without occupation." See *DOE Report 1926* to *DOE Report 1933*, Appendix J, Report of the Provincial Attendance Officer.

[119] Marks, "New Opportunities within the Separate Sphere," 51-52. For DOE statistics from other years, see *DOE Report 1926* to *DOE Report 1933*, Appendix J, Report of the Provincial Attendance Officer.

Figure 4.3. Secondary school enrolment by family head (father's) occupation. Sel. TBE schools, 1933.



Source: DOE Annual Report 1933, 299.
Legend: Boys JRV = boys' junior vocational school; Girls JRV = girls' junior vocational school; C Comm = Central Commercial School; CTS = Central Technical Schools; Harb CI = Harbord Collegiate Institute.

Certainly, the economic situation of Toronto youngsters and their families influenced choices about schooling, including influencing youngsters' attendance at junior vocational and handicraft schools. Enrolment in junior vocational and handicraft schools rose and fell at least partly with the rhythms of the local economy, with some variation along gender lines. Adolescent boys surged into junior vocational and handicraft schools when work was scarce. The best year for enrolment over the entire 1923 to 1945 period was in the middle of the Depression. In 1934-1935, over 700 boys enrolled in junior vocational and handicraft schools. (See Appendix A, Table A.2.) Indeed, Canadian secondary school enrolments rose generally in the Depression, as jobs dried up.[120] After hitting a 1934-1935 peak, boys' junior vocational school enrolment in Toronto declined and then remained steady until the start of WWII. Once the fighting broke out in Europe, and work opportunities became available locally, the outflow of boys from the handicraft school was about the same as the inflow during the Depression.[121]

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[120] Stamp, 159; Heron, 256-257.

Another indicator that the handicraft schools rated poorly against war work opportunities is the statistic that DOE officials called "Permanent retirements," a statistic the DOE measured from 1934-1935 onwards. This statistic recorded the number of students leaving junior vocational or handicraft school with no plans to continue schooling any further. Permanent retirements, as a percentage of total enrolments, rose during the first years of WWII, suggesting that students left the schools with more frequency in these years, probably to take waged work. The growing number of the part-time enrolments during WWII also suggests the availability of more work for male adolescent special education students as well. The somewhat equally larger relative number of retirements in the mid-depression years cannot be explained by greater work opportunities, although it could be explained by more young men leaving the schools for even marginal work opportunities as their families' economic situations worsened in the Depression's nadir.[122] (See Figure 4.4 and Figure 4.5.)

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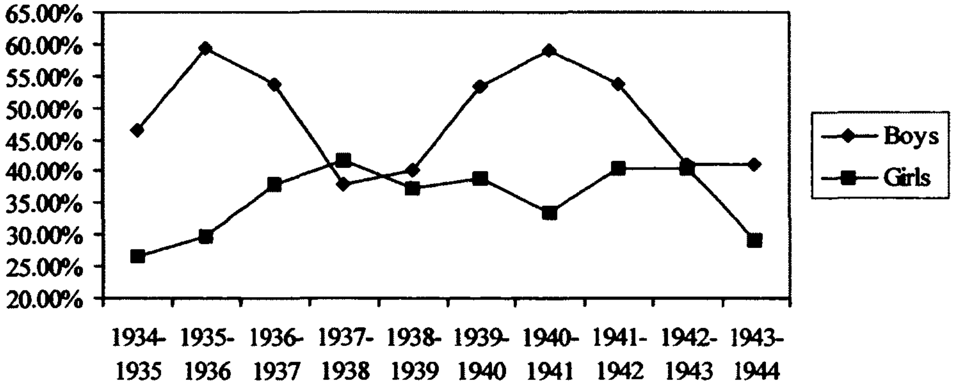
[121] World War II created employment opportunities that enticed many young males to abandon schooling for work. Comacchio, 40.

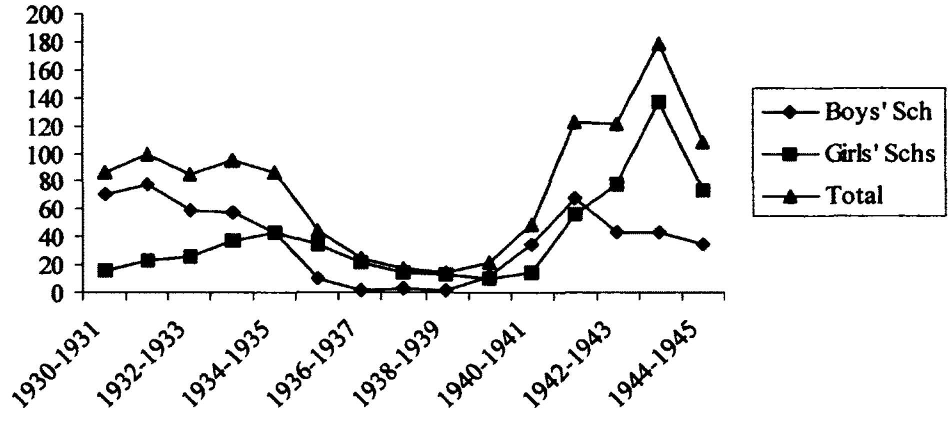
[122] David Tyack, Robert Lowe, and Elisabeth Hansot, *Public Schools in Hard Times: The Great Depression and Recent Years* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 148-149.

Figure 4.4. Yearly retirements from Toronto boys' and girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools, as percentage of total enrolment.



Source: *DOE Annual Report*, 1934 to 1945.

Figure 4.5. Part time enrolments, Toronto junior vocational and handicraft schools for boys and girls, 1930-31 to 1944-45.



Source: *DOE Annual Report*, 1930 to 1945.

Enrolment patterns at the girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools resembled those at the boys' schools for most of the Depression and war years. Enrolment in the girls' schools rose steadily in the first few years of the Depression. (See Appendix A, Table A.2) After cresting in the middle of the Depression, enrolments fell consistently, until the start of WWII. Multiple factors came into play in girls' attendance, as parents weighed whether or not their daughters should attend junior vocational and handicraft schools in tough times. Working-class girls' families had a particular need for their labour and wages during the Depression. These families called on daughters more often than on sons for assistance as the economy turned sour and male kin lost jobs. Katrina Srigley's research shows young women in Toronto supported entire families during the Depression.[123] The school principal at one of Toronto's girls' junior vocational schools reported, in 1932, that many of the girls at the school were the only members of their family earning any wages.[124]

Soon after war arrived in 1939, enrolment patterns at girls' and boys' handicraft schools began to diverge. (See Appendix A, Table A.2.) Enrolments in schools for boys and for girls declined in the early war years. However, after 1942, enrolments in the girls' schools rose, while the boys' enrolments continued to fall. This divergence could be explained by looking at the differing types of employment opportunities available to young female and male workers in bad and good economic times. As the economy improved with WWII, boys, and for a while girls, moved out of the handicraft schools. Retirement statistics, however, suggest gendered differences in access to employment options for these youngsters. (See Figure 4.4.) After 1939, boys exited the handicraft schools at a greater rate than girls.

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[123] Katrina Srigley, *Breadwinning Daughters: Young Working Women in a Depression Era City, 1929-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 4. On young women and men and employment in Toronto during the Depression, see also: Lara Campbell, *Respectable Citizens: Gender, Family, and Unemployment in Ontario's Great Depression* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 90; Marcus Aurelius Klee, "Between the Scylla and Charybdis of Anarchy and Despotism: The State, Capital, and the Working Class in the Great Depression, Toronto, 1929-1940," Ph.D. diss. (Queen's University, 1998), 251-252.
[124] *Toronto Board of Education Annual Report* 1932, 64-70.

It is possible that, as the economy recovered in the Depression's dying days, younger boys—there were larger numbers of boys leaving in the first two years of junior vocational school or handicraft school than girls during these years—found waged employment before girls of the same age. Especially after 1940-1941, there was a noticeable trend towards boys leaving during or after the first year of the program.[125] However, if the end of the Depression eased the economic necessity for working-class adolescent girls to support their families, it did not necessarily also offer girls wide opportunities if they chose to continue to work in better times.[126] By war's end manufacturing employed more women than domestic service, which had been the largest female employment sector in 1939. Yet domestic service remained an employment silo for young working-class women, especially near war's end, as male veterans returned to manufacturing jobs and attempted to push out women.[127] With the choice between low-status and backbreaking domestic work, which was available and pushed onto working-class adolescent girls particularly, and continued school attendance at a handicraft school, we can assume that more than a handful of female Toronto handicraft school pupils would have preferred to hit the books.

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[125] These conclusions are drawn from statistics that the DOE reported from 1934-1935 to 1943-1944. See *DOE Report*, 1935 to 1944. The conclusions should be approached with some caution. The ages at which the pupils left are not included in DOE reports, and must be inferred from the typical admission age of thirteen years. Numbers are available only for ten school years in the fifteen-year period, and the start of the Depression is not included. Finally, there appear to be abnormalities in the numbers.. The conclusions here are best approached as a general overview, not a precise portrait, of the length of schooling for handicraft school pupils.

[126] Comacchio, 155-159.

[127] Jennifer Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State, 1939-1947* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 39, 115-117. See also: Strong-Boag, 53.

Financial necessity pulled some adolescents out of the junior vocational and handicraft schools in the 1930s and 1940s. The schools pushed out many other young people. Educationists claimed that the junior vocational and handicraft schools smoothed the supposedly unusually difficult transition that so-called 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' boys and girls faced as they moved into the workforce.[128] But in reality, Toronto's handicraft schools were not very effective in transitioning boys and girls from the classroom to the factory or kitchen floor.

A 1939 comprehensive study of Toronto school leavers offers interesting evidence of how handicraft schools measured up to other Toronto learning institutions in their capacity to transfer adolescents smoothly from school to work. The massive study, under the auspices of Toronto Superintendent Dr. C.C. Goldring, surveyed approximately 12,000 school leavers from Toronto's public schools at the time they left school, or shortly after. Goldring noted in his report on the survey's findings that: "One of the interesting features of the data regarding those who left the Handicraft Schools in 1939 is the high percentage who secured employment." (See Table 4.4.)

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[128] TDSBA. TDSB 2003-0534. Scrapbook Vol. 2 (1932-1943). "School Girls Get Variety of Jobs," 30 September 1935. Other studies reported similarly promising results for graduates. See VF: T.B.E. Schools-Sec.-Jarvis C.I. 1940-1959. W.J. McIntosh, "Follow-Up Study of One Thousand Non-Academic Boys," *Journal of Exceptional Children* 15 (March 1949): 166-170. See also, *TBE Annual Report 1930*, 46-51. Not every report was rosy. In 1932, the Board's attendance officer noted that at the boys' handicraft school "during the first half of the year all [the principal's] ideals in regard to 'satisfactory vocational adjustment' for adolescents had to be thrown into the discard and in place of investigations regarding satisfactory working conditions, adequate pay and chances for promotion, the question 'Have you a job?' crowded out every other consideration." *TBE Annual Report 1932*, Report of the Chief Attendance Officer, 144.

Table 4.3. Comparative unemployment rates for school leavers, 1939. Toronto schools.

	Boys		Girls	
	N	%[1]	N	%[1]
Handicraft schools, unemp.	102	32.90%	31	11.44%
Total school leavers, Handicraft.	310		273	
Total school leavers, dest. known, Handicraft	310		271	
Collegiate institutes, unemp.[2], [3]	153	9.04%	198	14.28%
Total school leavers, collegiate institutes	1692		1387	
Total school leavers, dest. known, collegiate institutes	1692		1387	
Technical and Commercial schools, unemp.[2], [3]	487	14.49%	855	28.38%
Total school leavers, tech. & comm.	3368		3016	
Total school leavers, dest. known, tech. & comm.	3362		3013	
Elementary schools, Gr. 9 & 10., unemp.	42	17.80%	66	12.45%
Total school leavers, Elem. Gr. 9 & 10	259		581	
Total school leavers, dest. known, Elem. Gr. 9 & 10	236		530	
Elementary schools, Gr. 1-8. unemp.	112	20.82%	59	15.40%
Total school leavers, Elem. Gr. 1-8	630		434	
Total school leavers, dest. known, Elem. Gr. 1-8	538		383	

Source: TDSBA. Goldring, Cecil Charles. Papers. (Box 1 of 2). TDSB 2003-0568. C.C. Goldring, "Some Human Products of Toronto Schools During 1939," (February 1940).

[1] Percentage of school leavers whose destination was known.

[2] Reported as "without occupation."

[3] Statistics for collegiate institutes and technical and commercial schools do not differentiate between girls who left school and intended to work at home and girls who left school and intended to find a job, but were unable to find that job.

Where handicraft schools graduates were concerned, girls were much more successful in finding employment than boys. Exactly 150 boys and 130 girls who graduated from handicraft schools actually found jobs, according to the survey. (Other handicraft school leavers went to other schools, left school because of ill health, were institutionalized, left for other reasons, or died.) Graduates working for wages had found typical gendered juvenile employments. (Table 4.4.)

Table 4.4. Top five occupations of employed Toronto handicraft school leavers, 1939. Boys and girls.					
Boys			**Girls**		
	N	**% of tot. emp'ed**		**N**	**% of tot. emp'ed**
Delivery boy	42	28.00%	Housework[1]	65	50.00%
Factory work	22	14.67%	Factory work	17	13.08%
Farm work	17	11.33%	Power operating[2]	10	7.69%
Fruit store	5	3.33%	Waitress	5	3.85%
Paper route	5	3.33%	Nursemaid	4	3.08%
Other occupations	59	39.33%	Other occupations	29	22.31%

Source: TDSBA. Goldring, Cecil Charles. Papers. (Box 1 of 2). TDSB 2003-0568. C.C. Goldring, "Some Human Products of Toronto Schools During 1939," (February 1940).

[1] Domestic work, for wages.
[2] Likely industrial sewing.

Goldring was satisfied with the employment records of handicraft school graduates.[129]

As we have seen, educational historians have shown that young people continued to attend school as long as they derived a value from the instruction that outweighed what they lost by not participating in the labour force.[130] In his study of the relationship between schooling and juvenile employment in Hamilton, Ontario, Craig Heron observes that staying in school past age thirteen did not offer young people many chances to acquire a specific trade skill that could help them to find employment later because schools did not teach the trade skills that employers sought. Heron also showed that even if a young person managed to learn a trade through the school, there was no guarantee that a job would immediately be available to that young person in his (sometimes her) field. And working-class youth could not wait around jobless for the ideal opportunity to arrive. Finally, most employers in Hamilton preferred to do their own on-the-job training and for this reason they did not necessarily care whether or not a new employee was trained in a specific skill or not.[131]

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[129] TDSBA. Goldring, Cecil Charles. Papers. (Box 1 of 2). TDSB 2003-0568. C.C. Goldring, "Some Human Products of Toronto Schools During 1939," (February 1940). On gendered juvenile employments in the 1930s and early 1940s, see: Leonard C. Marsh, *Canadians in and Out of Work: A Survey of Economic Classes and their Relation to the Labour Market* (Montreal: McGill University and Oxford University Press, 1940), 220-226; Strong-Boag, 51-63.
[130] See, for instance, Grubb and Lazerson, "Education and the Labor Market," 127-130.

Goldring's 1939 survey is cast in a different light when we recognize the historical relationship between schooling, technical learning, and waged work. When we read Goldring's 1939 survey alongside the low daily attendance rates at junior vocational and handicraft schools, and alongside the evidence on Depression enrolment patterns, the survey would seem to suggest that the junior vocational and handicraft schools actually did relatively little to get their graduates jobs. In fact, many of the boys and girls leaving the schools may have been pushed out by a curriculum lacking relevance to their future employment. When they voted with their feet against junior vocational and handicraft schools these boys and girls, and their parents, registered an unspoken criticism of the special schools' incapacity to connect adolescent students with employment. Even Goldring's survey itself hinted at the poor job the schools did of preparing students for a seamless transition to the workforce. Handicraft school leavers fared poorly relative to graduates of other Toronto schools in 1939. Pupils who left the boys' handicraft schools had the highest unemployment rate of any group of school leavers. (See Table 4.3.) Their rate of unemployment was nearly two times the rate for youngsters who did not have any secondary education at all and left school between Grades 1 and 8.

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[131] Heron, 253-254; Stamp, 114. See also: Tom Moore, "Attitude of Organzied Labour Towards Technical Education," *Addresses and Proceedings of the 67th OEA Convention* (Toronto: OEA, 1928): 131.

Female handicraft school leavers in 1939 had a better employment rate than most girls or boys who left Toronto secondary schools, according to Goldring's survey. (See Table 4.3.) However, fully 50 percent of school leavers from girls' handicraft schools in 1939 entered domestic service. (See Table 4.4.) It is likely, that amongst the over 4,000 female school leavers from the collegiate institutes and technical and commercial schools, there were girls who had an option to enter domestic service as well, but also had the good fortune (mainly, by the likely virtue of their parents' means) to be able to decline that option. These girls could wait for a year or two and for a chance to pursue more education beyond the public schools, in a university or private business college; or, they had the means to look around and wait for a better employment opportunity than domestic service to come along. Middle-class children, unlike handicraft school pupils who were mainly working-class, were not necessarily compelled by their parents, or by their financial situation, to enter domestic service.

An ineffective curriculum at the junior vocational and handicraft schools also held even further potential to push out many youngsters, again suggesting that the schools were not very responsive to the needs of adolescent students or their parents. The domestic science curriculum at the girls' schools, for instance, was likely to turn young women away from the vocational classroom. In addition to the basic domestic arts and sciences course that dominated the curriculum at the girls' schools (as we saw earlier) there was also a specialized pre-domestic training program intended to stream the girls into positions as household servants. The "Home Service and Apprenticeship" course sent students out from the junior vocational and handicraft schools during school hours to do substitute work as domestic servants in the homes of Toronto's elite. Educational reformers who were members of groups such as the National Council of Women hoped that they could rescue domestic employment's tarnished early-twentieth-century image by attracting more young women to accept the call of service.[132] The principals at the girls' schools described their domestic apprenticeship program in 1929:

> By interesting Women's organizations in the school, we carry on an extensive employment bureau. During illness or when extra help is required for entertainment, these ladies employ our girls. The school provides a uniform, made on the power-machines in the Sewing Class, and the girl is counted as 'present' at school, if satisfactorily employed in these desirable homes. Our girls thus enjoy higher standards of living, and are made more ambitious to better their home condition at present and in the future.

Wages for this hard domestic work are not mentioned.[133]

The Home Service and Apprenticeship program existed at a time when the vocation of female household servant was in serious decline. By the 1910s domestic service, with its stringent supervision and difficult working conditions, was a very unpopular occupational choice for urban young women, especially as new wage-earning niches became more widely available.[134] The TBE's Home Service and Apprenticeship Program more than likely turned youngsters away from domestic service and away from the junior vocational and handicraft schools as well. The program forced an undesirable 'double-duty' on the young women enrolled: domestic work at school and domestic work at home. "Little Mothers," as the junior vocational school principals called the young women enrolled in their schools in 1929, were well acquainted with domestic skills far before they ever arrived at the school.[135] Most of them had likely already spent years helping their own mothers with the massive tasks involved in managing the home.[136] The girls' schools' principals acknowledged that "revulsion from overwork" drove many young women out their familial home as soon waged work beckoned. Yet they did not seem to think that still more of this sort of work during school hours would drive young women out of their schools as well. Moreover, many parents could have easily seen the Home Service and Apprenticeship Program as an affront and could have instructed their daughters to avoid it for that reason. The program was part of a compulsory education policy that deprived families of their teenagers' wage-earning potential. Worse, in an about face, the school then sent the girl back out the door to a wage-earner's job, apparently without compensation. Domestic service was also sometimes negatively associated with provincial unemployment policy that made women seeking relief accept domestic service positions and with Ontario's reformatories, reform schools and other places that incarcerated women, who also used compulsory domestic service and often made accepting a domestic service position a requisite for release.[137]

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[132] Marta Danylewycz, "Domestic Science Education in Ontario, 1900-1940," *Gender and Education in Ontario*, eds. Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1991): 138-139; Tyack and Hansot, 217.
[133] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 120-121.
[134] Strange, 37; Strong-Boag 51-54; Coulter, 155.

Families make choices about the children's education for many different reasons. Several historians have shown that it is possible to make a few generalizations about how different immigrant and ethnic groups approached schooling, especially secondary and vocational education. Ethnicity also intersects with gender, with generally slightly different gendered family relations prevailing in different immigrant groups and affecting family approaches to schooling.[138] Examining the over- and under-representation of specific ethnic groups in junior vocational and handicraft schools in light of this secondary literature on ethnicity, gender, and schooling, is revealing because of what it says about family choices surrounding special education.

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[135] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 119-120.
[136] See Strong-Boag, 12.
[137] Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 30-31; Stephen, "Unemployment," 164-166; Strange, 49.

Consider the case of Toronto Italians, who, if we measure by a sample of enrolment numbers, appear to have been greater supporters of junior vocational and handicraft schools relative to other ethnic groups. To be sure, enrolment is not without compulsion. Yet, as I have suggested, enrolment in secondary school special education programs reflects some element of choice. The student records from The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, and East End PS, indicate Toronto boys from Italian backgrounds made up a significant proportion of the youngsters admitted from these three schools to junior vocational and handicraft schools, across the period from 1923-24 to 1944-45. (See Table 4.5.) The proportions of Italian boys admitted to the classes are noticeably high relative to the number of Italians in the neighbourhood populations surrounding the three schools. Toronto's Italians were 2.06 percent of the total city population according to the 1931 Dominion census. In Ward 3, where The Ward PS was located, Italians were 2.17

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[138] See Miriam Cohen, *Workshop to Office: Two Generations of Italian Women in New York City, 1900-1950* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992) and Michael R. Olneck and Marvin Lazerson, "The School Achievement of Immigrant Children, 1900-1930," *History of Education Quarterly*, 14:4 (Winter 1974): 453-482. There is an extensive literature on immigrants and schooling in Canada and the United States, much of which discusses the generalized views of specific immigrant groups on education. See, for example: Luigi G. Pennacchio, "Toronto's Public Schools and the Assimilation of Foreign Students, 1900-1920," *The Journal of Educational Thought* 20:1 (April 1986): 37-48; Tim Stanley, "White Supremacy, Chinese Schooling, and School Segregation in Victoria: The Case of the Chinese Students' Strike, 1922-1923," in Nancy Janovicek and Joy Parr, eds., *Histories of Canadian Children and Youth*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003): 126-143. See also, Joel Perlmann, *Ethnic Differences: Schooling and Social Structure among the Irish, Italians, Jews, and Blacks in an American City, 1880-1935* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

percent of the population in 1931.[139] Yet, nearly 22 percent of the students admitted from The Ward PS to boys' junior vocational and handicraft schools in the 1923 to 1945 period were Italian. There was not as large a proportion of Italian girls enrolling in junior vocational and handicraft schools in this period. Approximately 16 percent of girls admitted to these schools in my sample were Italian. However, relative to the overall population of Italians, this percentage also seems high. (See Table 4.6.)

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[139] Dominion Bureau of Census (D.B.S.), "Population of the Municipal Wards of the Cities of Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Quebec and Ottawa by Quinquennial Age Groups, Conjugal Condition, Birthplace, Racial Origin, Religion, School Attendance and Literacy, By Sex, Census 1931," D.B.S. Seventh Census of Canada, Bulletin No. XL (Ottawa: 1934): Table 5.

Table 4.5. Student race/ethnicity/nationality/religion, junior vocational and handicraft schools for boys, admitted from all three schools aggregated, 1923-24 to 1944-45.

	The Ward PS		Armoury Park PS[1]		East End PS		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Anglo-Canadian	15	23.44%	40	58.82%	3	30.00%	58	40.85%
English	5	7.81%	9	13.24%	5	50.00%	19	13.38%
East. Europ., Jewish	14	21.88%	2	2.94%	0	0.00%	16	11.27%
Italian	14	21.88%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	14	9.86%
American	0	0.00%	3	4.41%	2	20.00%	5	3.52%
Polish	2	3.13%	3	4.41%	0	0.00%	5	3.52%
Russian	4	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	2.82%
Austrian	1	1.56%	2	2.94%	0	0.00%	3	2.11%
Scottish	0	0.00%	3	4.41%	0	0.00%	3	2.11%
Canadian, Jewish	1	1.56%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.70%
Chinese	1	1.56%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.70%
Czechoslovak	0	0.00%	1	1.47%	0	0.00%	1	0.70%
German	0	0.00%	1	1.47%	0	0.00%	1	0.70%
Greek	0	0.00%	1	1.47%	0	0.00%	1	0.70%
Indian (S. Asian)	1	1.56%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.70%
Irish	0	0.00%	1	1.47%	0	0.00%	1	0.70%
Jamaican	1	1.56%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.70%
Japanese	1	1.56%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.70%
Ukrainian	1	1.56%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.70%
Na	3	4.69%	2	2.94%	0	0.00%	5	3.52%
Total	64	—	68	—	10	—	142	—

Sources: Data from Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA), Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z. TDSBA, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11. TDSBA, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "East End PS" Microfilm reel 11 and Office Record Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 10.

[1] Data up to 1930 is for the four schools merged into Armoury Park PS in 1930.

Table 4.6. Student race/ethnicity/nationality/religion, junior vocational and handicraft schools for girls, admitted from all three schools aggregated, 1923-24 to 1944-45.

	The Ward PS		Armoury Park PS[1]		East End PS		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Anglo-Canadian	8	18.18%	37	59.68%	4	25.00%	49	40.16%
East. Europ., Jewish	15	34.09%	2	3.23%	0	0.00%	17	13.93%
English	1	2.27%	6	9.68%	6	37.50%	13	10.66%
Scottish	2	4.55%	7	11.29%	2	12.50%	11	9.02%
Italian	7	15.91%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	7	5.74%
Polish	4	9.09%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	3.28%
Irish	0	0.00%	1	1.61%	2	12.50%	3	2.46%
Canadian, Jewish	2	4.55%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	1.64%
Chinese	1	2.27%	1	1.61%	0	0.00%	2	1.64%
Austrian	1	2.27%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.82%
American	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	6.25%	1	0.82%
French Canadian	0	0.00%	1	1.61%	0	0.00%	1	0.82%
French	0	0.00%	1	1.61%	0	0.00%	1	0.82%
Greek	1	2.27%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.82%
Indian (S. Asian)	0	0.00%	1	1.61%	0	0.00%	1	0.82%
Ukrainian	1	2.27%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.82%
Welsh	0	0.00%	1	1.61%	0	0.00%	1	0.82%
na	1	2.27%	4	6.45%	1	6.25%	6	4.92%
Total	44	—	62	—	16	—	122	—

Sources: Data from Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA), Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z. TDSBA, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11. TDSBA, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 11 and Office Record Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 10.

[1] Data up to 1930 is for the four schools merged into Armoury Park PS in 1930.

The relatively large number of Italian Canadian children enrolling in junior vocational and handicraft schools is particularly interesting when placed in the context of a considerable historical literature on immigrant Italian parents' views of secondary schooling. That literature tells us that North American Italian parents often did not choose to continue their adolescent children's education beyond elementary school. Italian parents had good reason not to send their daughters to secondary school. In the early twentieth century, as Miriam Cohen shows, public education had relatively little to offer North American Italian children in terms of traditional cultural values, transferable skills, or upward mobility. Moreover, early-twentieth-century educationists often held generalized negative views of Italian children's school aptitudes, which made it difficult for Italian children to access school opportunities.[140] Yet, it seems that Toronto Italians were relatively quite interested in junior vocational and handicraft schools as educational venues for their sons and daughters. There are several possible explanations for this. First, Cohen has noted that North American Italian parents would tolerate some education for their adolescent sons, as long as this schooling was vocational.[141] This may explain why Italian boys were admitted to junior vocational and handicraft schools. In the case of adolescent girls, we could speculate that the sex-segregated nature of the girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools, and the domestic curriculum, appealed to Italian immigrant parents who valued these things in education.[142]

If Italian youngsters were over-represented in Toronto's junior vocational and handicraft schools, Jewish youngsters were under-represented. Toronto's Jewish population, by the early twentieth century already largely made up of Eastern European Jews, was larger than its Italian population. The 1931 Dominion census indicates that the city's Jewish population was over 45,000, or 7.18 percent of the total Toronto population.[143] Jewish boys represented a significant proportion of young people admitted to junior vocational and handicraft schools from the three schools whose student records I looked at. The proportion of Jewish girls admitted to special secondary schools is even higher. (See Table 4.6.) Yet given the size of the city's Jewish population, and the number of Jewish children living in The Ward and attending The Ward PS, these enrolment numbers seem to indicate under-representation of Jewish youngsters in junior vocational and handicraft schools.[144]

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[140] Cohen, 115-124, 160-166. See also, Selma C. Berrol, "School Days on the Old East Side: The Italian and Jewish Experience," *New York History* 57:2 (April 1976): 208-209; Olneck and Lazerson, 475; Leonard Covello and Francesco Cordasco, ed., *The Social Background of the Italo-American School Child: A Study of the Southern Italian Family Mores and their Effect on the School Situation in Italy and America* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, [1944], 1972), 253; Perlmann, 85.
[141] Cohen, 124.
[142] Maxine Seller, "The Education of Immigrant Children in Buffalo, New York, 1890-1916," *New York History* 57:2 (April 1976): 196-197.

Again, as in the case of Canadian Italians, documented ethnic differences in culture and attitudes towards education may help to partially explain the different choices that Jewish families appeared to make vis-à-vis junior vocational and handicraft school education. Speaking generally, Jewish families who had emigrated from Eastern Europe to North America placed a particularly high value on education, especially academic preparation.[145] Lynne Marks has argued that some Jewish parents in Toronto in the 1920s made decisions about their children's education based primarily on the academic status that a particular school program offered, not on what career prospects that school may have also displayed. For instance, Jewish parents sent their daughters to academic collegiate institutes in order to receive the type of academic education that members of the Jewish community valued highly at the time. One former Harbord Collegiate Institute

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[143] DBS, Population, Table 5.

[144] On the Ward as a Jewish neighbourhood, see Stephen A. Speisman, "St. John's Shtetl: the Ward in 1911," in Robert Harney ed., *Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834-1945* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985), 117-118.

[145] See Lazerson and Olneck, 472-473; Stephan F. Brumberg, *Going to America, Going to School: The Jewish immigrant public school encounter in turn-of-the-century New York City* (New York: Praeger, 1986), 22-30; Berrol, 201-213; Perlmann, 412-417. On Jews and public schooling in Canada see: Pennacchio; Lynne Marks, "*Kale meydelach* or *Shulamith* girls: Cultural change and continuity among Jewish parents and daughters—a case study of Toronto's Harbord Collegiate Institute in the 1920s," *Canadian Woman Studies/Les cahiers de la femme* 7:3 (1986): 85-89.

(CI) student told Marks that "it was considered by the community to be really fine if parents could send their daughters to an academic high school." The women reported that Central Commerce, another nearby option, was not preferred because it was not seen as an academic high school.[146] Yet Marks discovered that a significant portion of Jewish young women eventually entered clerical work, even after attending an academic collegiate institute. As their parents considered clerical jobs "prestige" positions they would often pay to send a young woman to a short stenographic course after she had finished attending an academic high school. They did so even after discouraging their daughters from attending public school commercial programs, such at the program at Central Commerce, that offered the same types of business courses without fees.[147] In these parents' calculation the academic status of the collegiate institute trumped the commercial high school, even though parents eventually provided their daughters with a commercial education by paying for it. If academic status was a consideration, as Marks' suggests, then we might infer that the girls' vocational and handicraft schools, which ranked lower than Central Commerce in terms of academic standards (and lower still than Harbord CI), may have been unpopular with Jewish families. This might explain lower enrolment of Jewish adolescents in junior vocational and handicraft schools.

By no means do the variations in how different ethnic groups tended to viewed education completely explain junior vocational and handicraft school attendance patterns.

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[146] Marks, "*Kale meydelach* ...," 85-89. On gender differences in how Jewish parents viewed public schooling for daughters and sons, see: Sydney Stahl Weinberg, "Longing to Learn: The Education of Jewish Immigrant Women in New York City, 1900-1934," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 8:2 (Spring 1989), 108-109.

[147] Marks, "New Opportunities," 54-59. On the persistent "middle class respectability" of commercial occupations, even after these jobs were proletarianized and feminized in the early twentieth century, see Jackson and Gaskell, 183-184.

To be sure, school officials' views on the relative intelligence of different 'racial' groups, which we discussed in the previous chapter, affected how school officials dispersed youngsters along different educational tracks. Social science and social history research that looks at different ethnic groups' typical responses to schooling offers interesting hypotheses that are useful in exploring how Toronto parents may have approached the decision to send a child to a special education program. Yet this research cannot tell the whole story about how Jewish or Italian parents and their children (and Anglo-Canadian parents, for that matter) weighed notions of disability and learning difficulty in deciding on education for their teenaged children. Clearly more study is needed in this area. Some of that study will also hopefully address how different North American ethnic and racial groups responded to disability, as well as to public schooling.

Conclusion

Preparation for work and life defined the junior vocational and handicraft schools' role in the period 1923 to 1945. Or at least it was supposed to. The expansion of Toronto's special class system into the secondary school panel in the 1920s made good policy sense to school officials. The high schools were the venue where boys and girls received preparation to become men and women. New, differentiated programming children labelled 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' made sense to Toronto school officials as secondary schools were expected to serve a more heterogeneous student body, especially in the 1920s. Secondary schools from the 1920s onwards also took on a greater role of preparing young people for adult life by socializing them to approved class and gender roles, along with appropriate conceptions of behaviour and sexuality. Moral regulation affected mostly adolescent girls who were working-class, non-Anglo-Canadian, and just as often girls who had disabilities or learning difficulties as well.

Toronto's 'subnormal' and 'dull-normal' adolescents who attended junior vocational and handicraft schools encountered a differentiated curriculum tailored by educators to these children's supposedly concrete learning styles, and to their expected futures as low-skill workers. Special educators tried to prepare adolescents for a workforce that was segmented by ability and disability, in addition to being segmented by gender and class. In efforts to prepare adolescent special education pupils for that workforce they helped to create an association between concrete learning and employment low status blue-collar occupations.

The age of Toronto's junior vocational and handicraft school students, the modicum of juvenile and parental choice associated with secondary education, as well as the intertwined nature of vocational schooling and actual work opportunities, gave rise to a particularly complex set of interactions between young people, their parents, the junior vocational and handicraft schools, and the workforce. Direct evidence from student records, and indirect evidence from such sources as attendance and enrolment statistics, a study of school leavers in 1939, analysis of the curriculum from the student's perspective, and an examination of immigrant groups' views on vocational education, together demonstrate that Toronto young people and their parents mainly saw dubious value in junior vocational and handicraft school education and avoided these schools for that reason.

At the same time that Toronto school authorities were expanding special education into the secondary panel they were also expanding special classes in another direction. As we shall see in the next two chapters, junior vocational and handicraft schools emerged at the same time that young people with physical disabilities, young people who were deaf, and young people with other sensory impairments placed new demands on Toronto school authorities to expand special education even further.

Chapter 5. "Mental equality where physical equality has been denied"[1]: orthopaedic and sight saving classes in Toronto schools, 1920-1945.

In 1920 the chief inspector of Toronto public schools, R.H. Cowley, reflected on the city's handful of auxiliary classes for children with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties. "This is but the beginning of special provisions that must become much more extensive if wisdom and humanity are to regulate educational opportunity for all receptive children," Cowley wrote. There were still scores of youngsters, "for whom as yet the public schools have done little or nothing" such as, "cripples, stammerers, epileptics, mutes, the blind, etc."[2] By 1923, the Toronto Board of Education (TBE) had expanded significantly the number of auxiliary classes and had added junior vocational schools for adolescent special class pupils as well, developments we examined in the preceding two chapters. Between 1920 and 1926, a relatively short period of time, Toronto school officials also established special education classes for nearly all of the groups of children in Cowley's list above.[3] These classes—'orthopaedic' classes for children with physical disabilities; sight-saving classes for children with visual impairments; speech correction classes; day schools classes for children who were deaf; and special classes for children who were hard-of-hearing—were the final elements in the consolidation of special education that took place in Toronto's public school system in the 1920s. The expansion of special education into these areas coincided with similar efforts led by school reformers in other urban, administratively progressive city school systems to bring special education to an increasingly diversified group of young people.[4] In creating day school programs for children with visual impairments and children who were deaf, Toronto school officials also helped to shift part of the educational responsibility for these youngsters from large custodial institutions, such as the Ontario School for the Deaf (OSD) at Belleville and the Ontario School for the Blind (OSB) at Brantford, as well as from smaller private ventures, to the public schools.[5]

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[1] H.J. Prueter, "The Care and Education of Crippled Children in Ontario," D.Paed. thesis (University of Toronto, 1936), 8.

[2] *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Annual Report 1920*, Chief Inspector's Report, 53-55.

[3] The only exceptions were children with epilepsy, whom the public schools excluded, and a few (though not all) children who were deaf and children who were blind, who continued to be under the authority of provincial custodial institutions. For the administrative division of special education see Harry Amoss and L. Helen DeLaporte, *Training Handicapped Children* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1933), 186-188. On children with epilepsy, see Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Archives (CAMHA). Burdett McNeel Fonds. Provincial Psychiatric Clinics: Lectures. B.T. McGhie (ed.). E.P. Lewis, "Psychiatric Clinics in the Toronto Public Schools," 19 May 1930.

The present chapter examines orthopaedic classes for children with physical disabilities (often referred to as 'crippled' children in the first half of the twentieth century) and sight-saving classes for children with visual impairments, from the 1920s to 1945. I look at both the development of special class policy, as well at young people's experiences in special classes. The next chapter examines the experiences of children who were deaf, children who were hard-of-hearing, and children who had speech difficulties. Toronto school officials treated these youngsters similarly to the boys and girls enrolled in orthopaedic and sight-saving classes.

'Overcoming' and 'integration'

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[4] See Robert Osgood, *The History of Special Education: A Struggle for Equality in American Public Schools* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008), 56-64 and Osgood, *For 'Children who Vary from the Normal Type': Special Education in Boston, 1838-1930* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 2000), espec. 93-117 and 151-166.

[5] On the history of the Brantford school, see Euclid Herie, *Journey to Independence: Blindness, The Canadian Story* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2005), 23-28. The history of the Belleville school may be found in Clifton F. Carbin, *Deaf Heritage in Canada: A Distinctive, Diverse, and Enduring Culture* ed. Dorothy L. Smith (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1996), 92-105. Sporadic and private schemes to educate young people with certain disabilities existed in Toronto before the 1920s. See, for example, *TBE Minutes 1908*, Appendix No. 96, Management Report No. 25, 10 December 1908, Adopted 17 December 1908, 622 and "To Cure Pupils of Stuttering," *Toronto Star* (13 January 1911): 11.

In the first part of this chapter, I argue that Toronto schoolmen and schoolwomen drew on two main ideas about disability in order to develop a policy for bringing children with physical disabilities and visual impairments into the special education system: 'overcoming' and 'integration.' Notions of individual uplift and overcoming were important to educational progressives in the first half of the twentieth century. Progressives believed that school programs such as kindergartens and manual training classes could lift urban children out of the slums and help them prevail over such deficits as poverty and poor upbringing, although we now recognize that these plans were often shaped by the reformers' middle-class and Anglo-Canadian biases about race, ethnicity, class, and gender.[6] The notion of overcoming in special education involved the idea that a disability was a physical phenomenon, an individual and pathological deficit that prevented a person from becoming a contributing member of society. In the early twentieth century, rehabilitation professionals, special educators, and the large segments of the non-disabled public, adhered to this medical model of disability. They generally believed that if a person with a disability received the correct teaching, training, and physical rehabilitation, that this person could 'overcome' his or her physical deficit and meet, or come close to meeting, the non-disabled world's expectations about normalcy. People with disabilities bore the full burden for their own success or failure under the medical model.[7] The medical model stands in contrast to the social model of disability that frames twenty-first-century critical disability studies and the new disability history. The social model contends that the primary obstacles affecting people with disabilities were social, cultural, and economic discrimination—not the supposed limitations of the disabled person's body.[8] This chapter evaluates the medical model views of educators against the realities of disabled children's school experiences, which the social model helps to explain.

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[6] On progressive reform in Toronto schools, see Chapter 2 of this dissertation. See also: Neil Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 202-224.
[7] Paul K. Longmore and David Goldberger, "The League of the Physically Handicapped and the Great Depression: A Case Study in the New Disability History," *The Journal of American History* 87:3 (December 2000): 897. See also Richard J. Altenbaugh, "Where are the Disabled in the History of

The concept of overcoming in special education also helped to structure an important disability hierarchy in the public schools that placed children with physical disabilities or perceptual impairments ahead of children with intellectual disabilities. Educationists believed that the former were more likely than intellectually disabled children to conquer disability and to achieve "mental equality" with other schoolchildren, as H.J. Prueter, a former principal at the Toronto public school where the Board's first classes were housed, wrote.[9] Significantly, all of the types of classes I discuss in this chapter and the next usually excluded children labelled mentally 'subnormal,' even if they had physical disabilities or sensory impairments.[10] Exclusion helped to reinforce the disability hierarchy in the public school. The reason 'subnormal' children were excluded, Prueter wrote, was that they had lower levels of intelligence than physically disabled and perceptually impaired children, and therefore "it would be extremely doubtful whether

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Education? The Impact of Polio on Sites of Learning," *History of Education* 35:6 (November 2006): 710; Seth Koven, "Remembering and Dismemberment: Crippled Children, Wounded Soldiers, and the Great War in Great Britain," *The American Historical Review* 99 (4, October 1994): 1175-1176; Lennard J. Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body* (London: Verso, 1995), 8.

[8] Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky, "Introduction. Disability History from the Margins to the Mainstream," in Longmore and Umansky eds., *The New Disability History: American Perspectives* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 7, 12-13.

[9] Prueter, 8.

[10] Amoss and DeLaporte, 227; Prueter 141.

any one teacher could combine effectively the two types in any one class unit."[11] Further reinforcing the hierarchy was the belief, still common in the early twentieth century, that physical disabilities afflicted the innocent, while intellectual disabilities were visited on families who had sinned or who were immoral.[12] As we will see in Chapter 7, only in the mid-1930s, with the rise of the concept of specific learning difficulties, did educationists begin to more widely apply some aspects of the notion of overcoming to children intellectual disabilities and children with learning difficulties.

The concept of overcoming was related to 'integration,' the second main idea that shaped education for physically disabled and visually impaired schoolchildren in Toronto in the interwar period. Toronto educationists generally believed that young people had to overcome their disabilities to be effectively integrated into the public schools, and eventually into society. To special educators and rehabilitation professionals, integration required two things. It required physically disabled and visually impaired youngsters to learn to participate in mainstream society in a fashion that imitated their non-disabled peers as much as possible, and it required an end of these young people's supposed social dependence.[13] To promote integration, school officials designed some limited accommodations that made it easier for children to attend mainstream schools. Yet, early-twentieth-century integration is unlike the twenty-first-century school philosophy of inclusion. Inclusion embraces children with disabilities' differences and adapts the norm to the child. The only children who integrated into early-twentieth-century schools were those considered capable of adapting themselves to the norm.[14] Overcoming and integration, as core concepts in the education of physically disabled and visually impaired children, shaped pedagogy as well as policy.

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[11] Prueter, 141.

[12] Laurie Block, "Cure and the Contempt of Goodwill: Reason and Feeling in Disability Narratives, 1850-1950," in Cynthia Comacchio, Janet Golden, and George Weisz eds., *Healing the World's Children: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Child Health in the Twentieth Century* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 136-137; Martin S. Pernick, *The Black Stork: Eugenics and the Death of 'Defective' Babies in American Medicine and Motion Pictures Since 1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 71-73. See also, on hierarchies: Mark Deal, "Disabled People's Attitudes Toward Other Impairment Groups: A Hierarchy of Impairments," *Disability & Society* 18: 7 (December 2003): 897-910.

[13] Henri-Jacques Stiker, *A History of Disability*, trans. by William Sayers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 134-138; Brad Byrom, "A Pupil and a Patient: Hospital-Schools in Progressive America" in Longmore and Umansky eds, 133.

The second part of this chapter looks at young people who attended Toronto's orthopaedic and sight saving classes (and their parents), as they encountered policies, pedagogies, and school cultures, that were shaped by notions of overcoming and integration. I look at different students' experiences in order to argue that educators' generally rosy claims about overcoming and integration in Toronto's orthopaedic and sight-saving classes in the period before World War II (WWII) usually failed to measure up to the reality of what students actually experienced. Educational progressives were driven to rehabilitate and transform disabled schoolchildren into boys and girls who had overcome their physical differences. Consequently, the pedagogies used in orthopaedic and sight-saving classes tended to be selective, and focussed narrowly on academic and physical exercises that trained 'crippled' and visually impaired students to learn in only one way, usually the way that was closest as possible to how their normal peers learned. This focus in effect prevented special educators from embracing an assortment of instructional approaches that were available, variety that might have better met diverse pupil needs. The one-size-fits-all approach to instruction that was used in orthopaedic classes and sight-saving classes, and especially in the day school classes for deaf children that we will look at in the next chapter, was one of the greatest shortcomings of special education in the 1920 to 1945 period.

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[14] On the difference between integration and inclusion, see: Stiker, 134-138 and Marcia H. Rioux and Paula C. Pinto, "A Time for the Universal Right to Education: Back to Basics," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 31:5 (September 2010), 622.

The integration of young people with physical disabilities and visual impairments into the schools was also elusive. Even after the Board created special classes for these youngsters, and attempted to better integrate them into school life, disabled young people seemed to remain on the school's social margins. School officials, disability experts, parents, teachers, and even non-disabled schoolmates, regularly expressed attitudes about disability shaped by pity, which made disabled schoolchildren seem like inferior outsiders in their own schools. Yet an irony of segregated special education is also that, while the system often actually distanced disabled schoolchildren from their non-disabled peers, the classes brought disabled young people together. The special class setting contributed to the creation of important and empowering peer cultures amongst young people of about the same age who shared a common 'crippled,' deaf, or visually impaired identity. Investigating those identities—looking at how young people themselves formed them through special education settings—is an important part of writing the history of young people with disabilities in the schools and in twentieth-century society as well.[15]

Saving sight and losing crutches: Policies, pedagogies, and curricula for physically disabled and visually impaired youngsters in Toronto schools, 1920 to 1945

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[15] Altenbaugh.

The "sight-saving classes" that Toronto school officials established at Orde Street PS in 1921 represent one of the TBE's earliest policies that extended special classes to new groups of pupils in the 1920s.[16] Educators in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, attached great importance to sight, which they also considered a quite vulnerable human sense. The *Ontario Public School Health Book*, for instance, read: "So delicate is this instrument—the eye, that we must not strain it by reading at dusk or at any other time in a poor light, nor should we read in joggling cars." By 1945, Toronto had five full-time, separate sight-saving classes that admitted children whose vision had been affected by illness or injury, as well as children whose natural vision was less than one third of normal. (See Appendix A, Table A.4.) Youngsters whose vision was lower than one tenth of the norm were automatically transferred to the Ontario School for the Blind at Brantford.[17] School authorities planned the sight-saving classes to help preserve sight and to integrate visually impaired children into schools and society. They hoped to transform "the outlook of the pupils from one of inferiority and dependence because of physical difference to one of preparedness and independence in facing a limitation with which they have learned, in a measure, to cope," as Chief Inspector D.D. Moshier put it in 1930.[18]

Sight-saving classes had three main pedagogical aims: to deliver the curriculum without straining the student's eyes; to teach children how to save their sight; and to offer children vocational preparation suited to the physical limitations educators assumed partially sighted children's disability imposed.[19] Sight saving experts and other educationists held that reading with sight was important, as the one best way of approaching text. "In our schools," wrote Toronto oculist Frederick Aylesworth, "the eyes of the pupils are the main, if not the only means of approach to book knowledge and on this account are probably the greatest asset the child has."[20] Sight saving students used special materials and technical aids to read. Special sight saving texts reproduced the standard Ontario textbook in extra-large 24-point type. The children in sight-saving classes also made greater use of typewriters, had more extensive manual training apparatus, and their classroom surfaces were covered with special materials that reduced glare.[21] In the 1930s, the Board purchased a special device, the "Easy Read," that magnified reading material for sight saving students.[22] The sight saving curriculum also included instruction on proper eye care.[23]

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[16] Donald D. MacDonald, "Sight-Saving Classes in the Public Schools," D.Paed thesis (University of Toronto, 1923), 36.
[17] MacDonald, 63, 72.
[18] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Chief Inspector's Report, 93-94.

The architects of Toronto's special education system planned orthopaedic classes for children with physical disabilities to fulfill aims similar to those of sight saving classes—overcoming physical disability, and preparation for independence and integration. The Board opened Toronto's first orthopaedic class for younger students in April 1926 at Wellesley PS, adding secondary school level instruction for adolescents within a few months. Trustee Edith Groves, the progressive school reformer whose interest in special education we examined in Chapter 2, was an important player in establishing Toronto's orthopaedic classes. Helping Groves was Toronto teacher Hannah Milne, who, in 1921, had become Toronto's first teacher of 'extramural' classes (home-based instruction) for children suffering from serious illnesses and children with physical disabilities.[24]

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[19] MacDonald, 12; *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Chief Inspector Moshier's Report, 92.

[20] Frederick Aylesworth, "Defective Vision in School-Age Children," *Addresses and Proceedings of the 65th Annual Convention of the Ontario Educational Association* (hereafter OEA) (Toronto: OEA, 1926), 211.

[21] MacDonald, 39; *TBE Minutes 1927*, Appendix No. 167, Report of the Special Committee Reported to Investigate the Equipment in Sight-Saving Classes, 18 October 1927, Adopted 3 November 1927, 1204-1205; *TBE Annual Report 1931*, Chief Inspector's Report, 83.

[22] "Red Tape Cut by Board to Aid Eyes of Pupils," *Toronto Star* (3 December 1938): 26.

[23] MacDonald, 68.

The orthopaedic classes that Milne and Groves helped to establish enrolled so-called 'crippled' children, including youngsters who had become disabled from the effects of polio or tuberculosis of the bone; "spastics" (children with what is now called cerebral palsy, or with other forms of paralysis); children with muscular dystrophy; and young people with a range of other physical disabilities.[25] Many children in this period acquired disabilities after birth, often as a result of childhood illnesses, such as polio (also then known as "infantile paralysis"), as well as from childhood accidents.[26] After a summer and fall polio epidemic swept through Ontario in 1937, the province's schools had to make accommodations for 276 new young people with disabilities who now needed special education services. A large number of these children resided in Toronto.[27]

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[24] *TBE Minutes 1924*, Appendix No. 187, Management Report No. 19, 10 December 1924, Adopted as amended 18 December 1924, 1324; *TBE Minutes 1926*, 15 April 1926, 95; Appendix No. 133, Management Report No. 17, 23 June 1926, Adopted 6 July 1926, 913; S.B. Sinclair, "Miss H.D. Milne, An Appreciation," *The Bulletin* 8:2 (November 1931): 7-8.

[25] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Chief Inspector Moshier's Report, 84-85. On causes of 'crippling' in children, see also, Prueter, 25-32. On "spastic paralysis" in this period see Edwin Warner Ryerson, "Cerebral Spastic Paralysis in Children," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 98 (1, 2 January 1932): 43-45.

[26] See Prueter, 31-32. On the 1937 polio epidemic's effect on Toronto schools, see Bruce Vance ed., *The Schools and the Polio Epidemic*, Education in Toronto Board of Education Public Schools, A Series of Historical Sketches, #2 (Toronto: TBE Sesquicentennial Museum and Archives, 1994). See also: Christopher J. Rutty, "The Middle-Class Plague: Epidemic Polio and the Canadian State, 1936-37," *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 13 (1996): 277-314.

[27] *TBE Minutes 1937*, Appendix No. 154, Retiring Address of W.R. Shaw, Chairman of Board of Education, in 1937, at Final Meeting of Board on December 16th, 1937, 675. Note in Appendix A of this dissertation, the rise in the number of children in Toronto orthopaedic classes after 1937. See Appendix A, Table I.5.

Most of the Toronto children who attended the orthopaedic classes, even before the 1937 epidemic, had what educators classified as a "permanent partial disability," with nearly all of the students enrolled wearing braces or splints, or using crutches or wheelchairs.[28] Wellesley PS, where the TBE's orthopaedic classes were located, also enrolled non-disabled children in the regular grades, which meant that 'crippled' youngsters were partially integrated into the school. Although, like other special education students in this period, orthopaedic class students were segregated in special classrooms for instructional purposes.

The primary purpose of the orthopaedic class was to help young people to overcome dependency, which non-disabled adults saw as the inevitable consequence of un-rehabilitated physical disability. Former Wellesley PS principal, H.J. Prueter, for instance, believed the 'crippled' child had been doomed to life-long dependency before the orthopaedic classes came along. "The crippled child in a wheel-chair daily watched the procession of normal children pass on their way to school and was compelled to realize that for him life held no promise of future independence or self-sufficiency. His lot was cast, - a burden to himself, to his parents and to society at large."[29] Educationists and rehabilitation professionals thought that physical and occupational rehabilitation, and academic and vocational instruction, would reclaim 'cripples' and prevent them from becoming dependents.[30] They hoped for the day when "the crutches would go into the discard," as Trustee R.H. Kerr said in 1926.[31]

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[28] R.W. Hopper, "The Rehabilitation of the Crippled Child," *Social Welfare* 14 (February 1932): 89.
[29] Prueter, 135.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century metaphor of crutches as a symbol of social dependence encapsulated the new rehabilitation approach that early on shaped Toronto's orthopaedic classes in very important ways.[32] In the twentieth century, disabled World War I (WWI) veterans, the arrival of orthopaedics as a medical discipline, and the rise of physiotherapy and occupational therapy, shifted notions of disability away from the religious paradigm of the Victorian age. Advances in surgery, post-surgical rehabilitative therapy for the body, and occupational therapy for the mind, contributed a new popular discourse about how adults and children could throw away their crutches, and thus conquer disability and dependence.[33] This discourse of overcoming nevertheless preserved the notion that the main limitations imposed on people with disabilities came from within their own bodies, not from societal prejudices and roadblocks to employment or full citizenship for people with disabilities.[34]

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[30] See Ibid; see also: "Is it worth while to educate our crippled children," *The Bulletin* 2:2 (March 1926): 3-4; H.D. Milne, "Why an Orthopedic School," *The Bulletin* 2:2 (March 1926): 7-8.

[31] TDSBA. TDSBA. Box: T.B.E. Schools - Elem. Wellesley Orthopaedic - Sunny View. File: Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. "Little Tots' Hearts Thrilled with Joy At Christmas Treat," dated 21 December, 1926.

[32] Roger Cooter, *Surgery and Society in Peace and War: Orthopaedics and the Organization of Modern Medicine, 1880-1948*, (Houndmills, U.K.: Macmillan, 1993), 54-56.

[33] Byrom, 133. On the war's effects on rehabilitation techniques generally, see Koven, 1182-1186. On Canada specifically, see Ruby Heap, "'Salvaging War's Waste': The University of Toronto and the 'Physical Reconstruction' of Disabled Soldiers during the First World War," in Edgar-André Montigny and Lori Chambers, eds., *Ontario Since Confederation: A Reader* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000): 214-234 and Jennifer Stephen, "Unemployment and the New Industrial Citizenship: A Review of the Ontario Unemployment Commission, 1916," in eds. Robert Menzies, Robert Adamoski, Dorothy E. Chunn, *Contesting Canadian Citizenship: Historical Readings* (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2002), 174. On children, see Ontario Archives (OA). Ontario Government Record Series, Premier Mitchell F. Hepburn public correspondence records, "Crippled Children's Foundation Fund," RG 3-9-0-129. "A Sporting Chance for Joe" (Crippled Children's Foundation Fund Inc., 1935). Families nonetheless continued to seek religious intervention to 'cure' disability. See, for example, Pauline Demers, "Ce sont les personnes qui m'accompagnent qui s'offusquent des réactions des autres à mon égard," in Sally Aitken, Pierrette Caron, and Gilles Fournier, eds., *Histoire vécue de la polio au Québec* (Montreal: Carte blanche, 2001), 55.

Before ‘crippled’ youngsters could begin the overcoming process, they had to enter the education system. Actually getting ‘crippled’ children into school buildings was a crucial challenge that educational reformers such as Edith Groves and Hannah Milne faced, and successfully surmounted, in the early 1920s. To Milne, the inaccessible public school building represented the “absolute neglect” of ‘crippled’ children’s education. “The last time you passed our City Public Schools,” Milne questioned,

> did you notice the entrance? Did it look as if it were built with a view to encouraging a lame child to come in? Did you see any way by which a mother could wheel an invalid chair into a class-room? Did the inevitable flight of concrete steps have a friendly hand-rail by the help of which the chap with the dragging foot or heavy brace could help himself up? NO![35]

When the trustees selected Wellesley PS as the site for the Board’s first orthopaedic classes they also authorized a remarkable series of building renovations to create a more accessible physical environment at the school. A photograph of Wellesley PS in 1926 shows a newly constructed wooden ramp running up the outside of the building. The school furnished “special lavatory accommodation” by constructing handrails in a few existing bathrooms. Board-supplied wheelchairs greeted the children on arrival.[36]

New accommodations improved the building in noticeable ways. But they did not make Wellesley PS, a school constructed in the nineteenth century, fully accessible. The school’s interior was completely made of wood, from the walls to the staircases. Staff remained particularly concerned about fire, especially since the school had nearly burned to the ground in 1923. School staff eventually decided that in the case of fire, "sturdy" senior non-physically-disabled boys would rush to the orthopaedic classes and carry their 'crippled' schoolmates to safety. The children practiced this emergency plan successfully in a fire drill.[37]

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[34] Byrom, 133.

[35] Milne, “Why an Orthopedic School,” 7.

[36] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Loose photo numbered 418; clipping, “Carried by Buses,” dated 14 April 1926; clipping, “Classes for Cripples Are Opened To-day,” dated 14 April 1926.

Perhaps more impressive, in terms of accommodations, than the physical changes to Wellesley PS was the Board's new transportation program for 'crippled' boys and girls attending the school. Edith Groves fought for transportation services from the Toronto Transportation Committee (TTC). In 1926, at a cost to the Board of $27 per day (subsidized in part by the Ontario Department of Education), TTC "grey buses" began to transport 'crippled' children to Wellesley PS, although for a shortened school day. The buses delivered the children by 10am and returned them home no later than 3pm. Two school custodians greeted the children at school and helped to carry them off the buses. A female matron also attended to their needs.[38]

Once they were in the school, children with physical disabilities encountered a curriculum and pedagogy that was organized primarily around rehabilitation. Special educators at Wellesley PS incorporated physical rehabilitation and occupational therapy directly into the orthopaedic classes' daily academic routine.[39] Rehabilitation at

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[37] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Clipping, "To Have Fire Drill in Cripples' Class," dated 14 April 1926; Prueter, 47. On the 1923 fire, see: *TBE Minutes 1923*, 19 April 1923, 95.

[38] *TBE Minutes 1925*, 17 September 1925, 185-186; *TBE Minutes 1926*, 18 March 1926, 80-81; Appendix No. 105, Finance Report No. 10, 17 May 1926, Adopted 20 May 1926, 728-730; *TBE Annual Report 1925*, Chief Inspector's Report, 90. See also: TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Clipping, "Carried by Buses," dated 14 April 1926.

[39] OA. Auxiliary Education Services correspondence files, RG 2-59, Box 1, File: Toronto, 1924-1930, Hannah Milne, "Report of Work of Orthopaedic Classes," 27 June 1928, 2-3; *TBE Minutes 1927*, Appendix

Wellesley PS taught children to use their 'crippled' bodies like 'normal' people used theirs. As Historian Daniel Wilson has argued about polio specifically, returning children to the most normal state possible was the pinnacle of overcoming and integration: "Prevailing cultural values held that the only acceptable response to the disabilities caused by polio was to try as hard as possible to overcome any disability; to walk if at all possible; and to return to home, school, and work looking, behaving, and moving as normally as possible."[40] Toronto educational authorities encouraged orthopaedic class teachers to train students to write, draw, or walk—even if the child's particular disability made this difficult. 'Spastic' children in Toronto's classes, for instance, practiced how to walk, speak, and move their digits. Children whose disability affected their arm or hand movement practiced buttoning, fastening, and opening and closing doors with their hands.[41] Special educators did not encourage children enrolled in orthopaedic classes to use the abilities they had. Educators eschewed wheelchair use, for instance, even if wheeling was functionally as good as, or even superior, to walking. The schools asked parents in this period to extend into the home the school's emphasis on normalcy and worried that parents did not do enough in this regard.[42] In fact, many parents embraced normalcy as a goal for their children just as surely as school authorities did. For example, the mother of Charlie Brocklehurst, a boy who contracted polio as a six-year-old in

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No. 185, Management Report No. 20, 23 November 1927, Adopted 1 December 1927, 1307-1308; 15 December 1927, 230; *TBE Minutes 1929*, Appendix No. 175, Management Report No. 21, 27 November 1929, Adopted as amended 5 December 1929, 1549-1550.

[40] See: Daniel J. Wilson, "Psychological Trauma and Its Treatment in the Polio Epidemics," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 82:4 (Winter 2008): 867-870. See also, Daniel J. Wilson, "And They Shall Walk: Ideal versus Reality in Polio Rehabilitation in the United States," *Asclepio: Revista de Historia de la Medicina y de la Ciencia* 61:1 (January-June 2009): 175-192.

[41] Amoss and Delaporte, 219-220; *TBE Annual Report 1930,* Chief Inspector Moshier's Report, 84-85

[42] Amoss and DeLaporte, 219-220; Prueter, 144.

Montreal in 1934, burned his brace in the furnace to force him to walk without it.[43] After rehabilitative therapy and training a few young people who attended Toronto's orthopaedic classes returned to mainstream classes.[44] Yet for most of the period 1920 to 1945, integration meant that the children who did return to the mainstream had to adapt to the norm. They could not expect accommodations in settings beyond the special schools or classes. The norm would not change for them.[45] Only in the 1940s did rehabilitation professionals in Canada begin to perceive that the wheelchair offered a specific mobility benefit that actually helped with social integration.[46]

Rehabilitation work in Toronto's orthopaedic classes grew quite complex between the two world wars. Jean Hampson, a teacher and trained occupational therapist joined the staff at Wellesley PS in 1927.[47] Hampson was a WWI veteran and "a pioneer in the application of remedial therapy for children."[48] She was also affiliated with the University of Toronto's remedial therapy (rehabilitation) programme and worked during WWII at the Astley-Ainslie Institute, a rehabilitation facility in Edinburgh, Scotland.[49] Hampson designed activities for disabled schoolchildren that included such early rehabilitation exercises as loom weaving. Looming required the student to focus the mind and helped to train different muscle groups because the teacher could configure the loom in a number of different ways.[50] Occupational therapy approaches such as looming, Ruby Heap has argued, were supposed to rouse and occupy the 'crippled' person's mind, train their muscles, and prepare him or her for vocational industrial training.[51]

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[43] Charlie Brocklehurst, "Never Give Up," in Sally Aitken, Helen D'Orazio, and Stewart Valin, eds., *Walking Fingers: The Story of Polio and Those Who Lived With It* (Montreal: Véhicule Press, 2004), 54.
[44] OA. Milne, "Report of Work of Orthopaedic Classes," 27 June 1928, 1.
[45] Byrom, 145-146.
[46] Geoffrey Reaume, *Lyndhurst: Canada's First Rehabilitation Centre for People with Spinal Cord Injuries, 1945-1998* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 24-27.
[47] OA. Milne, "Report of the Work of Orthopaedic Classes," 27 June 1928, 1.
[48] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Clipping, "Popular Toronto Teacher Goes to Scots Hospital", n.d. (ca. 1939-1945).
[49] *Ontario Department of Education (DOE) AnnualReport 1945*, Report 6, Auxiliary Classes, 49.

By the 1930s, school officials such as H.J. Prueter and D.D. Moshier even promoted surgery as a part of the school-based rehabilitation program. In 1932 a surgeon, Dr. Wansborough, was appointed to the Board's rehabilitation programme.[52] By venturing into surgery, Toronto orthopaedic classes were drawn into early professional debates about the proper role of physicians and therapists.[53] Surgery also pushed against the boundaries that provincial educational authorities established for special classes, which were to offer primarily educational, not medical, cures to children with disabilities.[54]

In addition to the heavy physical and occupational rehabilitation program, Toronto educators upheld academic and vocational studies in the orthopaedic classes as well. They did so out of the belief that this preparation gave 'crippled' children compensation in areas other than the physical.[55] The shift towards vocationalism that helped to shape the curriculum in Toronto junior vocational and handicraft schools in this period affected curriculum and pedagogy in orthopaedic classes as well. The Board expanded the orthopaedic class curriculum in the 1930s, creating separate academic and vocational streams.[56]

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[50] Jean Hampson, "Weaving," *The Special Class Teacher* 14:2 (February 1940): 54.
[51] Heap, 226.
[52] Prueter, 143-144; *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Chief Inspector Moshier's Report, 85; *TBE Minutes 1932*, Appendix No. 142, Management Report No. 17, 12 October 1932, Adopted 20 October 1932, 1373.
[53] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Clipping, "Doctors Disagree on Therapy Work Among Children", dated September, 1928; clipping, "Says School Usurps Work of Hospitals", dated September 1929; Prueter, 138. See Heap, 222-227; Byrom 134-140.
[54] Amoss and Delaporte, 187.
[55] Prueter, 8.

Special educators had two roles to play in preparing 'crippled' children to integrate into the work world. Their first duty was to prepare youngsters for employment deemed appropriate in light of their disabilities.[57] Occupations for people with disabilities in the first half of the twentieth century were organized according to the worker's disability, an ascribed trait, not according to the worker's skills, interests or aptitudes. School authorities, such as Superintendent C.C. Goldring, sorted vocational options for 'crippled' youngsters by the physical nature of the child's disability and by gender. Goldring recommended that boys with disabilities that affected their ability to walk be trained for occupations such as printer, automotive assembly worker, or bookkeeper. Girls were to train as typists, small assembly workers, or switchboard operators.[58] Chief Inspector of Auxiliary Classes S.B. Sinclair believed that white-collar work was most suitable for 'crippled' workers. Sinclair also argued that, as Henry Ford claimed to show in his *My Life and Work*, industrialization had created many new opportunities in unskilled, partly-automated assembly work which "handicapped persons" could not only learn, but which they could also do "more happily and satisfactorily" than non-disabled workers.[59]

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[56] *TBE Minutes 1936*, Appendix No. 163, Management Report No. 19, Adopted 17 December 1936, 704-705.

[57] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Clipping, "Aim to Help Crippled Children Find Niche in Life," dated September, 1929; clipping, "Board Will Plan Jobs For Crippled Children," dated September 1929

[58] TDSBA. Goldring, Cecil Charles. Papers. (Box 2 of 2). TDSB 2003-0569. C.C. Goldring, "Occupations Available for the Physically Handicapped," n.d., 4-6. See also: *TBE Minutes 1936*, Appendix No. 163, Management Report No. 19, Adopted 17 December 1936, 704-705; "Suitable Occupations for Handicapped Workers," *The Bulletin* 8:2 (November 1931), 17.

Some, but not all, 'crippled' children accepted the vocational options that educators had in mind for them. In 1929, one Toronto schoolboy with a physical disability named Gilbert, told a *Toronto Star* reporter who visited the orthopaedic classes: "I want to be an engineer ... but I am afraid I could not stand up on this leg very long. So I guess I will have to take some kind of office work." Girls that the same reporter interviewed, such as Edith who wished to become a stenographer, and two other girls interested in dressmaking and design respectively, selected jobs that were characterized as non-physical and appropriately gendered as well. But not every child accepted the orthopaedic classes' vocational guidance logic. One boy, with a "bone defect that is said to be curable" told the *Star* reporter: "I want to be a doctor or a flier." The reporter called this a "rather startling declaration."[60] Girls with physical disabilities faced a double disadvantage as they grew up. Not only did they miss out on many jobs, it was also expected that these girls would never marry.[61]

The orthopaedic classes' second main responsibility in the area of vocationalism was to make youngsters with physical disabilities look and act as 'normal' as possible, so that they would not stick out in the workplace. By the mid-1930s, with the rise of child adjustment theories, there was also an increasing focus on adjusting children with disabilities so that they felt psychologically 'normal' in addition to looking 'normal.' (We will examine adjustment theories in Toronto's special classes in Chapter 8.) Some educationists, such as C.C. Goldring, believed that training disabled youngsters to look 'normal' was important because employers discriminated against visibly disabled people in hiring. "In addition to the limitations in choices of available occupations, because physical defects prevent the performance of certain tasks, the physically handicapped individual must face certain other disadvantages due to the attitude of many employers." Goldring, however, placed most of the onus on the workers with physical disabilities to get around discrimination. They had to present themselves to employers in ways that made them seem as 'normal' as could be.[62] Gradually, because of labour force changes during the early World War II years, the challenge of finding work for 'crippled' graduates became easier.[63]

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[59] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Clipping, "Report is Presented on Orthopedic Classes," dated September 1928.

[60] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. "Board Will Plan Jobs For Crippled Children," dated September 1929. See also Jacqueline Beaudin, "Quand je me sens un peu découragée, j'essaie de revenier à l'essentiel," in Aitken, Caron, and Fournier eds., 39-40.

[61] See Claire Vincent, "La maladies ma privée de mon enfance," in Aitken, Caron, and Fournier eds., 89.

Vocationalism in the orthopaedic classes actually resembled vocationalism in the junior vocational and handicraft schools that we looked at in the last chapter. These schools emphasized training young people with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties for specific blue-collar occupations. The schools also taught these children how to change their appearance and demeanour to get and keep jobs. However, orthopaedic class vocationalism also reinforced the disability hierarchy that existed within the special education system. The schools prepared young people with physical disabilities for different jobs, many of which were white collar and were said to require mental skill that 'subnormal' or 'dull-normal' adolescents supposedly did not possess. Moreover the orthopaedic classes trained their pupils differently as well, using some school integration to prepare them for the workforce. Evidence suggests that a few 'crippled' children progressed beyond Grades 9 and 10 in regular high schools. In 1932, five of sixteen youngsters who had done parts of their secondary school studies in the orthopaedic classes were attending the upper forms (Grades 11 to 13) at a mainstream secondary school. Of the remaining eleven class members, six were working, while another four were at home. One had died.[64]

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[62] TDSBA. C.C. Goldring, "Occupations Available for the Physically Handicapped", n.d., 2-3.

[63] OA. RG 29-1. Correspondence of the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Ontario Society for Crippled Children - Meeting Minutes Reports (1942-1943). W.G. Frisby, "Education and Vocational Training Committee Report" [1943], 1; Ontario Society for Crippled Children, "Report of Committee on Vocational Guidance, Training and Placement" [1942].

The pedagogy in sight saving classes, like the teaching approach in orthopaedic classes, greatly emphasized methods that made disabled children more like their 'normal' schoolmates. Sight saving pedagogy marginalized non-normative ways of learning, such as Braille reading. Educators feared that children with minimal vision would damage their eyes reading Braille dots with their remaining sight, instead of reading with their fingers as they were supposed to do. In this way at least, the preservation of the sense of sight was more important than learning to read by alternative means.[65] Sight-saving class teachers actually used oral teaching methods more often than other teachers did, and they encouraged their students to learn aurally instead of learning by reading.[66] The eye specialist visited each sight saving class weekly and advised the teacher on the length of time each child could be permitted to read without straining his or her eyes. Teachers did not permit excessive reading and drawing, which experts deemed threats to eyesight.[67]

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[64] *TBE Annual Report 1932*, Appendix No. 78, Report No. 1 of Special Committee of Board Re Orthopedic Classes at Wellesley School, 3 May 1932, Adopted as amended 5 May 1932, 619.
[65] MacDonald, 9; Herie, 83.
[66] MacDonald, 71.

In the disability hierarchy that existed in Toronto's special education system, sight saving students were permitted the greatest amount of integration with their mainstreamed peers. Sight saving classes used a modified pedagogy. But the curriculum, in the elementary grades at least, was planned to parallel the mainstream curriculum. This made the classes quite unique, as special classes usually followed a much more distinctive curriculum. Senior sight saving class pupils were partially mainstreamed for instructional purposes, something else that was rare for special education students in this period. At Orde Street PS, older sight saving students left their special classroom to take oral recitation with their peers. "The pupils themselves are delighted to be able to measure up with the pupils of the regular classes," Toronto Inspector D.D. MacDonald wrote. D.D. MacDonald and other educationists thought that integration and competition with non-disabled peers benefited children with reduced vision.[68]

In 1928, the Board began offering a modified high school curriculum covering Grades 9 and 10 to qualified sight saving students. High school sight saving students in one school in 1932 sat all of the same examinations as their mainstreamed peers.[69] For a time Chief Inspector Moshier and Inspector N.S. MacDonald thought that strictly academic secondary school work, with its heavy reading load, would damage the eyesight of sight saving class pupils. Although Moshier still recommended making academic secondary education available to these students, he favoured other, less reading-intensive, technical, vocational, and commercial studies.[70] Yet for the most part, Toronto educators encouraged sight saving students to do pretty much anything that 'normal' pupils did academically, so long as the sight saving students remembered to save their sight.[71]

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[67] MacDonald, 44; Aylesworth, 213.

[68] MacDonald, 42.

[69] *TBE Minutes 1928*, Appendix No. 123, Management Report No. 15, 12 September 1928, Adopted 20 September 1928, 1065; *TBE Annual Report 1932*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 108.

High school participation was another sign that sight saving students were closer to the top of the disability hierarchy at school. After graduating from sight saving classes it seems, from evidence in student records, that more than a few students went on to attend mainstream academic, technical, and commercial secondary schools in Toronto. Donald N. was one of these students. From 1932 to 1940, Donald, who had an eye condition called strabismus (where the focus of the eyes is not in alignment), attended The Ward PS, where he completed Grades 3 to 9 in the sight saving class. In September 1940 Donald transferred to a Grade 10 class at a Toronto academic high school.[72]

Sight saving class students who did not attend past Grade 8, such as Raymond C., left The Ward PS mainly to go to work. After attending sight saving classes at The Ward PS throughout 1940s, Raymond turned sixteen in 1951 and obtained a work permit, leaving the sight saving class for a job as a helper at Wonder Bakeries.[73] However, sight saving students who did attend beyond Grade 8 did not necessarily have more to show for that education. Around the middle of WWII, Shirley T. quit the Grade 9 sight saving class at The Ward PS about a month before final exams. Shirley took a messenger bindery job in the print and mailing department of a downtown department store. The roughly $15 per week that the job promised would have gone a long way at home for Shirley and her single mother.[74] As Shirley's story suggests, in addition to the disability hierarchy, class and gender were important factors in sight saving pupils' opportunities to pursue secondary schooling. Sight saving students from middle-class or better-off families, such as Florence R., whose father was a civil engineer, seem to have been more likely to attend secondary schools than were students, such as Franklin C., whose single mother worked in a factory. Franklin left The Ward PS sight saving class to take a job "on the boats" in the early 1940s. Florence left the same class and went off to Grade 9 at an east-end collegiate institute.[75]

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[70] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Chief Inspector's Report, 94; *TBE Annual Report 1932*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 109.

[71] MacDonald, 45.

[72] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Mc-Si, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Donald N.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[73] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer E-I, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Raymond C.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

Integration, overcoming, and their discontents

Toronto school authorities enthusiastically espoused notions of overcoming and integration and these concepts shaped TBE policies in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. Yet overcoming and integration, and the policies they supported, had limits. These limits become especially clear when we look at special classes from the perspectives of the children with disabilities who experienced them first hand. One of the limits of special education for children with physical disabilities was the role the classes sometimes played in reproducing popular ideas about disability and childhood steeped in pity, ideas that had the power to establish children with physical disabilities in particular as 'others,' worthy mainly of sympathy and charity, not acceptance.

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[74] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Shirley T.' O.R.C., A.D.P

[75] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer E-I, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Florence R.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Franklin C.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

Sympathy and charity were closely associated with 'crippled' schoolchildren and orthopaedic classes in this period. The large crowd that gathered on the sidewalk outside of Muirhead's Cafeteria in Toronto one Saturday evening in December 1931, and the sight they came to see, together offer just one example of how sympathy shaped popular and educational views of some children with disabilities in the first half of the twentieth century. In December 1931, Toronto was locked in the depths of a cold Depression winter. Christmas was less than one week away when a pack of people lined the corner of Wellington and Bay Streets outside of Muirhead's Cafeteria. The crowd, which remained gathered for hours, strained for a look at the real life Christmas pageant playing out inside the restaurant. People who managed to catch a glimpse, one newspaper reported, "watched in tense silence and big smiles the fun that went on inside." By the time Santa Claus arrived, at 7 pm, the jostling crowd was packed "five or six deep" and bodies blocked the windows nearly completely. Inside the more orderly confines of Muirhead's, the Restaurant Association of Toronto and the Rotary Club hosted a Christmas party for the "the crippled children of Toronto."[76] Sir James Woods, the wealthy and philanthropically-minded dry goods wholesaler and settlement house founder, likely donated the Christmas gift that each disabled child invited to Muirhead's received in 1931. For much of the late 1920s, Woods generously gave a gift to every one of the young people enrolled in the TBE's orthopaedic classes, and to the 'crippled' children in the extramural teaching programme—but not, apparently, to any other TBE pupils.[77]

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[76] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Clipping, "Crippled Children Have Time of Lives," dated 19 December 1931.

The deluge of charity that prominent Torontonians such as James Woods poured into good works with 'crippled' schoolchildren tapped into popular tropes of disability and childhood dating back to at least the nineteenth century. Examining these tropes helps us to better understand the prominent place of 'crippled' children in early twentieth century culture and in the popular psyche, a position that shaped special education policies and children's experiences in special classes in significant ways. The Toronto schoolchildren in attendance at Muirhead's were bathed by the glow of sympathy and charity. This was precisely the scene the crowd assembled outside had come to see.

Scenes such as the one that unfolded inside Muirhead's, involving children with disabilities and expressions of charity towards them, were part of a sort of unorganized North American pageant about disability and childhood that played across the United and Canada in this period.[78] Judged on the attention Toronto's 'crippled' children alone received from philanthropists, it appears that organizations and individuals saw these children, more than any other disabled child, or special class pupil—and more than even non-disabled children—as worthy objects of sympathy and charity. In 1928 alone, for example, the Board's orthopaedic classes were supported by no less than Rotary, Kiwanis, the Shriners, the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire (IODE), the

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[77] Ibid.; *TBE Minutes 1929*, 19 December 1929, 296; Allan Irving, Harriet Parsons, and Donald Bellamy, *Neighbours: Three Social Settlements in Downtown Toronto* (Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 1995), 76-77.

[78] See Longmore and Goldberger, 895-896; Block, 144-145.

Local Council of Women, several Masonic Lodges, several local Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (TLC) groups, and a few other organizations beside.[79]

Charitable works with 'crippled' children drew heavily on the "affliction narrative," which originated in the Protestant Bible tracts of the mid nineteenth century, and which often featured poor children. According to Laurie Block: "Benevolence to the disabled—an act of kindness or monetary donation—earns the able a benefit, grace, chit raising him or her closer to God, or, at least approval from loved ones who recognize the good deed done. This does not require identifying or empathizing with the disabled; the narratives emphasize *sympathy*, a more hierarchical relationship."[80] The affliction narrative was pervasive in mass culture as well, particularly in the silver screen films that attracted millions of viewers to early-twentieth-century movie theatres.[81] The acts of generosity of the Rotary Club and Sir James Woods (amongst many others) reflected the space that 'crippled' schoolchildren occupied as sympathetic, ideal, deserving subjects for charity. The notion of overcoming was also often present when 'crippled' children were at school. One newspaper reporter's description of 1930 Christmas fashion show at a girls' junior vocational school that the Ontario Minister of Public Welfare, Mr. W.G. Martin, also attended:

> A gasp of delighted surprise swept the rows of pupils and teachers when one small lame member of [the] school, who had never been seen without her crutches, walked for the first time without them across the long platform, buoyed by the joy of displaying the pretty brown dress, hat and

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[79] OA. Hannah D. Milne, "Report of Work of Orthopaedic Classes," 3.
[80] Block, 127-132.
[81] Martin F. Norden, *The Cinema of Isolation: A History of Physical Disability in the Movies* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 33-36.

> purse, which her nimble fingers had made. More than one teacher surreptitiously wiped away tears of pleasure.[82]

To be sure, not every adult who attempted to serve children with physical disabilities was swayed by feelings of pity, though many appeared to have been. A few experts and philanthropists (as well as mental hygienists, as we will see in Chapter 8) believed that such attitudes encouraged long-term disability and dependency. In 1940s, W.G. Frisby, of the Ontario Society for Crippled Children (OSCC), celebrated children with disabilities as heroic individualists who overcame physical obstacles. He did so to criticize emerging welfare state policies that he felt coddled people with disabilities and "groups, who are attended to, before they have a chance to tend to themselves."[83]

Principals and teachers encouraged non-disabled pupils to view their disabled peers with sympathetic eyes as well. H.J. Prueter argued that integrating 'crippled' children into schools had important benefits for "normal pupils" as well. "The normal pupils readily develop a spirit of individual responsibility for the welfare of the cripples which is as commendable as it is fraught with desirable character-training possibilities," he wrote.[84] The principal at a Toronto boys' junior vocational school encouraged his staff to build character in troublemaking older boys by getting them to "encourag[e] the weaker fellow" with a disability. He argued that this guidance was, as Prueter also suggested, an important part of teaching quarrelsome teenaged boys to become good citizens "with the proper attitude toward life."[85]

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[82] TDSBA. TDSB 2003-0534. Scrapbook Vol .1 (1927-1933). Clipping, "Vocational Girls Give Gay Display," *Mail and Empire*, 8 December 1930.
[83] OA. W.G. Frisby, "Education and Vocational Training Committee Report" [1943], 1-2. See also: J.D.M. Griffin, "Educating the Victim of Polio," *The Special Class Teacher* 12:3 (February 1938): 20.
[84] Prueter, 46.

Students who did not have disabilities learned a powerful hidden curriculum about disability, and remembered it years later. Ruth Dewsbury, a non-disabled student who attended Wellesley PS in the 1930s, recalled the satisfaction she felt in taking responsibility for feeding 'crippled' youngsters in her school. "Our special pleasure was being allowed to help serve lunch to the ['crippled'] pupils." Interestingly, Dewsbury's specific recollection of the policy of integration at Wellesley PS in the 1930s was nearly identical to the message educators of the day transmitted about bussing 'crippled' children to the school. Dewsbury wrote years later, in 1985: "The idea [of bussing 'crippled' children to the school] was wonderful! The children were so bright and eager to be educated in a regular school atmosphere."[86] These interactions, in which the child with a disability served as an object lesson for the non-disabled child, raise questions about the true depth of the integration that appears in school officials' optimistic reports.

In reality, disabled schoolchildren's daily lives were often shaped by exclusion from many of the peer cultures at school, at a time when young people's peer cultures were an extremely important part of their lives. Historians have shown that extensive youth cultures of many different varieties developed in the years between 1880 and 1930, as the worlds of North American children and adults became more separate. The rise of mass schooling, changing concepts of parenting, new manners and customs, and the appearance of affection and the decline of hierarchical authority in family life (especially in middle-class families), as well as new commercial products targeted for the first time to youthful consumers, helped to differentiate adult and non-adult cultures to an extent that had not existed before. Especially after WWI, young people appeared as a new and distinct cultural group (with subdivisions often arranged variously along lines of age, gender, ethnicity and race, religion, class, and ability). Being part of a gang of friends of a similar age gave children and adolescents an important sense of being attached to, and fitting in with, a group that was not made up primarily of kin. Most of these groups of friends revolved around the public school, where childhood and youth cultures found a natural home.[87]

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[85] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, 47.

[86] TDSBA. Vertical Files (hereafter VF). T.B.E. Schools-Elementary-Wellesley P.S. Ruth Byrne Dewsbury, "Happy School Days," *Recording Recollections at Ryerson* 4:2 (June 1985): 12.

Ruth Dewsbury was undoubtedly correct in her assessment that many children with disabilities were happy for the opportunity to be integrated into public schools. Yet, when children with disabilities did attend school, they were often made to feel that they did not quite fit in. Other youngsters teased 'crippled' children when adults were out of earshot.[88] Children labelled 'subnormal' frequently endured taunts such as "dummy, dunce, [and] nut" from schoolmates.[89] As Mona Gleason has argued, embodied identities and bodily differences were particularly important to hierarchies of power in the worlds of childhood.[90] Teachers sometimes put down disabled students as well. Ernest S.'s mother complained to the school principal at Armoury Park PS in 1937 that Ernest's teacher had called Ernest, who was an opportunity class pupil, a "dumbbell."[91]

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[87] See: Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 214-232; Sutherland, *Growing Up*, 220-253; Cynthia Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006), 99-128; Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled: The Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939* (Markham, ON: Penguin Books, 1988), 27-33.

[88] Griffin, 20; Neil Sutherland, *Growing Up: Childhood in English Canada from the Great War to the Age of Television* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press,) 251.

[89] S.B. Sinclair, *Backward and Brilliant Children* (Toronto: Ryerson Press), 25.

Moreover, while they integrated these children into the academic side of the school, school officials often did not allow children with disabilities to participate fully in the school's social side. This further alienated young people with disabilities from the school's peer culture. Youngsters in the orthopaedic classes at Wellesley PS had their own play area for their "greater safety."[92] Other children with disabilities were excluded from some activities because adults wrongly assumed that they were incapable of participating in physical games or roughhousing, even though both were important to children's cultures that often centred on activity and games.[93]

Contesting 'The Crippled Children's Bus': Adults and children with disabilities define disability differently

Disabled children were often left out of the school's peer cultures. Yet the months and sometimes years that they spent together in the same special classes, and their similar educational and rehabilitation experiences in those schoolrooms, exerted a strong pull that brought children with physical disabilities together with one another. Through special classes, 'crippled' schoolchildren, and other children with disabilities as well, were able to create their own peer cultures as disabled young people. They constructed a self-image and group image that was sometimes similar, but often subtly different, than the 'crippled' schoolchild identity that school authorities often assigned to them. The image that disabled children created of themselves seemed to attempt to defy pity. It also did not place the same constant emphasis on physical incapacities that most adults' images of 'crippled' children did. Sources such as pupils' poems and other writings, as well as student recollections, reveal the subtle efforts of young people to define their own identities.[94]

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[90] Mona Gleason, "Disciplining the Student Body: Schooling and the Construction of Canadian Children's Bodies, 1930-1960," *History of Education Quarterly* 41:2 (Summer 2001), 202-203.
[91] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 2. 'Ernest S.' O.R.C.
[92] *TBE* Minutes 1928, Appendix No. 75, Management Report No. 10, 25 April 1928, Adopted 2 May 1928, 667.
[93] Tony Shorgan, "It Was a Privilege Having Polio," in Sally Aitken, Helen D'Orazio, and Stewart Valin, eds., 42. On children's active play and culture, see Sutherland, *Growing Up*, 220-253.

Two poems that refer to the bus that carried 'crippled' children to and from orthopaedic classes in Toronto (one written by an adult school reformer, and the other by a child with a physical disability) illustrate how children with disabilities defined their identities differently than non-disabled adults did. To progressive educationists such as Edith Groves, the adult who wrote the first poem, the bus was more than a simple conveyance. It was a symbol of progressives' successful efforts to differentiate a curriculum for 'crippled' children within the special class system. In her poem, "The Crippled Children's Bus," Groves wrote about how the bus enabled 'crippled' girls and boys to overcome their disabilities. She assumes the identity of two voices in the 1927 version of the poem—the child and the 'cripple':

> I'm waiting on the sidewalk in my rubber-tired wheel chair,
> My Mummy says it's good to get the crisp, keen morning air,
> And soon Hurray! around the bend will swing the big grey bus
> That's going to take us off to school and only carries us.

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[94] Disability historian Richard Altenbaugh uses patient recollections and data from clinical studies to examine how "a distinct 'polio' community" comprising young people emerged on hospital rehabilitation wards. Altenbaugh, 720-721. Geoffrey Reaume uses a variety of materials drawn from patient case files to investigate patient identities at 999 Queen West, a provincial psychiatric institution in Toronto. Geoffrey Reaume, *Remembrance of Patients Past: Patient life at the Toronto Hospital for the Insane, 1870-1940* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000).

S'pose 'at a great big man with millions in his pocket
Was to hold his finger up and do his best to stop it,
The driver he would say, 'Oh, no, that is against the rule,
This is the Crippled Children's Bus, and I'm taking them to school.'

S'posing 'at a prince or king along the street should scurry,
Saying, 'Mister, pick me up, I'm in a dreadful hurry!'
The driver he would say, 'Oh, no, I'm sorry as can be,
I mustn't crowd these children, 'cause they're crippled don't you see!'

And don't we have the mostest fun a-riding in the bus,
Forgetting 'bout our crutches, 'bout our braces we don't fuss.
We tell each other all the news, and we don't care if we're late.
'Twill be the busman's fault, not ours, if the teacher has to wait.

I used to sit around the house grumbling every minute,
Nothing much for me to outside the place or in it,
For I'm so badly crippled where I'm put I have to stay.
But now adventure comes to me in the big bus every day.

Along the street the bus it glides with never any bumps,
The driver must be careful 'cause we can't stand jars or thumps,
The neighbors sometimes wipe their eyes, and then they wave at us
But we don't cry, we're happy in the Crippled Children's Bus.[95]

The last two lines in the final stanza reproduce the pathos that many adults expressed towards 'crippled' children. Groves's poem captures other aspects of non-disabled adults' perceptions of children with disabilities as well. One of these aspects is the association that many non-disabled people drew between disability and weakness or fragility. The delicate children in Groves's poem "...can't stand jars or thumps." The line that reads "For I'm so badly crippled where I'm put I have to stay," suggests, with the words "where I'm put I have to stay," that the supposed embodied nature of disability is what immobilizes children. (A 1929 version of the same poem replaced these last two lines in the fourth stanza with the lines: "But now, you see, I'm busy with my spellings and my sums. / At night I dream about the bus and all my little chums." By 1932, "where I'm put I have to stay" was again the line.) The two lines in the 1927 and 1932 versions, especially the words "where I'm put I have to stay," also suggest that children with disabilities are powerless to move at all, because the passage implies that disabled children can only go where adults put them.[96]

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[95] TDSBA. Wellesley P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. "The Crippled Children's Bus," dated June 1927.

There are several non-disabled adults in Groves's poem. One is the bus driver, whose presence is concrete. The other adults are the implied social reformers, such as Groves, who convinced the Board to purchase the bus. The adults in the poem mobilize or activate the children with disabilities. They literally give the 'crippled' children the vehicle that will allow them to overcome shortcomings that are supposedly located in their bodily deficiencies. The most obvious example of this second person mobilization by the non-disabled adult is the "Crippled Children's Bus" itself. It brings the children to the school and in it, "adventure" arrives "every day." Finally, the poem stresses the exceptionality of 'crippled' youngsters. The bus will not pick up anyone but them. Indeed, children attending orthopaedic classes were the only children that the school board bussed to school. But the exceptionality of 'crippled' children is structured entirely around the children's disabilities and not around their other identities as young people, as boys or girls, or as any group that they may have thought of themselves as belonging to.

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[96] Ibid. A slight variation on the poem appeared in the OEA's newsletter for special education teachers in 1929. See "The Crippled Children's Bus," *The Bulletin* 5:2 (February 1929): 18. A 1932 version is the same as the 1927 version. See Lelean Groves (posthumous), *Everyday Children* (Toronto: The Committee in Charge of the Edith L. Groves Memorial Fund for Underprivileged Children, 1932), 118.

These other identities are not represented in the poem. Even the child speaker is genderless and has no identifiable pronoun other than "I."

The second poem, "Our Picnic," is by a young male Wellesley PS pupil with a physical disability, whom I have given the pseudonym Gerald S.:

> We started at the hour of three,
> Laughing and chanting and full of glee.
> Even the bus hummed a merry tune
> As if to say 'We'll be there soon.'
> Then when we the park did reach
> Some made for the swings and some for the beach
> The supper was enjoyed by all
> And after that a game of ball.
> The game and sports were Oh! such fun.
> A part was sung by everyone
> This was heard by one standing near,
> 'We'll surely have one every year.['][97]

"Our Picnic" has some similarities to Groves's "The Crippled Children's Bus." Both poems employ the bus as a crucial narrative device that literally advances the plot forward. "Our picnic" has a happy tone, which is present in Groves' poem as well.

However, there are some important subtle and not so subtle differences in "Our Picnic" and Groves's poem. "Our picnic" —importantly—fails to reproduce several elements of disabled children's identity that Groves's poem actually emphasizes. "Our Picnic," contains a bus that moves the children, but does not refer to 'immobility.' The boys and girls in this poem are, in fact, quite physically active. They play games, "head for the swings ... and for the beach," and participate in sports. They do not avoid activity, an essential element of children's culture, because they are disabled. Indispensable, because the children cannot day-trip without it, the bus nevertheless simply conveys the

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[97] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Typescript, "Our Picnic," ca. June 1928.

'crippled' girls and boys to the school party at Kew Beach. It does not 'activate' them, failing to encompass the theme of overcoming Groves assigned to it. Nor is there any sign of pathos, or self-pity in "Our Picnic." Indeed as Paul Longmore and David Goldberger have argued, 'crippled' young people often disliked the images that sympathetic organizations and individuals fashioned around them, notions that did not address the issues that they actually lived with daily as people with disabilities.[98] Importantly "Our Picnic" does not show signs of restraint. The poem gives no feeling that the author is dancing around disability. Disability is present, especially in the author's person, but it does not consume the poem. Finally, "Our Picnic" also reflects the youth voice and developing youth peer culture in a way that Groves's poem cannot. Groves attempts to address young people's cultural cohesion by adopting the child's voice, and even by counterpoising young people as a group against adults: "We tell each other all the news, and we don't care if we're late / 'Twill be the busman's fault, not ours, if the teacher has to wait." But Groves's perspective is not particularly genuine. Gerald is a young person and captures the youth peer culture much better, even though he wrote the poem for a school contest, a venue that might suggest less leeway for a young person to utter any outspoken statement about youth identity.

Gerald won a book prize for "Our Picnic." Most significantly, perhaps, Gerald could not overcome his disability in the way that educators hoped children like he would. He did not have the muscle control to make a pen move across paper. Other pupils wrote down his poems and compositions for him. A number of these creative pieces appear in a scrapbook from Wellesley PS. Gerald's schoolmates also called on him, because he was gifted with words, to compose various messages on the class's behalf. The boy even invented a tune for his classmates to sing on picnic day: "Hooray! Hooray! 'Tis picnic day! Come, lads and lasses, hasten away!"[99]

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[98] Longmore and Golderger, 895-896. See also: Block 141-142.

The assistance that Gerald received from his classmates, and the responsibility that they placed on him as the class poet and official communicator, also demonstrate how young people with physical disabilities formed bonds with one another when placed together for the first time in classes with other 'crippled' children. In the Wellesley PS orthopaedic classes, D.D. Moshier observed, "Children aid each other by constantly reminding them [sic] what is best to do. They live in company with their equals and no inferiority is felt."[100] Edna Barg, a public school student in Toronto during the 1930s, recalled years later how she felt slightly "left out" in the regular grades. This feeling lasted until she went to a sight-saving class in Grade 3. "What a difference that move made," Barg wrote in a 1989 recollection. "Almost immediately I had a different feeling about school. All my fellow classmates had the same problem that I had. I could compete and succeed." She believed that the small, mixed grade class encompassing visually impaired children of all ages had helped her build stronger and more lasting friendships with her classmates.[101] Scholars such as Paul Longmore and David Goldberger, and Richard Altenbaugh, have argued that settings such as special education classrooms and hospital wards created unique opportunities for young people with disabilities to form peer groups around their common identities as disabled children.[102]

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[99] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Letter, dated 31 October 1926; clipping, "Orthopaedic Class Enjoys Day in Open," June 1927.

[100] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Chief Inspector's Report, 85.

[101] TDSBA. VF. Toronto Board of Education—Curriculum—Special Education. Edna Barg, "Sight Saving Class," *Recording Recollections at Ryerson* 8:3 (December 1989): 7.

In addition to defining their own identities as disabled people, and forming peer groups of their own, young people with disabilities also claimed control over their school situations in more direct ways, through small acts of resistance that directly challenged school or medical officials' perspectives on their disabilities and what type of education they should receive as disabled students. Dick H. defied officials in an attempt to return to school after contracting polio in the 1937 epidemic and becoming disabled afterwards. Dick spent 1938 and 1939 as an extramural instruction pupil. In 1940, he asked to return to mainstream classes at Armoury Park PS. He had difficulty walking and, for this reason, the school principal indicated that he was uncertain about Dick's prospects in the school. However, Dick and his mother—who also tried to get him admitted to an orthopaedic class—were persistent. After two months and "much fussing" in an effort to convince school officials to allow him to return, Dick took his place in a mainstream class at Armoury Park PS.[103] School officials and Dick's doctors might have worried that Dick was too 'delicate' to endure school. Dick felt differently. Indeed, children with disabilities did not always believe that they were delicate, a view that non-disabled adults often held. At East End PS, seven-year-old Gene M., who wore glasses, eagerly roughhoused with the other boys, breaking his spectacles six times in the process.[104]

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[102] Altenbaugh, 720-721; Longmore and Goldberger, 899-905. See also, Audrey McGuiness, "I Didn't Let Polio Get in May Way," in Sally Aitken, Helen D'Orazio, and Stewart Valin, eds., 71. Though hospital wards did not always create youthful solidarity. The effect of being removed or quarantined from parents for a long time caused some children to long for their parents even more. Daily visits kept their families fresh in these children's minds. See Brocklehurst in Sally Aitken, Helen D'Orazio, and Stewart Valin, eds., 53-54. Historians of deafness have advanced a similar argument about the role of residential schools for people who were deaf (such as the Ontario School for the Deaf in Belleville) in forming the Deaf cultural identity. See Douglas C. Baynton, *Forbidden Signs: American Culture and the Campaign Against Sign Language* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 3; Susan Burch, *Signs of Resistance: American Deaf Cultural History, 1900 to World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 10-11.

[103] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 4; Armoury Park PS A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0834. 'Dick H.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

Sight saving students also tried to assert control over their own schooling. Pauline N. first enrolled in a sight saving-class in 1930, when she was still in primary school. Five years later Pauline's doctor forced her to leave school, telling her that she needed to save what remained of her dwindling eyesight. However, Pauline defied her doctor's advice by returning to Grade 9 in the fall of 1936. She missed hardly any school at all in 1936-37 and received recommendations (advanced standing excusing a student from writing the final exam) in four subjects. Pauline later completed most of Grade 10. In April 1938 her doctor again advised her to leave school. This time Pauline did leave permanently. She had, however, achieved nearly two years of secondary education through her own perseverance and against her doctors' advice.[105] In another slightly different example, when medical officials recommended treating Clara T.'s eyes, she refused. She was insistent that she could see "quite well" because she sat close to the blackboard.[106]

Other children with physical disabilities gained some control over their own schooling by capitalizing on the education and unique opportunities that special classes sometimes offered. These young people integrated themselves into mainstream schools before school reformers introduced special education programs for them. Before orthopaedic classes made school buildings more accessible 'crippled' children, and before buses carried children with disabilities to school, some disabled schoolchildren made their way to school by improvised means. In 1920, six years before the orthopaedic classes opened, Toronto schoolteacher Mrs. Kerr completed a survey of 216 "[physically] disabled children of school age," who were attending 82 different Toronto public schools. Of these children, 23 arrived daily at school as passengers in "go-carts or children's express waggons [sic]." They sometimes climbed flights of stairs on their hands and knees.[107] The very first day that orthopaedic classes at Wellesley PS opened, eager 'crippled' children turned up at the school before the bus could pick them up from their homes. Willie Agnew, for example, arrived half an hour early for classes after coming to school with his father from their home on Roncesvalles Avenue, on the other opposite side of Toronto from the school.[108]

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[104] TDSBA. "East End PS" O.R.C. Microfilm Reel 10; East End PS. A.D.P. Microfilm Reel 11. 'Gene M.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[105] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Pauline N.' A.D.P.

[106] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0834, Box 1 of 2. 'Clara T.' A.D.P.

Once at school, children with physical disabilities integrated themselves without adult assistance. One boy at Wellesley PS could not participate in school baseball games as a player, so he transformed himself into an umpire and participated that way.[109] Pupils in wheelchairs circulated amongst non-disabled students at Wellesley PS during lunch time, even though they were supposed to stay in their own special schoolyard.[110] Children with physical disabilities, so often the objects of charity, participated as canvassers in school charity campaigns. The "Star Brights," a group of youngsters in one Toronto orthopaedic class, raised enough money for the Junior Red Cross to help pay for the hospital costs of three patients at the Hospital for Sick Children (HSC).[111] Other children in the Wellesley PS orthopaedic classes, who themselves were former HSC patients and had joined a harmonica band while in the hospital, performed for 'crippled' veterans hospitalized at the Dominion Orthopaedic Hospital (more commonly known as the Christie Street Hospital).[112]

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[107] *TBE Minutes 1920*, Appendix No. 10, "Auxiliary Classes. Special Report Dr. Helen MacMurchy to the Toronto Board of Education," 9 January 1920, 21-22; Mrs. Kerr, "Defective Children," *Public Health Journal* 5 (12, December 1914): 620; "Is it worthwhile to educate our crippled children?," 3-4.
[108] TDSBA. Wellesley St P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. "Carried by Buses," dated 14 April 1926.
[109] Prueter, 46.
[110] Prueter, 90.

Disabled and non-disabled children alike sometimes used adults' ideas about disability to their own advantage, claiming disability to avoid punishment or schoolwork and to receive special services at school. Carl F.'s principal desperately "wish[ed]" to strap him but could not because Carl had a heart condition.[113] In 1927, psychologist E.D. MacPhee reported a claim that Albert E., a Toronto sight saving class pupil that MacPhee had examined, was "using visional [sic] defect for getting out of all types of work."[114] Children who knew that they were entitled to medical services to treat illnesses related to their disabilities could demand those services from school authorities. In 1938, Peter O., with his mother's backing, threatened his principal that he would change schools if the school did not get him medical treatment for his eyes. The principal punished him for being "saucy," but the school arranged for the treatment.[115] Children with disabilities also received hot lunches and milk, important services that were not often available to children in the mainstream classes.[116] Some non-disabled children even tried to obtain improved treatment at school by claiming to be disabled. When the principal at Armoury Park PS summoned nine-year-old Frankie C. to his office in 1937 for punishment, the boy did not show. The principal eventually caught up to Frankie, who told a lie—"a long story about Doctor's orders of no whipping." Another boy had suggested lying about having a condition to Frankie as an effective way of getting out of corporal punishment. The lie exposed, Frankie was sentenced to six whacks.[117]

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[111] TDSBA. Wellesley P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. Postcard, 15 July 1927.
[112] TDSBA. Wellesley P.S. Scrapbook 1926-30. "Played 138 Numbers," dated March 1928. On the Christie Street Hospital, see Reaume, *Lyndhurst*, 11-12.
[113] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1. 'Carl F.' O.R.C.
[114] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer E-I; A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Albert E.' O.R.C., A.D.P. See also: "East End PS" O.R.C. Microfilm Reel 10. 'Doris B.' O.R.C.
[115] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 4. 'Peter O.' O.R.C.

Special education students who gained a sense of ownership over their education after attending special classes reported favourably on segregated special classes years later. Edna Barg wrote that she believed that if it had not been for the special class she attended in the 1930s she would not have acquired the skills and strategies she learned that helped her get into high school. "As it was, by the time I had reached grade ten I had learned to cope. I studied from the text and stayed after school to copy notes. This class was a godsend to all of us. We were able to excel, to compete equally, instead of always being at the bottom of the class. Then we would have felt stupid."[118] In fact, Barg used her experiences to speak out *against* inclusive education in the late 1980s. "Frequently today," she wrote "we hear of parents who want their handicapped child to be allowed to enter the neighbourhood school with his friends. Is this really the best way to educate these children? I think it is not …" Barg wrote that her grandson, who was "perceptually handicapped" also struggled in the mainstream classroom. "Now he is in a class with other bright, but handicapped children and is doing very well, and he is happy at school. What a tragedy if he had been kept in the neighbourhood school and allowed to fail."[119] Sydney Eisen, a former special class pupil, who attended Orde Street School in Toronto in 1930s, remembered the speech classes he attended as a positive experience, not just for himself, but for other children, who he felt benefited from the special teaching.[120]

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[116] *TBE Minutes 1926*, 18 March 1926, 80-81.
[117] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 4. 'Frankie C.' O.R.C.
[118] Barg, 7.

Overcoming was a part of the outlook of some children with disabilities who attended special classes. However, these youngsters' views of overcoming were distinct from educationists' perspectives, which focussed on rehabilitating malfunctioning body parts. From young people's perspectives, overcoming was about surmounting school or social challenges. Put another way, educationists' and young people's perspectives diverged along separate medical model and social model lines. Edna Barg spoke with satisfaction about what she described as "learn[ing] to cope."[121] This use of overcoming was common amongst people who had contracted polio in particular and who were particularly subjected to the "'try harder' mantra" which flooded the wards at rehabilitation hospitals. Overcoming may have had a particular meaning for polio patients because it was possible for some who had been physically immobilized by the disease to eventually regain their mobility.[122] But while rehabilitation professionals encouraged people with polio to overcome their own bodies, young people with polio dropped the bodily focus and adapted the "'try harder' mantra" to mean that they should overcome social obstacles and become high achievers. Tony Shorgan, who lived with the after-effects of polio in Montreal in the 1920s and 1930s, remembered childhood struggles with a mixture of a sort of pride in his identity as a person with a disability and dignity at having overcome societal challenges. "I had some bad experiences growing up, but I can't complain; when I look back, I can say that my polio was almost a blessing. I would certainly not have accomplished as much if it weren't for my polio."[123]

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[119] TDSBA. VF. Toronto Board of Education—Curriculum—Special Education. Barg, 7.
[120] TDSBA. VF. T.B.E. Schools, Elem—Orde St. Rebecca Ko and Chor Wah Lee, "Sydney Eisen Student, 1935-1939," in *Orde Street Public School 70 Years, 1914-1984* (Toronto, 1984), 13-14.
[121] Barg, 7.
[122] Wilson, "Psychological Trauma," 870-876. See also Herta Guttman, "Keep Going the Full Mile," in Sally Aitken, Helen D'Orazio, and Stewart Valin, eds., 62-64.

Between the school and the home: Parents of young people with disabilities

Parents also helped young people to navigate the orthopaedic and sight-saving classes from the 1920s to the early 1940s, just as parents of other children enrolled in Toronto special education classes helped their children through the school system as well. Some Toronto parents went to considerable lengths to get a child into a special orthopaedic or sight-saving class. Robert Hedley and his parents lived in suburban York County, beyond the TBE school boundary. Robert's parents applied to enrol Robert in an orthopaedic class in Toronto in 1926. The Board approved the request, on the condition that the Hedleys would daily take Robert from their suburban home to a point inside Toronto city limits, where he could meet the bus that would take him the rest of the way to Wellesley PS.[124] The TBE usually charged students from outside the city non-resident tuition fees to attend Toronto public schools. Sometimes a child's local school board paid part, or all, of those fees. The Forest Hill School Board (serving an inner suburb of

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[123] Shorgan in Aitken, D'Orazio, Valin, eds., 40. See also, William Phillips, "Adjust, but Keep Going," in Aitken, D'Orazio, Valin, eds.,50.

[124] *TBE Minutes 1926*, 18 November 1926, 253-254. See also, for example, *TBE Minutes 1926*, Appendix No. 213, Finance Report No. 22, 29 November 1926, Adopted 2 December 1926, 1396; *TBE Minutes 1933*, Appendix No. 120, Management Report No. 15, 27 September 1933, Adopted 5 October 1933, 1203.

Toronto) paid Catherine W.'s fees, over $300, to attend a sight-saving class at The Ward PS in 1941.[125]

Not all parents who applied to cross boundary lines were guaranteed that their child would be admitted. In 1941, a Toronto resident and Catholic separate school supporter, Mr. Ferrari, asked the Board to admit his child to a sight-saving class at a Toronto public school. Ferrari pledged to redirect his school taxes to the TBE. The TBE, however, only agreed to admit Ferrari's child if the separate school board paid the TBE over $200 to make up the difference between the taxes Ferrari paid and the estimated $275 cost to the Board of educating his child. (We do not know if the separate school trustees agreed to the payment or not.)[126] The separate board does not appear to have had sight saving classes at the time.[127]

Families who were well off had an option that other parents did not. They could afford private tutoring for their children. In 1934, Donnie B.'s father, who was a manufacturer, withdrew Donnie from the sight-saving class at The Ward PS and sent him to a private tutor.[128] Many families in this period made significant financial sacrifices to pay for their disabled children's medical treatments and care. These parents, especially mothers, also devoted intangibles such as time and energy to their children.[129]

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[125] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer J-M. A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Catherine W.' O.R.C., A.D.P. See also: "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Shirley T.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D; A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Ray L.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[126] *TBE Minutes 1941*, Finance Report No. 1, Part II, 20 January 1941, Adopted 23 January 1941, 13.

[127] A list of classes is not available for 1940-41. However, the provincial inspector's report shows no sight-saving classes in Toronto separate schools in 1939-40. *DOE Annual Report*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 57.

[128] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Donnie B.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[129] See: Shorgan in Aitken, D'Orazio, Valin, eds., 39; Brocklehurst in Aitken, D'Orazio, Valin, eds., 57; Vincent in Aitken, Caron, and Fournier eds., 87-88.

Not every parent, however, was proactive about special education for his or her child. More than a few parents tried to prevent their child from entering a special class at all. Pat F.'s parents refused to send him to a sight-saving class when he was eight years old because they worried that he might be injured on the streetcar journey that would carry him to his new school. Only when he reached age twelve did Pat begin to make the daily trip from his east end home to the sight-saving class at The Ward PS. Several other parents like Pat F.'s also refused sight-saving classes for their children.[130] The parents of one child who was recommended for the sight-saving class declined to send him there because they feared that they would be putting their son at a disadvantage by sending him to a class "with other children of defective eyesight."[131]

Conclusion

In 1926, the TBE opened its first orthopaedic class at Wellesley PS. The orthopaedic classes were the last in a set of special classes that brought special education to a diverse group of Toronto schoolchildren in the 1920s. Special classes for children with physical disabilities or sensory impairments, including the orthopaedic and sight-saving classes, were part of the same special class system as auxiliary classes or junior vocational schools. Yet the former type of classes was quite different from the two latter special programs. Orthopaedic and sight-saving classes were based upon the idea that the children who attended them could overcome their disabilities with the proper training, and become integrated into public schools. School officials seldom extended notions of overcoming and integration to children with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties, especially not in the 1920s. However, even for 'crippled' children and children with visual impairments, overcoming and integration were elusive. In their efforts to have 'crippled' and visually impaired young people overcome their physical differences, special educators often looked past the abilities these children did have that allowed them to learn, although to learn differently than other children in the schools. Integration, a core principle of orthopaedic and sight-saving classes, seemed just out of reach of physically disabled and visually impaired students, who were excluded for different reasons from peer cultures in schools. Yet young people with physical disabilities and visual impairments, placed in special classes, got together to form peer cultures of their own. They also showed that they were actors who had a say in how they defined their identities as young people with disabilities and a say, sometimes with their parents help, in decisions about their own schooling.

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[130] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer E-I, A.D.P. Drawer A-L. 'Pat F.' O.R.C., A.D.P. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Millie O.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Mc-Si, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z. 'Jimmie C.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[131] MacDonald, 39.

Chapter 6. Special classes and the methods debate: Deafness, hearing and speech education in Toronto, 1922-1945.

School officials also applied the concepts of 'overcoming' and 'integration' that we looked at in the last chapter to children who were deaf, children who were hard of hearing, and children with speech difficulties. The Toronto Board of Education (TBE) opened special classes for these children in the early 1920s, around the same time that the special class system expanded to include children with physical disabilities and visual impairments. All of Toronto's special hearing and speech education classes embraced some form of the educational approach known as oralism. Oralists, especially so-called pure oralists, advocated speech training and lip reading and opposed sign language. In the first half of the twentieth century oralists, manualists (who preferred sign language), and people who favoured combined methods that drew from both approaches, were involved in an ongoing and often bitter debate over which method or set of methods was best for instructing children who were deaf or who had hearing or speech difficulties. This methods debate had wide implications that reached beyond pedagogy to touch on questions of identity, culture, family, politics, and Deafness's place in the disability hierarchy.

Deaf political activists, and members of the Deaf community have long claimed—since the nineteenth century—that Deafness is a linguistic and cultural difference, not a disability.[1] In the first half of the twentieth century, one the most common forms of Deaf activism was opposition to the imposition of oralist education on Deaf young people. Deaf people saw pure oralism in the schools, imposed by hearing teachers, as an attack on their language that jeopardized the survival of their unique culture.[2] The Ontario Association of the Deaf (OAD), the province's main Deaf political group, protested oralist instruction in Toronto's public schools from practically the moment that Board began offering special classes for children who were deaf, children who were hard of hearing, and children with speech difficulties. Toronto's oralist day school classes, which opened in 1922, remained until at least the mid 1940s, a source of controversy that concerned issues related to disability and difference, identity, pedagogical methods, and school policy.

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[1] Susan Burch, *Signs of Resistance: American Deaf Cultural History, 1900 to World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 4-5. See also, Harlan Lane, *The Mask of Benevolence: Disabling the Deaf Community* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 18-28. To signify their existence as a cultural group, Deaf people have often capitalized the word 'Deaf.' This usage of 'Deaf' dates at least as far back to World

The historiography on Deafness in Canada almost always focuses on provincial boarding schools and debates over methods and Deaf identity in these institutions.[3] The boarding school setting is especially significant because the Deaf community has argued that these institutions were the crucibles where Deaf people's unique language and culture was formed.[4] By studying Toronto's day school classes and the methods debate in

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War II, and often appears in the historiography on Deafness as well. The term 'deaf,' beginning with a lower case letter, is restricted in that historiography to cases when it is only the condition of non-hearing that is being discussed. See Burch, *Signs of Resistance*, 1-5. This chapter follows these two conventions.

[2] Burch, *Signs of Resistance*, 11-16.

[3] See: Margret Winzer, "An Examination of Some Selected Factors that Affected the Education and Socialization of the Deaf of Ontario, 1870-1900," Ed.D dissertation (University of Toronto, 1981); Peter A. Cowden, "'Children of Silence': Education of the deaf in Ontario, 1856-1906," PhD dissertation (SUNY at Buffalo, 1990); Tanis Maureen Doe, "Ontario Schooling and the Status of the Deaf: An Enquiry into Inequality, Status Assignment and Educational Power," M.S.W. thesis (Carleton University, 1988); Stéphane-D. Perreault, "Intersecting Discourses: Deaf Institutions and Communities in Montreal, 1850-1920," PhD dissertation (McGill University, 2003); Nathalie Lachance, "Analyse du discours sur la culture sourde au Québec. Fondements historiques et réalité contemporaine," PhD dissertation (Université de Montréal, 2002); Robert Stamp, "'Teaching the Children of Silence': Samuel Greene and the Hearing-Impaired," *Historical Studies in Education* 17:1 (Spring 2005): 165-168.

[4] Douglas C. Baynton, *Forbidden Signs: American Culture and the Campaign Against Sign Language* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 3.

them, we gain a new perspective on deaf education and Deaf identity formation. Studying deaf education in the public schools, alongside closely related special education programs for children who were hard of hearing and classes for children with speech problems, contributes further to this perspective. In those classes, oralism attracted less controversy because it was not usually tied to larger questions about identity. What is more, the methods debate in Toronto's oralist day school classes is an interesting historical example of how school reformers who wished to impose a single method of instruction in special classes were challenged by children, parents, and others interested people who wanted different and opposing methods. As a pedagogical debate, the methods debate raises crucial questions about who benefits from a particular pedagogical approach, in this case oralism or combined methods, and who does not. By not offering varied instructional techniques, special classes failed to achieve educationists' goal of adapting the school to meet different children's individual needs—a failure that Deaf activists were eager to point out.

Miss Palen goes to Toronto: Hearing and speech education policy and practice, 1922-1945

Imogen Palen was a seasoned teacher when, in 1922, she packed up her affairs and moved to Toronto from her hometown of Belleville, Ontario. Palen went to the big city to renew her vocation. Born around 1870, by the time Palen left Belleville she was a seasoned educator with close to 30 years of teaching experience.[5] In 1909, after teaching in the public schools, Palen joined the staff of the Ontario School for the Deaf (OSD), the provincial boarding school for deaf students that was located in Belleville. It was probably at the OSD that Palen first became devoted to the oralist approach to deaf education, a commitment she would retain for the rest of her career. By the 1940s, Palen had accumulated an impressive list of academic and professional credentials related to oralist education. She trained at the Ontario College of Education in Toronto, at the School for the Deaf at Columbia University, and at the Central Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis. Palen was one of several teachers that the Canadian government selected to do rehabilitation work with Canadian soldiers who had been deafened in World War I. She was also a founding member of the International Council for Exceptional Children, a member of the American Association for Teaching Speech to the Deaf and the Progressive Oral Advocates, and an honorary life member of the Toronto Lip Reading Club.[6] When the Board hired Palen, she became the first teacher of lip-reading ever employed by a Canadian school board.[7] Indeed, Palen's long career was staked upon the rise and consolidation of oralism in hearing and speech education that occurred between the late nineteenth century and the 1930s.[8] Oralists believed that teaching children who were deaf to speak and to read lips would help them to overcome deafness and to

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[5] I located Palen in the 1891, 1901, and 1911 Canada censuses. Her birth date is listed variously as 1869, abt. 1870, and 1875. She was employed as a public school teacher in Belleville in 1891. Library and Archives Canada. Statistics Canada Fonds, R-92. *1891 Census of Canada.* Manuscript census (Msc). Hastings West District, Belleville subdistrict, 51; *1901 Census of Canada.* Msc. Hastings West District,

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Belleville subdistrict, A-3, 11; *1911 Census of Canada*. Msc. Hastings West District, Belleville West subdistrict, 29.

[6] Palen is first listed as a member of the OSD staff in 1909. *Report of the Ontario Department of Education* (hereafer *DOE Report*) *1909*, Appendix H, Report of the Superintendent of the Ontario Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, 181. See also: "Deaf Work Pioneer Miss I. Palen, dead," *Toronto Star* (4 September 1945): 11; "Pioneer Teacher Of Deaf and Dumb," *Globe and Mail* (4 September 1945): 4.

[7] "Pioneer Teacher Of Deaf and Dumb," 4

[8] Baynton, espec. chapters 3 and 4; Burch, espec. 7-41. See also Susan Burch, "Reading Between the Signs: Defending Deaf Culture in Early Twentieth-Century America," in Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky, eds., *The New Disability History: American Perspectives* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 214-235.

integrate into families, schools, and society.[9] Palen wrote that speech and lip reading instruction helped make "the deaf child *a part of* the community, instead of *apart from* the community."[10]

Deaf people, and a few hearing educators of the deaf, had a different perspective on communication and instruction for people who were deaf than Palen did. Signs were the preferred language of many Deaf people. Deaf people themselves, and hearing educators who embraced signs, subscribed to either the philosophy of manualism or, much more commonly, the philosophy of combined methods. Manualists chose only signs over speech and lip-reading. Combined methods supporters preferred an integrated combination of signing and oral-aural communication, but with the emphasis placed mostly on signing.[11] Many Deaf people supported combined methods by the early twentieth century because this approach allowed them to communicate with each other and with hearing people, who usually did not learn sign language. However, people who signed argued that codified and standardized sign language, what they called 'the sign language' (which became known as American Sign Language, or ASL, after World War II), was a language like any other and that Deaf people who used it were a linguistic minority group like any other. Linguists have confirmed the sign language's status as a true language. The sign language (ASL) is not a manual version of the English language, although such a system does exist and is called Manually Coded English. Rather, ASL is a rich non-verbal language of its own, with its own unique syntax and grammar, that uses hand movements and other non-manual signs, such as head-movements and facial expressions.[12]

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[9] Burch, *Signs of Resistance*, 13. See also Imogen Palen, "Lip Reading," *Addresses and Proceedings of the Sixty-Second Annual Convention of the Ontario Educational Association* (hereafter, *OEA)* (Toronto: OEA, 1923): 265.
[10] *TBE Annual Report 1925*, Report on Deaf and Hard of Hearing, 83. Emphasis in original.
[11] See Burch, *Signs of Resistance*, 11; Baynton, 4; Margret A. Winzer, *The History of Special Education: From Isolation to Integration* (Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press, 1993), 125-129.

In 1922 Imogen Palen took charge of a series of new classes in Toronto public schools for children who were deaf, children who were hard of hearing, and children with speech difficulties. In the years that followed Palen, and the oralist approach, became fixtures of this corner of Toronto's special class system. In her first two years in Toronto Palen worked as an itinerant teacher, moving from school to school to instruct children with hearing and speech difficulties. In April 1924, TBE trustees approved permanent classes for "Very-Hard-of-Hearing" children at Rose Avenue PS and oralist day school classes for "totally deaf" children at Clinton PS.[13] Ten years later, in 1934, the Board opened high school classes for adolescents who were deaf at Central Technical School (for girls) and at a junior vocational school for boys.[14] By 1934-35 there were a total of eleven oral day school classes for children who were deaf, classes for children who were hard of hearing, and speech correction classes in Toronto. The classes enrolled 650 students.[15] Ten years later, in 1944-45, Toronto boasted four hard of hearing classes, with total of 59 pupils; four oralist day school classes for 38 students who were deaf; and six pull out speech correction classes that served over 1,000 students who rotated through them.[16] (See Appendix A, Table A.5. to Table A.7.)

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[12] See: Lane, 13-18; Baynton, 12-13; Burch, *Signs of Resistance*, 55-56.

[13] *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Annual Report 1922*, 116; "Lip-Reading Classes Now in Eight Schools," *Toronto Star* (26 January 1922): 7; "Pioneer Teacher Of Deaf and Dumb": 4; *TBE Annual Report 1924*, Chief Inspector's Report, 74.

[14] *DOE Report 1934*, Appendix I, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 63.

[15] *DOE Report 1935*, Appendix I, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 35.

Toronto day school classes for children who were deaf are the first set of classes that we will look at. The TBE's decision to open day school classes made Toronto somewhat unique. Ordinarily provincial boarding institutions, such as the OSD in Belleville, were responsible for deaf education. It was unusual, although allowable by legislation, for Ontario city school systems to assume that responsibility.[17] Toronto was one of just a handful of cities in North America, including Boston, Erie, Pennsylvania, and cities in Wisconsin, where the public school board operated day school classes for children who were deaf.[18] Progressives who subscribed to the twentieth century's new views on the importance of child development believed that, wherever possible, families should not be broken up and children who needed specialized services, including children who were deaf, should receive those services close to home.[19] Toronto lip reading teacher Nellie MacDonald wrote that the Board opened its oral day school classes "for the sake of the mothers of Toronto deaf children." MacDonald wrote favourably about the OSD boarding school, but added, "We cannot, however, deny that the babes miss mother and father, and that mother and father miss the wee ones. Many a mother parts from her six-year-old with a heavy heart."[20] Progressive Toronto school trustee Edith Groves saw day school classes as an opportunity to protect families and rescue deaf children "required to leave home at a tender age."[21] The TBE's 1946 pamphlet addressed to parents, "Education of the Deaf Child or the Child With Impaired Hearing," was written in such a way so as to reassure hearing parents that their deaf child could learn to hear and speak. The pamphlet instructed parents in techniques that would prepare their pre-school child for lip reading instruction: "Talk to your child unceasingly just as though he could hear...Bring him close to you and encourage him to watch your lips. This will give him an idea of speech."[22] The view that family care was better than institutional care represented an evolution in the custodial-institutional beliefs that had dominated nineteenth-century child saving. The litmus test for the progressive child savers was whether or not in their eyes the caregiver for a child in need, especially the mother, qualified as deserving.[23] Oralists who subscribed to these views believed that 'normal' parents of deaf children, that is parents who were respectable, employed, and themselves hearing, were deserving and could be trusted to nurture and care for deaf boys and girls in the home.

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[16] *DOE Report 1945*, Report 6, Auxiliary Classes, 142.

[17] See: Harry Amoss and L. Helen DeLaporte, *Training Handicapped Children* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1933), 238; Winzer, *The History of Special Education*, 103-104.

[18] See Robert L. Osgood, *The History of Special Education: A Struggle for Equality in American Public Schools* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008), 57. See also, Robert L. Osgood, *For 'Children Who Vary From the Normal Type,': Special Education in Boston, 1838-1930* (Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press, 2000), 93-117, on the City of Boston's public school for deaf children, an oralist school and the first day school of its kind in the United States (and North America).

[19] Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890-1930* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 135-138; Baynton, 79-81.

The instructional model in the day school classes had two components: speech training and lip reading training. Before learning how to read lips children who were deaf were taught how to speak. Teaching speech was a highly intensive and very intimate process. The teacher began each lesson by placing a student's finger on the teacher's face. The teacher then said the word the pupil was to learn. The pupil was supposed to feel the vibration and then practice reproducing that vibration with his or her own voice. The process was strange at first to many children. According to Nellie MacDonald, "It is quite likely that [the child] will prove far from docile. He may snatch his hand away and scream and kick." As the child became more proficient in feeling sounds through vibration, she or he moved to the piano to learn chords by touch, which was supposed to deepen the association between specific vibrations and specific sounds. "After considerable practice," most children learned to properly regulate their own voices.[24]

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[20] Nellie Y. MacDonald, "Deaf Children in the Public Schools," *The School* 14:5 (January 1926): 499-500.
[21] Groves also spoke about rescuing blind children from the Ontario School for the Blind at Brantford. *TBE Minutes 1922,* 16 November 1922, 242. See also, *TBE Annual Report 1929*, Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and Speech, 201.
[22] Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA). Vertical File (VF). T.B.E. - Biography- Goldring, Cecil Charles. "Education of the Deaf Child or the Child With Impaired Hearing," (Toronto Board of Education: 1946), 6.
[23] Ladd-Taylor, 135-138.

After first learning how to speak children who were deaf began the process of learning to read lips. Without the benefit of sound, the student learned each word, painstakingly, by memorizing how it appeared on the speaker's lips. "It takes a great deal of concentration before he learns that a particular movement of the lips may mean 'a sheep' and another movement 'a ball'," MacDonald wrote. In the first year of lip reading, an average child might learn 50 to 100 nouns and 30 "commands." Even an especially proficient child learned only about 200 words this way, and perhaps 50 "commands." It took four years of intensive lip reading instruction in this manner before a child who was deaf could even begin attempting any of the other subjects on the curriculum.[25]

Toronto children who were hard of hearing (that is, children who were not completely deaf) had special classes of their own, where they practiced speech and learned to read lips as well. The Board's first hard of hearing class opened at Rose Avenue PS in 1924.[26] In the late 1930s and early 1940s, technical innovations helped school authorities to further differentiate instruction for children who were hard of hearing from instruction for children who were deaf. Hearing aids, which first came to North America in the 1920s, supplied educationists with a new way of helping hard of hearing children to overcome a hearing difficulty.[27] The TBE introduced the new hearing aid technology, which the Scottish Rite Masons donated to the Board, in the hard of hearing class at Rosedale PS in 1938. The hearing aids donated by the Masons connected a portable microphone to sixteen wired headsets plugged into students' desks. The devices were used to amplify the hearing that hard of hearing children already had, which made teaching speech easier. Hearing aids could not be used with deaf children, who did not have enough hearing to amplify.[28] A 1946 TBE pamphlet for parents included a description of the hearing aid's role in overcoming and integration. "A hearing impairment is a serious handicap to a child since it prevents him, in a measure, from entering into the world of ideas about him. The Toronto Board of Education has recognized the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing children and has provided special classes and modern mechanical aids to assist children to overcome this handicap."[29]

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[24] MacDonald, 499-500.

[25] Ibid.

Speech education, for children who were not necessarily deaf or hard of hearing, was also an outgrowth of oralism in Toronto public schools. In 1924, the same year that it opened permanent day school classes for children who were deaf, the TBE also began operating special pull out speech correction classes for children with "speech defects," including "stuttering, stammering, lisping, defective phonation and foreign accent and articulation," as well as baby talk.[30] In April 1925, the Board opened a speech correction clinic at Clinton PS, which Imogen Palen directed. In September and October of the following school year, Palen visited 43 TBE schools and evaluated the speech of 383 different pupils that school principals had identified as having speech difficulties.[31] The Board later established speech correction classes at several schools across Toronto. Itinerant speech teachers moved between these school and students with speech difficulties were withdrawn from their classes on a part-time basis to attend the centre closest to their home school.[32] The pull out model allowed speech correction teachers to see a large number of students in the course of a school year. Special educators believed that difficulty speaking, like difficulty hearing, would prevent children from fully integrating into adult society. The teacher who vigilantly policed speech in her class, Imogen Palen said, was helping to "greatly enhance[] her pupils' chances of success in social and business after-life."[33]

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[26] *TBE Annual Report 1924*, Chief Inspector's Report, 74

[27] R.A.R. Edwards, "Sound and Fury; or, Much Ado about Nothing? Cochlear Implants in Historical Perspective," *The Journal of American History* 92:3 (December 2005): 903.

[28] *DOE Report 1939*, Appendix G Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 69.

[29] "Education of the Deaf Child or the Child With Impaired Hearing," 11.

Overcoming a speech problem required different children to conquer different challenges. Special educators had widely assorted theories supporting the origins of speech difficulties. They attributed speech difficulties to trauma, to a breakdown of the relationship of the conscious and subconscious, to nervousness, to undue pressure on children to succeed, to emotional problems, to delays in children's motor skill development, to improper speech models in the home and neighbourhood, to malnutrition and illness, to physical causes such as cleft palate, or to uninformed parents' overuse of baby talk.[34] By the 1930s and early 1940s, by which time psychologists' interests had shifted to focus on the personality adjustment of all schoolchildren (including special class pupils), experts mainly attributed speech problems to maladjustment and proposed psychological remedies.[35] When Toronto school psychologist Dr. E.P. Lewis evaluated Albert G. for a speech class in 1929, for example, he noted that Albert would be less nervous, and make better progress, if the teacher ignored his stutter. "He carries along like a normal child if he is not conscious of his 'nerves.' The best way for him to forget this is to pay no attention to them."[36] Stuttering in particular was often attributed it to psychological maladjustment, because speech experts were unable to find a physical explanation for it.[37]

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[30] *TBE Annual Report 1924*, Chief Inspector's Report, 74-75. See also, *TBE Annual Report 1925*, 24; L.A. Pequegnat, "Classification of Speech Defects," *Addresses and Proceedings of the Sixty-Eighth Annual Convention of the OEA* (Toronto, OEA: 1929), 83-88.

[31] *TBE Annual Report 1925*, 84.

[32] *TBE Annual Report 1931*, Chief Inspector Moshier's Report, 80.

[33] Imogen B. Palen, "Correction of Speech Defects," *The School* 16:5 (January 1928): 438. See also, Imogen B. Palen, "Stammering," *The School* 17:7 (March 1929): 636; Pequegnat, 83.

Generally speech correction teaching addressed psychological, physical, and environmental causes, while simultaneously teaching children the mechanics of proper sound formation.[38] Imogen Palen at times used the Müller-Walle speech teaching syllable drills devised in the 1910s by Martha E. Bruhn, a Boston lip reading teacher. The drills connected syllables to sounds, and in turn connected these sounds to tongue and lip movements that the student could practice.[39] Bessie Bowling (who also taught Toronto's first class for 'backward' children at Queen Alexandra PS in 1912) used innovative methods in her speech correction classes in the early 1940s. Bowling used drama lessons, for instance, to encourage young people to literally lose themselves in a role. Since the maladjusted personality was the presumed source of the speech blockage, pretending to be someone else gave practice in lifting the blockage, Bowling believed. Bowling also saw no harm in boosting the self-confidence of a child who stuttered by allowing that child to read aloud in unison with a partner.[40] However, the Director of the speech clinic at the Hospital for Sick Children (HSC), Ruth Lewis, by contrast, argued that if a child who stuttered was allowed to shirk oral work he or she would withdraw "into a world of his [sic] own." To Lewis, the most important lesson that children with speech difficulties could learn in speech training class was that they had to overcome their speech challenges and enter into the same world that 'normal' youngsters inhabited.[41]

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[34] Palen, "Correction of Speech Defects," 434-438; Palen, "Stammering," 631-636; E. Bowling, "Some Causes and the Re-Education of Speech Defects," *Addresses and Proceedings of the Sixty-Eighth Annual Convention of the OEA* (Toronto: OEA, 1929), 95-97.

[35] Anne Dunston, "Speech Education," *The School* (Elem ed.) 29:5 (February 1941): 561-562; Elizabeth Bowling, "The Stutterer," *The School* (Elem ed.) 29:10 (June 1941): 934-936; E.D. MacPhee, "Some Psychological Problems in Speech Defect," *Addresses and Proceedings of the Sixty-Eighth Annual Convention of the OEA* (Toronto: 1929), 90-92.

[36] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" Office Record Card (O.R.C.) Box TDSB 2003-1308, Box 6, Admission-Discharge-Promotion (A.D.P.) card Box TDSB 2003-0834, Box 1 of 2. 'Albert G.' O.R.C. [1], O.R.C.[2], A.D.P. See also, "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1308, Box 7, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0835. 'George R.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

[37] Bowling, "The Stutterer," 934. Ruth Lewis, "Speech Defects and the Classroom Teacher," *The School* (Elem. ed.) 33:1 (September 1944): 47.

Feeling entirely at sea: Oralism and school and social integration

Oralism was supposed to prepare students who were deaf to better integrate into the hearing worlds of the classroom, the schoolyard, the workplace, and the family. A few deaf and hard of hearing youngsters responded favourably to oralism. One Toronto schoolboy, for instance, wrote Imogen Palen to thank her for teaching him to read lips after meningitis had affected his hearing and kept him away from school for four years. "When the new class for hard-of-hearing pupils was opened at Rose Avenue PS," he wrote, "I was transferred there … with the help of the teacher and the lip-reading I was able to pass my Entrance Examination … I think that without a knowledge of lip-reading and hard-of-hearing children have a very hard task to converse with hearing people."[42] Toronto young people who experienced it had a range of experiences there and expressed a range of feelings about the oralist method and the possibilities it offered for integration.

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[38] Palen, "Correction of Speech Defects," 434-438; Palen, "Stammering," 631-636; Bowling, "Some Causes," 97.

[39] *TBE Annual Report 1922*, 117. Martha E. Bruhn, *The Müller-Walle Method of Lip-Reading for the Deaf*, 2nd ed. (Lynn, MA: Thomas P. Nicholls, 1916).

[40] Bowling, "The Stutterer," 934-936.

[41] Lewis, 48.

However, a number of young people viewed oralism and lip reading with disfavour. One of the main problems the named was that speech and lip reading were difficult and tedious to learn in the first place. Julius Wiggins was a Deaf boy who attended day school classes at Clinton PS in the 1940s (and who went on to found a prominent deaf newspaper in the United States, *The Silent News*). About his time in oralist classes at the OSD, Wiggins signed to the translator-editor of his memoir that "The entire speech and lip-reading business was an awful bore, because there were never any explanations. We did as we were told, no more and, if possible, less."[43] Passive resistance was a tactic that Deaf children who knew the sign language sometimes used against oralist teachers and their methods. When the OSD closed temporarily during World War II to be transformed into an air force barracks, a number of pupils were transferred to temporary new day schools programs in Toronto.[44] C.C Goldring complained that the youngsters who came to Toronto schools from the OSD—ostensibly a school where oralism was practiced, but where students often learned sign language from each other—exhibited no "incentive to learn speech and lip-reading joyfully." Goldring also advised that it might be necessary to segregate the insubordinate signing children from other deaf youngsters in the school, presumably to induce a better atmosphere for oralism.[45]

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[42] *TBE Annual Report 1925*, 83.

[43] Julius Wiggins, *No Sound* (New York: The Silent Press, 1970), 10-11.

Learning to speak and read lips was enormously time consuming and children who were deaf complained that it took time away from regular school studies. At the OSD in Belleville, where oralist methods were also used after 1907, the intensive early focus on lip reading for deaf children meant that Julius Wiggins and others did not begin to study even basic academic subjects until much later than hearing children. Wiggins did not begin to read or write until Grade 3. "The gaps caused by an unwieldy method [lip reading] left many of us very far behind, indeed," he later related.[46] In fact, even oralists such as Imogen Palen acknowledged the method's general challenges. "Not even the expert lip-reader, after years of practice," she admitted "can follow all the rapid and intricate movements of the lips in speech." Palen also knew that youngsters who were born without hearing, or those who were deafened before they learned to speak, performed less well in oralist schools than children deafened later in childhood.[47] To the

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[44] *DOE Report 1941*, Report of the Minister of Education, 1; *TBE Minutes 1941*, Management Report No. 13, Part II, 2 September 1941, Adopted 4 September 1941, 284-285; *TBE Minutes 1944*, 22 June 1944, 107-108.

[45] "Would Extend School Plan for Hard-of-Hearing Pupils," *Toronto Star* (6 March 1945): 3.

[46] Wiggins, 11.

[47] *TBE Annual Report 1929*, 201-202; Palen, "Lip-Reading," 265.

OAD and other opponents of oralism the difficulties that oral methods imposed were reason enough to prefer manual or combined methods. To oralists, such as Palen, the problems they acknowledged were not a significant enough to warrant a review of their methods.

Oralism was supposed to help schoolchildren integrate into the mainstream schools on multiple levels. However, some Toronto students transferred from oralist classrooms and into the mainstream classrooms of the regular system still encountered a system that was poorly adapted to their educational needs. Julius Wiggins recalls his high school experience in a mainstream classroom, which he began to attend part-time in the mornings in September 1945:

> We were taught the usual subjects, but found that trying to understand our teachers was fruitless. None of them made much effort on our behalf. Instead of using the blackboard they spoke from their desks and, as none of them tried to enunciate or speak visibly, we could not lip-read. In addition, we could not find anyone to inform us about our assignment or from whom I could copy notes. I felt entirely at sea and complained bitterly to Father.

Wiggins' father urged him to stick with his schooling. Wiggins, however, "found the going impossible" and left school at Christmas for a full-time job at Sable Bay Furs.[48]

Deaf pupils such as Wiggins also found that schoolyards were not always integrated places, even though they were supposed to be. Teachers at Clinton PS in the 1930s told hearing youngsters to include deaf children into recess play. Verna M. Morrison, a hearing student who attended the regular classes at Clinton PS recalled integration at the school in the 1920s. "The hard-of-hearing classes got on well with us. We learned to read lips and signs too."[49] Yet, Wiggins remembered separation on the schoolyard at Clinton PS in the 1940s. "At recess, although we all played the same games, the deaf and the hearing students never mixed. The deaf were interested in their own conversations, usually in sign-language and the hearing were interested in speech."[50] As we saw in the previous chapter, teasing children who were different often resulted in them feeling excluded at school. Children with speech difficulties seem to have been especially vulnerable to teasing.[51]

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[48] Wiggins, 66.

Oralism did not prepare children for integration at school and oralism was not especially useful for communication and integration in the workplace either. Deaf people who worked alongside hearing people did not always use speech and lip reading to communicate. In fact hearing people often found speech and lip reading more of an impediment than a benefit when communicating with people who were deaf. Surveys that the (American) National Association of the Deaf conducted in the United States in the 1900s and 1910s showed that most deaf workers used writing to communicate with hearing co-workers. Historian Robert Buchanan argues that a few hearing co-workers and employers even learned how to fingerspell. (Fingerspelling used a manual version of the English alphabet to spell English words.)[52] Julius Wiggins, for instance, apprenticed at the National Fur Co., where he used writing to communicate with his boss.[53] Wiggins also communicated with hearing chums at the Teen Canteen in Toronto through a mix of writing and fingerspelling, the latter which he taught to a few of the boys and girls who went to dances there.[54]

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[49] *Clinton Public School 1888-1988* (Toronto: Toronto Board of Education, May 1989), 27. See also, p. 18.
[50] Wiggins, 37-38.
[51] See Bowling, "Some Causes," 95-97; Miriam Bassin Chinsky, *The Tailor's Daughter: Growing Up in North Toronto* (Toronto: Multimedia Nova, 2004), 24.
[52] Robert M. Buchanan, *Illusions of Equality: Deaf Americans in School and Factory, 1850-1950* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 1999), 32-35.

"Mothers of Little Deaf Children"[55]: Parents and oralism

Oralist day school classes held considerable appeal to hearing parents of children who were deaf. These parents often yearned for their child to be 'normal' or to experience a 'normal' childhood. Understandably, Toronto's day school classes were also popular because they allowed parents to keep their children with them at home instead of sending them to the distant OSD in Belleville. In 1925 Toronto parent Owen Elliott, whose son attended the OSD, wrote a letter to the *Toronto Star* seeking out other parents of children who were deaf with whom to form an organized lobby for more local day school classes. The emotional weight of sending his child off to Belleville for nine-month stretches with no break for Christmas, Elliott wrote, was "difficult to bear" for the whole family. Elliot wanted his son and others like him to "attend day classes and spend their time at home the same as normal children."[56] Elliott was not alone. Palen reported in 1928 that "several families moved to Toronto from outside points" so that their children could attend the oralist day school classes at Clinton PS, instead of going off to

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[53] Wiggins, 65.

[54] Wiggins, 63.

[55] TDSBA. TBE-Curric. Dept. Schools—Elem. Christie—Deer Park. TDSB 2003-0671. Clinton Deaf Classes File. Memorandum N.L. Pollard to C.C. Goldring, 29 October 1951.

[56] "To the Parents of Deaf Children," Letter to editor, Owen Elliot, *Toronto Star* (4 December 1925): 6. See also: "Classes for Deaf and Dumb," Letter to editor, Mother of One Afflicted, *Toronto Star* (22 December 1925): 6.

Belleville. Other parents relocated to get access to classes for children who were hard of hearing at Rose Avenue PS and Dovercourt PS.[57]

Hearing parents usually tried to what was best for their child who was deaf. Yet they also often felt strong, even negative emotions about their deaf child's lack of hearing. The principal at Clinton School wrote in letter to C.C. Goldring that at learning unexpectedly that their child was deaf "most parents are utterly bewildered and heart-broken."[58] Parents were criticized from both sides, by Deaf advocates and by oralist teachers. Even though oralists preferred the home as the ideal setting for deaf children's development this did not stop them from criticizing how parents raised children who were deaf, hard of hearing, or who had speech problems. Imogen Palen warned that parents who did not consent to lip reading for their hard of hearing boy or girl risked the child's mental health.[59] Educational experts blamed parents, especially mothers, for children's speech difficulties—despite how elusive, as we have seen, the causes of speech difficulties actually were.[60] The burden of blame that school authorities laid on parents was of course largely applied to mothers. Mothers in this period in Canada, as Kari Dehli has shown, were expected to assume responsibility for their child's education, even for their offspring's "successes and failures."[61] Psychologists, as we will see in the next chapter, often blamed mothers of maladjusted children for their problems. Even combined methods advocates criticized parents. "A friend of the Deaf" who wrote the *Star* in 1925 in response to some alleged oralist "boosting" in that paper, attempted to shame parents into revealing their true reasons for opposing sign language for their children. The letter writer suggested that hearing parents did not wish their children to learn how to sign because signing violated decorum with its "vulgar" hand motions and drew attention in public to their children's difference.[62]

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[57] *TBE Annual Report 1928*, 168.

[58] TDSBA. TDSB 2003-0671. TBE-Curric. Dept. Schools—Elem. Christie—Deer Park. Clinton Deaf Classes File. Letter Nellie Y. MacDonald to C.C. Goldring, 12 February 1945.

[59] *TBE Annual Report 1925*, 82.

[60] Clara G. Binnie, "Speech Defects and Mental Health," *The School* (Elem. ed.) 32:3 (November 1943): 220-221; Bowling, "Some Causes," 95.

[61] Kari Dehli, "For Intelligent Motherhood and National Efficiency: The Toronto Home and School Council, 1916-1930," in *Gender and Education in Ontario*, eds. Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1991): 147.

Some parents of deaf and hard of hearing children took a very proactive, even crusading role, in their child's schooling. One mother of a child who attended Clinton PS went as far as to enrol in 1926 in correspondence courses for "Mothers of Little Deaf Children" given by the Wright Oral School in New York City. She later moved to New York City and enrolled in the Wright school directly.[63] Parents also pressured school board officials to adopt hearing aids and other devices that assisted with oralism more widely. Mrs. Florence Gilchrist, whose daughter attended a class for children who were hard of hearing at Kimberley PS, petitioned the Board in 1943 for hearing aids for her daughter and her daughter's classmates. The Board eventually agreed to purchase the devices, for use of in all the board's hard of hearing classes, at a cost of over $5,000.[64]

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[62] Letter to the editor, A Friend of the Deaf, "Instruction for the Deaf," *Toronto Star* (14 December 1925): 6.

[63] TDSBA. TBE-Curric. Dept. Schools—Elem. Christie—Deer Park. TDSB 2003-0671. Clinton Deaf Classes File. Memorandum N.L. Pollard to C.C. Goldring, 29 October 1951. Private lip-reading lessons also existed in Toronto for parents who could afford them for their children. See: Advertisement, "Miss Grace K. Wadleigh Teacher of Lip-Reading" *The Bulletin* (December 1926).

[64] A shortage of materials caused by WWII prevented the company from delivering for over two years. *TBE Minutes 1943*, 21 October 1943, 145-146; 1 April 1943, 71; Appendix Management Report No. 17, Part II, 26 October 1943, 437; *TBE Minutes 1944*, Management Report No. 12, Part II, 13 June 1944, Adopted 22 June 1944, 195; *TBE Minutes 1945,* Management Report No. 6, Part II, 6 March 1945, Adopted 15 March 1945, 82.

As the two above mothers' stories suggest, activist parents often wittingly, or unwittingly, allied with oralist educators. This put parents at odds with Deaf adults' organized efforts to preserve sign language. Parents who embraced oralism sometimes found themselves at odds with their own children as well.[65] Being Deaf, and being a part of Deaf culture, often cut young people off from their hearing parents. Learning to read lips and to speak did not necessarily bring a rapprochement with parents either. Caught between cultures, Deaf young people could develop a widely ambivalent sense of identity. Julius Wiggins spent a large part of his young life at the OSD, where he had a certain sense of belonging that he could not always find at his parents' home in Toronto. Wiggins explained that Deaf people were "often foreigners in our own homes" because of the difficulty he and others experienced acquiring information that other young people simply picked up by listening to adult conversation.[66] Wiggins felt like an outsider. Indeed, while Wiggins was Jewish, he had no Bar Mitzvah, an important rite of passage in Jewish culture, because he was unable to read the Torah verses or repeat the prayers in Hebrew.[67] Yet Wiggins's memoir also expresses uncertainly about his identification with the Deaf community at Belleville. Wiggins moved to his parents' home permanently in 1941, when the RCAF took over the OSD buildings. He enrolled in the day school that the Board opened temporarily at Huron Street PS, and later went on to attend oralist classes at Clinton PS. When the OSD reopened in 1944, Wiggins and his friend Dick thought about returning there. Wiggins asked his mother if he could. She said that he had to stay at home. Wiggins was initially upset by the decision. However, over time he came to tolerate the day school classes at Clinton PS. His friend Dick, who had gone back to the OSD, later came back to Toronto and told Wiggins that "he couldn't take the lack of freedom after school hours" at the OSD. Wiggins signed to the translator-editor of his memoir: "I realized I had been saved from making a mistake."[68]

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[65] See: Burch, 14-15; Doe, 109-110.
[66] Wiggins, 29.
[67] Wiggins, 17.

Pedagogy and identity: The Ontario Association of the Deaf and Toronto educators debate oralism in Toronto, 1922-1945

To many Deaf people, oralism and day schools for children who were deaf seemed like an attack on Deaf language, culture, and identity. To understand why this was so we first have to know something about the language of signs and about Deaf cultural history. In the nineteenth century people in the United States, and later in Canada, founded boarding schools for people who were deaf. Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc established the first of these schools, the American Asylum for the Deaf, at Hartford in 1817.[69] The bishop of Montreal, Ignace Bourget, helped to found Canada's first boarding institution for people who were deaf in that city in 1848.[70] Ten years later, in 1858, Irish immigrant James McGann convinced a Toronto school trustee to allow him to use one classroom at Phoebe Street PS to teach deaf students.[71] In 1869 the province established the Ontario School for the Deaf at Belleville.[72] Deaf people who attended these boarding schools learned to communicate with one another by signing. Early on, in the crucible of the boarding school, signing developed into a distinctive language that became the foundation for a uniquely Deaf culture, which spread outwards to other institutions for the deaf and into deaf communities.[73]

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[68] Wiggins, 52-53.
[69] Baynton, 3.
[70] Perreault, 2.
[71] Cowden, 35-36; Winzer, "An Examination...," 138.
[72] Cowden, 74; Winzer, "An Examination...," 143-144.

Deaf culture flourished in the United States and by the second half of the nineteenth century it was well established in Canada as well.[74] By 1921, the year before the TBE started day school classes for children who were deaf, Toronto's Deaf community numbered around 250 people. Deaf culture in the city was organized around church, clubs and associational life, and work. The Toronto Evangelical Church for the deaf was an important Deaf community institution. The all-Deaf Brigden Club counted 50 members who met Saturday nights in a room at the YMCA. And more than 80 Deaf men worked together in two different workplaces: the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. plant and the post office.[75]

In spite of, or perhaps because of, the burgeoning of Deaf culture, by the end of the American Civil War, Deaf culture and identity had already fallen under attack from oralists who wanted people who were deaf to assimilate to hearing culture.[76] Oralist day school classes were an important instrument that oralists used to attempt to assimilate children who were deaf. In 1883, Alexander Graham Bell, the Brantford, Ontario resident and inventor of the telephone, who was a also leading oralist in North America, famously argued that boarding schools and the proliferation of sign language were creating the perfect conditions for "the formation of a deaf race."[77] According to Bell's *Memoir Upon the Formation of a Deaf Variety of the Human Race*, the two greatest causes of the emergence of a "deaf race" were "(1) segregation for the purposes of education, and (2) the use, as a means of communication, of a language which is different from that of the people." Bell argued that oralist day schools were necessary to counteract the development of separate signing communities in the boarding schools. "The grand central principle that should guide us, then," Bell wrote, "in our search for preventive measures should be *the retention of the normal environment during the period of education.* ... The direction of change should therefore be towards the establishment of small schools, and the extension of the day-school plan."[78]

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[73] Baynton, 3.

[74] See Baynton, 15-35, and Burch, *Signs of Resistance*, 42-66. On Canada, see Clifton F. Carbin, *Deaf Heritage in Canada: A Distinctive, Diverse, and Enduring Culture*, Dorothy L. Smith, ed., (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1996).

[75] Gallaudet University Archives (GUA). Digital Collections. <http://www.aladin.wrlc.org/gsdl/collect/gasw/gasw.shtml> (Accessed 14 January 2010). Mrs. Jay Cooke Howard, "Toronto, Canada," *The Silent Worker* 33:5 (February 1921): 158-159. See also, Margret A. Winzer, "Education, Urbanization, and the Deaf Community: A Case Study of Toronto, 1870-1900," in John Vickery Van Cleve ed., *Deaf History Unveiled: Interpretations from the New Scholarship* (Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press, 1993), 127-145.

[76] Baynton, 15-30; Burch, *Signs of Resistance*, 7-8, 12-13, 139-145.

By the early twentieth century, Deaf activists across North America were well aware of the threats that oralist day schools and lip-reading posed to Deaf culture. The oralist method of instruction in day schools—lip reading and speech teaching—undermined the linguistic foundation of Deaf culture. Oralism and the day school setting also separated people who were deaf from each other and disconnected them from the Deaf cultural heritage that had been founded in boarding schools. And, finally, oralism also removed deaf education from Deaf hands and placed it under the authority of hearing teachers and school officials. In Ontario, by 1907, the OSD was already quickly moving towards a completely oralist approach. In 1919, the Department of Education banned

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[77] Alexander Graham Bell, *Memoir Upon the Formation of a Deaf Variety of the Human Race* (1884), 48. CIHM No. 08831.

[78] The emphasis is present in the original text. See Bell, 46. On the connection between oralism and day schools see: Burch, *Signs of Resistance*, 11-16 and Baynton, 66-69.

Deaf adults from training as teachers in Ontario. By 1927, only three teachers who used sign language remained at the OSD.[79] The rise of oralism in Ontario paralleled its rise in the United States. Signing had been widespread in Deaf education in the nineteenth century. Already in 1900, however, signs had been eliminated from approximately 40 percent of classrooms where children who were deaf studied. By 1920, 80 percent of classrooms had eliminated signing. Deaf people in different parts of North America organized to fight these threats. They made opposition to oralism a leading Deaf issue in the early twentieth century.[80] From many Deaf people's perspectives, the pedagogical debate over educational methods in Toronto—over oralism versus combined methods—was in addition a debate about culture, identity, assimilation, and survival.

In Ontario, the main organization responsible for defending Deaf language, culture, and values, was the Ontario Association of the Deaf (OAD). Former OSD students formed the OAD in 1886.[81] The association publicly opposed oralism and day school classes for deaf children in Toronto even before the first oralist classes opened in the city in 1922. In 1921, OAD President George Reeves met with Ontario Minister of Education R.H. Grant to present Grant with the OAD's position on deaf education. Reeves handed Grant a list of issues that included strengthening the OSD's position in getting all children who were deaf into school, achieving better social integration by properly training Deaf students for trades and by improving public attitudes towards Deaf people, as well as protecting sign language at the OSD.[82]

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[79] Carbin, 98-99; Doe, 108-115.
[80] Burch, 10-12.
[81] Doe, 116-117; GUA. Digital Collections. Howard, 159.
[82] GUA. Digital Collections. Howard, 159.

The OAD reacted with concern when it learned in 1922 that the TBE had opened oralist day school classes. Delegates at the OAD's July 1922 meetings at Brantford passed an official motion protesting oralist day schools in Ontario.[83] The OAD reiterated that opposition several times in the following two and a half decades. In 1931 the OAD passed this resolution at its annual meeting: "'Whereas, the sign language is a most beautiful language and of priceless value to the deaf, ... [be it] 'Resolved, that any policy of education which tends to destroy, or impair or restrict the use of this beautiful language is opposed to the best interests of the deaf.'"[84] The question of oralism arose again in 1942, at the OAD's biennial meeting in London, Ontario. A group of former OSD students confronted OSD superintendent W.J. Morrison, who was present at the meeting, and criticized oralist practices at the OSD. Morrison walked out of the meeting's Saturday session rather than answer the former students' concerns. This caused outrage in the OAD and members toyed with opening a private boarding school in Toronto where they could use combined methods.[85]

Educators and school officials, however, did not hold the same views about signing, oralism, and deaf culture that members of the OAD and Deaf community held. Toronto superintendent C.C. Goldring likened signing, "a set of finger motions which could be understood only by those who could also talk on their fingers," with a retrograde approach to educating children who were deaf. Signing, Goldring said in a 1935 radio address (ironically, a medium inaccessible to people who do not hear), was based on the belief that "if a child were deaf, he must also be dumb." Goldring believed that oralism was a more modern and progressive educational approach.[86] Douglas Baynton argues that oralists gradually built an argument that oral communication was the "natural" human way of communicating. For oralists, 'natural' soon became conflated with 'normal,' as the latter concept emerged in modern thought. Thus oralism took on meanings of 'normality' and 'naturalness' while the sign language came to stand for the opposite, pathology and artificiality.[87]

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[83] "Sign Language Needed by Deaf," *The Globe* (5 July 1922): 2; Carbin, 188.
[84] Carbin, 188.
[85] Carbin, 188-189.

From 1922 to 1945 the TBE maintained its oralist day school classes for children who were deaf, which from late 1920s onwards enrolled between 20 to 30 boys and girls a year. (See Appendix A, Table A.6.) In 1945 Toronto public school officials presented plans to further expand deaf education along oralist lines.[88] Superintendent Goldring announced that the TBE planned to publicize its oralist day schools as an alternative to the OSD. Goldring boldly claimed that all Toronto children who were deaf Toronto could be educated using oralist methods in public school day classes. Toronto school officials also announced plans to purchase an audiometer device to expand hearing testing, to establish a clinic to educate and inform parents of Toronto pre-school children about deafness, and to issue a pamphlet about deafness addressed to parents.[89] The timing of the planned expansion likely had something to do with the Board's successes in operating additional oralist day school programs during World War II, although the exact reason for the timing cannot be confirmed. In 1941 the federal government took over the OSD's Belleville buildings for emergency housing for the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) No. 5 Initial Training School. Deaf young people boarding at the school were dispersed to temporary new day school classes in Toronto, Hamilton, London, and Windsor. The new classes in Toronto became permanent in 1944.[90] By 1945 the Board was ready to expand oralism.

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[86] TDSBA. Goldring, Cecil Charles. Papers. (Box 1 of 2). TDSB 2003-0568. C.C. Goldring, "Radio Talk: The Education of Underprivileged and Handicapped Children in Toronto Schools," 10 March 1935, 3.
[87] Baynton, 136-148.
[88] *TBE Minutes 1945*, Management Report No. 6, Part II, 6 March 1945, Adopted 15 March 1945, 82-83.
[89] "Would Extend School Plan for Hard-of-Hearing Pupils," 3; "Trustees Plan Clinic for Deaf Children," *Toronto Star* (7 March 1945): 4; "Urges Training Deaf Children by Lip-Reading," *Toronto Telegram* (6 March 1945): 3. *TBE Minutes 1945*, Management Report No. 6, Part II, 6 March 1945, Adopted 15 March 1945, 82-83.

The OAD responded immediately to the expansion of oralism in city schools. This time the OAD was quite effective at delivering its message of opposition to oralist teaching to the hearing public. The association took the position that the sign language was a real language, that learning to sign was a crucial part of Deaf culture, and that lip-reading instruction took too long, and was ineffective and cut into deaf children's regular education. The president of the OAD in March 1945 was David Peikoff, an experienced Deaf activist. Peikoff was born in Russia in 1900, became deaf at age five, and emigrated to Canada a year later with his parents, settling in Manitoba. A printer by trade, in middle age Peikoff attended Gallaudet University, the American Deaf university in Washington, D.C. At Gallaudet he became an activist, eventually moving to Toronto in 1936. Peikoff served as OAD president from 1938 to 1956.[91]

In 1945 Peikoff wrote and sent out a well-crafted statement to the press that outlined the OAD's opposition to the TBE's planned expansion of oralism. The statement, and the OAD's commentary on the plans, focussed on key areas, such as lip-reading's ineffectiveness as a method, the Board's failure to fully integrate deaf students as it had intended, and the advantages of combined methods over oralism. "The deaf of Ontario are sorry they must differ with Dr. Goldring in his philosophy of educating the adventitious as well as congenital deaf," Peikoff wrote.[92] He said that the OAD approved of Goldring's plans to expand hearing tests. The OAD could also tolerate some oralist teaching, as part of a combined approach. However, Peikoff disagreed with Goldring's claim that all Toronto children who were deaf could be educated using oral methods in day school classes. In fact, Goldring's faith in oralism, Peikoff wrote, was "wishful thinking" predicated upon the success of a few deaf children who had become proficient at speaking and reading lips. Indeed, it was not unusual for oralists to hold out a few deaf and hard of hearing pupils who became good speakers and lip readers as evidence that the method worked for all children.[93] Students who could not learn to proficiently read lips and to speak often, Susan Burch writes, "found themselves labeled as 'oral failures' and ridiculed as 'born idiots' or 'dummies.'"[94] Indeed, Peikoff criticized the Board for adopting oralism as the singular method for teaching deaf children. "Beneath all the glitter and glamour of prepared public demonstrations," Peikoff wrote, "the Clinton Street day school has not been able to equip the greatest number of their graduates with a truly liberal education."[95] Peikoff claimed that 90 percent of those instructed in lip-reading and speech, abandoned them for other methods of communication after leaving school (although he did not cite a source for this claim).[96]

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[90] *DOE Report 1941*, Report of the Minister of Education, 1; *TBE Minutes 1941*, Management Report No. 13, Part II, 2 September 1941, Adopted 4 September 1941, 284-285; *TBE Minutes 1944*, 22 June 1944, 107-108.

[91] Carbin, 190-192.

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[92] "Deaf Body President Praises and Differs," *Toronto Star* (23 March 1945): 2.
[93] Imogen Palen, "Hard-of-Hearing Classes," *The Bulletin* 6:2 (November 1929): 7; Ann Aitchison, "Deafness Need Not Be A Handicap," *The Special Class Teacher* 14:2 (February 1940): 13. Ann Aitchison, "News of the Deaf," *The Special Class Teacher* 16:1 (November 1941): 21.
[94] Burch, 27.
[95] "Deaf Body President Praises and Differs," 2.

Peikoff also criticized the core of the Board's integrationist mission: "Many of the products [graduating students] advertised as doing well in high schools took up only token advanced work, some arrangements apparently having been made for elimination of difficult subjects, thus preserving the semblance of deaf pupils in the same class as hearing contemporaries attempting higher subjects of study." He added that Toronto's oral day classes had "mentally warped for life" its pupils who had not mastered the lip reading and speech skills necessary to continue to a hearing secondary school. Peikoff and the OAD favoured the combined method of signing and lip reading. Cleverly co-opting the progressive educational phrasing that school authorities in Toronto had long used to justify special education, Peikoff promoted combined methods: "The humanitarian rule is that the method should be fitted to the child, rather than the child to the method. To teach the child the oral method only is trying to make him imitate hearing people."[97]

The OAD's statement secured positive press for the Association's position. *The Globe and Mail* published Peikoff's statement in full on 16 March 1945. *The Toronto Star* reported in detail on the statement's contents a week later, while *Star* editors gathered material for an editorial of their own on the subject. The *Star*'s editorial, which appeared on 31 March 1945, backed the OAD and combined methods over Goldring's advocacy of pure oralism. “The sign language would seem to be as essential to the totally deaf as a ‘seeing eye’ dog is to the blind,” *Star* editorialists found. “It is equipment which provides them with a sense of self-confidence, security and equality.” The editors had consulted with several experts, all of whom offered opinions favouring the combined method. The editorial also mentioned innovative sign language classes for hearing parents, educators, and others recently started at the University of California. The *Star* editors ended their editorial with a suggestive parallel to Nazi Germany: “The fact is interesting that when they came to power the Nazis prohibited the use of sign language in classes and schools for the deaf in Germany.”[98]

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[96] "Dr. Goldring's Plans for the Deaf," Letter to Editor, David Peikoff, *Globe and Mail* (16 March 1945): 6.

[97] "Deaf Body President Praises and Differs," 2; "Dr. Goldring's Plans for the Deaf," 6; "Education of the Deaf," *Toronto Star* (31 March 1945): 6.

All of this lobbying, and the support it attracted, eventually were to no avail. Although the OAD had gained some sympathetic public support for its stance, it was unable to influence a policy change, or to sway Goldring to change the tone of the Board’s pamphlet, “Education of the Deaf Child or the Child With Impaired Hearing,” which appeared in 1946. The strongly oralist pamphlet instructed parents of pre-school deaf children how to prepare them for lip-reading. The pamphlet also presented deafness as ‘handicap,’ not as a linguistic or cultural difference, and stressed the importance of deaf children integrating into the hearing world by becoming more like hearing persons.[99]

Conclusion

The TBE’s early efforts to establish a method for speech and hearing education underline some of the ambiguities and difficulties that could be found within the special classes in the period between roughly 1920 and 1945. Toronto public school officials intended the day school classes for children who were deaf, the classes for hard of hearing children, and the speech correction classes, to help young people to overcome hearing and speech 'problems' and to become integrated into the school and social mainstream. School authorities selected oralist methods as the only approach that they believed could help them carry out these objectives. Oralism undoubtedly benefited some children, such as the Toronto schoolboy who wrote to Imogen Palen that lip reading instruction had helped him pass the high school entrance examination. Day school classes, which were always oralist, also did a better job of preserving families than boarding schools.

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[98] “Education of the Deaf,” 6.

[99] “Education of the Deaf Child or the Child With Impaired Hearing.”

Yet—for many Deaf youngsters especially—the pure oralist approach used in the schools was a far less effective mode of communication than combined methods. Speech and lip reading were very difficult to learn. Even though one of the aims of oralist day school classes for children who were deaf was to bring children and parents closer together, the oralist approach could actually drive them apart. Some Deaf children, such as Julius Wiggins, never quite felt at home in hearing families. Many Deaf young people also had another important allegiance, to Deaf culture. Moreover, the Ontario Association of the Deaf, argued that oralist teaching was a direct threat to Deaf language and culture, and also pointed to the oralist method's deficiencies when compared to the combined approach. The OAD's protest, however, was to no avail and oralist teaching was still the only approved method in Toronto hearing and speech education classes in 1945.

The OAD was unable to bring the change they wanted to Toronto's special class system. Yet others did change the system. The final section of this dissertation looks at reforms that were successfully implemented in Toronto's special class system between 1930 and 1945. These reforms involved the rise of the concept of specific learning difficulties, which changed the instructional model and purposes of auxiliary and opportunity classes; the emergence of personality adjustment theories and their effects on special classes; and lastly, the changes in educators' attitudes about mental defect and in school policies brought about by social changes during World War II.

Section 3, Reforming Toronto's Special Education System, 1930-1945:

Chapter 7. The Emergence of Specific Learning Difficulties, 1930 to 1945.

By 1930, special education classes were well on their way to becoming a fixture of public schooling in Toronto, an engrained system within a system. Auxiliary classes and junior vocational schools, respectively renamed opportunity classes and handicraft schools by the mid-1930s, joined special orthopaedic classes for 'crippled' children, classes for children who were deaf and hard of hearing, speech correction classes, and sight saving classes, in rounding out a complete system of special education that enrolled approximately 3,200 pupils by the 1935-36 school year.[1] (See Appendix A.) Special education would retain its status as an institutionalized feature of the school system even during the difficult Depression and World War II years. The first section in this chapter briefly examines Toronto's special classes against the backdrop of economic and educational upheaval in the 1930s. I argue that Toronto's special class system survived, and even thrived, in the Depression because it had become part of the established "grammar of schooling"—a term that educational historians David Tyack and Larry Cuban use to refer to the features of public schooling that are implicitly accepted "as just the way schools are."[2] Indeed, the longevity of special education—many of its features are still part of the school system today—may be explained by the system's successful institutionalization by the twentieth century's fourth decade. Educational reforms that become institutionalized as part of the school system, Tyack and Cuban argued, are very difficult to unseat.[3]

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[1] On the renaming of auxiliary classes and junior vocational schools in the 1930s, see *Ontario Department of Education (DOE) Report 1937*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 47; *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Minutes 1935*, Appendix No. 24, Advisory Vocational Report No. 3, 12 February 1935, Adopted 21 February 1935, 152.

[2] David Tyack and Larry Cuban, *Tinkering Toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 85.

Although special classes were an accepted part of the school system in Toronto by the 1930s, there were, nevertheless, significant reforms to policies, practices, and curricula in Toronto special education between 1930 and 1945. Some of the most significant reforms came with the emergence of what I refer to as new theories of specific learning difficulties. These theories were the result of new research by reading experts, remedial educators, and psychologists, all of whom contributed to a conceptual shift in the field of special education. Specifically, the theorists of specific learning difficulties posited that a child could have difficulty learning in a specific area, such as reading, while remaining otherwise intellectually 'normal.' They also contended that diagnostic tests could help to pinpoint the exact location of a child's specific learning difficulty and that targeted remedial teaching could remove that difficulty. After 1930, theories of specific learning difficulties, and the remedial approach that accompanied them, reversed the paradigm that dominated special education in the 1920s. The science of specific learning difficulties helped to refute the theory, which held sway in North American special education in the 1920s, that low innate intelligence, or 'subnormality,' caused practically all learning problems.[4]

The emergence of new theories of specific learning difficulties prompted reforms to the special class system in the 1930s and early 1940s. The new theories suggested new learning potential in children that educationists had previously thought to have only limited potential. Yet, the emergence of specific learning difficulties also further stratified the disability hierarchy within the special class system. As educationists in the 1930s and early 1940s reclaimed the educational potential of some children with learning difficulties—children whose learning problems fit within the frameworks of specific learning difficulties theories—they neglected those children whose learning problems they could continue to explain as a sign of low intelligence.[5] At the same time, the emergence of theories of specific learning difficulties encouraged school officials to create policies that re-introduced remedial training into special education programs. Finally, the emergence of specific learning difficulties led to important pedagogical and curricular changes in special education classrooms. Special educators broadened the curriculum and instructional methods in special classes to meet the new belief that special class students were capable of academic learning.

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[3] Tyack and Cuban, 87.

[4] See Lewis M. Terman, *The Intelligence of Schoolchildren* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1919), 24.

Theories of specific learning difficulties emerged alongside, and were influenced by, important shifts in the field of psychology. In the 1930s and 1940s, psychology moved away from eugenics. Eugenicists saw mental conditions as innate, hereditary, and fixed. After 1930, Mona Gleason explains, psychologists gravitated even more towards environmental explanations of mental problems—problems related to both intelligence and mental health. The environmentalist focus presupposed that the mind's condition was not innate, but that it was shaped by external factors, and was therefore malleable. Consequently treatment and prevention could improve mental problems, or prevent them from appearing at all. This approach not incidentally gave psychologists greater agency and enhanced their professional status.[6] Theories of specific learning difficulties were in line with the environmental aspect of psychology's reorientation in the 1930s and 1940s. As we shall see in the next chapter, after 1930 other aspects of special education were even more significantly transformed by changes in the field of psychology.

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[5] See: Scot Danforth, *The Incomplete Child: An Intellectual History of Learning Disabilities* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 10.

Special education in tough times: Tough times in special education?

Toronto's special class system survived the Depression years intact. In fact, special classes thrived between 1930 and 1939. The Great Depression, historian Robert Stamp writes, did not overwhelm the schools of Ontario immediately. "The depression was more like a slowly advancing wave—turned back at the schoolhouse door with varying degrees of success in September 1930 and September 1931, before sweeping over the educational scene in 1932-33."[7] Yet when educational cost cutting did come, and special classes in different places in North America could be found on the chopping block, the Toronto Board of Education's (TBE) special education programs were spared.[8] Other cities were not always as lucky. A 1933 National Education Association survey showed that nearly ten percent of American city school systems had already cut partly or entirely classes for children with physical disabilities, and 15.6 percent of American urban school districts (around 50 cities and towns in total) had made similar complete or partial cuts to their classes for "Mentally handicapped children."[9]

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[6] Mona Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling, and the Family in Postwar Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 23-24.

[7] Robert M. Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 143.

[8] On cost cutting proposals in Toronto and special classes, see: *TBE Minutes 1938*, 7 April 1938, 117; "Retire Women Early Compared to Men," *Toronto Star* (8 April 1938): 8; Rev. Ernest Thomas, "Do We Need the Fads And Frills In Education?," *Toronto Star* (6 February 1939): 4; Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA). Box 2003-0534. Scrapbook, Vol. 2. Clipped letter. "Soaring Costs of Education. Big Sums Spent on Certain of the Schools in Toronto." *Toronto Telegram*, n.d., n.p.

The resiliency of Toronto special education in tough economic times is powerful confirmation that the city's special class system had reached an entrenched status in public schooling by the 1930s. Toronto's special classes escaped Depression-era educational cost cutting for several reasons. Perhaps the most important reason was that, the TBE did not face a disastrous budget situation in the 1930s. Miraculously, unlike some other cities in Canada and the United States, the TBE was able to maintain its revenues from municipal property taxes, around $10 million annually, without significantly increasing the educational mill rate (the proportion of local property taxes set aside for education).[10] This relative fiscal buoyancy helped to protect expensive programs in Toronto, such as special education.[11] Even the Province of Ontario's 33 percent cut to annual spending on schools in 1934 had little effect on Toronto. Provincial transfers only accounted for about five percent of the TBE's total revenues.[12] Ontario public school trustees prevented further education cuts by fighting off a hostile takeover bid to control the school board and fire trustees that austerity-seeking municipal politicians mounted in 1933.[13] The TBE's special classes also escaped unharmed from a provincial Committee of Enquiry on high public school costs that met from 1935 to 1937. The Committee's report revealed that the main thrust of complaints over educational and municipal costs was the financing structure (especially the inequality between neighbouring school districts), the mounting overall municipal tax rate due to rising relief expenditures, and to a lesser extent, teacher salaries and capital projects. Expenditures on individual programs, such as special education, were not a significant concern.[14]

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[9] David Tyack, Robert Lowe, and Elisabeth Hansot, *Public Schools in Hard Times: The Great Depression and Recent Years* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 40.

[10] The Board levied a low of $9.3 million in taxes in 1930 and a high of $10.8 million in taxes in 1938. (Excluding the numbers for 1935, which were not completely reported.) *DOE Reports 1931 to 1940*, Financial Statements. The educational portion of the local tax rate in Toronto remained stable at around 10 mills. It was, for instance: 10.2 mills in 1929; 10.45 mills in 1931; 10.30 mills in 1933; and, 10.5 mills in 1935. There were increases to 11.45 mills in 1937 and 11.55 mills in 1938, but even these ten percent increases were not exorbitant. See: "School Budget Down Salaries Left Alone" *Toronto Star* (12 February 1935): 23; *TBE Annual Financial Statement and Statistics 1939*, 23. For comparisons to other cities, see *DOE Annual Report 1935*, 121. See also, for comparison, Wendy Johnston, "Keeping Children in School: The Response of the Montreal Catholic School Commission to the Depression of the 1930s," *Historical Papers/Communications historiques* 20:1 (1985): 201-204; Tyack, Lowe and Hansot, 29-33.

[11] It is true that special education received some provincial incentive funding in this period, which might explain school trustees' reluctance to cut special classes in the 1930s. However, the high relative cost to the Board for special education completely removed any true financial incentive that might have existed for keeping the special classes open just to reap a windfall from the province. For example, in 1928-1929, the DOE covered only $11.38 of the $232.29 the Board reported it cost Toronto ratepayers to educate an auxiliary class pupil, an amount nearly $150 higher than what it cost to educate an "ordinary public school pupil". The ODE's per pupil funding is calculated from *DOE Annual Report 1929*, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 30. The per pupil costs to the Board are taken from: *TBE Annual Report 1929*, fold out graph on last page.

In fact rather than cutting special education during the Depression, Toronto school trustees allowed special programs to grow throughout the decade in relation to mainstream programs. (See Appendix A.) This also suggests support for special education. What is more, the TBE even authorized brand new expenditures on special education in the penny pinching 1930s.[15] Toronto also expanded the special stream for 'dull-normal' students (who were outside of the special class system at the elementary level). School authorities opened the Church Street School for Non-Academic Boys, a school completely devoted to the education of 'dull-normal' boys, in 1934.[16] Similar to the junior vocational and handicraft schools that we discussed in Chapter 4, the classes for so-called 'non-academic' boys represented a merger of special and working-class education.[17] The TBE added further "*Academic Vocational Class[es]*" for pupils in the 'dull-normal' IQ ranges, starting with classes at Maurice Cody Public School (PS) in 1936.[18]

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[12] Stamp, 143. On Toronto's funding formula see, for example: *TBE Annual Report 1929*, Report of the Chief Accountant and Statistician, 388-389.

[13] Stamp, 145-146; George F. Rogers, "Present-Day Problems in Education," *The School* 21:9 (May 1933): 742.

[14] *DOE Annual Report 1938, Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Cost of Education in the Province of Ontario,* 2-46.

[15] *TBE Minutes 1934*, 19 February 1934, 48-49; *TBE Minutes 1934*, Appendix No. 7 Property Report No. 1, 11 January 1934, Adopted 18 January 1934, 16; "School Board Boosts Tax Without Cutting Salaries," *Toronto Star*, 20 February 1934: 10.

Another reason Toronto's special classes survived in the 1930s is that numerous outside groups, including the National Council of Women, the Women Teachers' Association, the Big Sisters (Jewish, Protestant, and Roman Catholic branches), and the Home and School Association all expressed support for various special programs in Toronto.[19] This support insulated the classes from cost cutting politicians. "Frills? Perhaps, but made of 'whole cloth' by 'real girls,'" read one favourable news article on the girls' handicraft schools.[20] Toronto's special education system found widespread financial and popular support in the tough 1930s.

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[16] *TBE Minutes 1934*, 18 April 1934, 81; Appendix No. 59, Management Report No. 9, 11 April 1934, Adopted 18 April 1934, 265. See also, TDSBA. Vertical Files (VF). TBE-Schools-Elem.-Church. Private TBE Minutes. 11 April 1934, 63-66.

[17] See: Ontario Archives (OA). Ontario Government Record Series. "Auxiliary Education Services correspondence files," RG 2-59, Box 1, File: Toronto, 1924-1930, Memo. H.E. Amoss to D.D. Moshier. 7 December 1932; TDSBA. VF. TBE-Schools-Elem.-Church. Private TBE Minutes. 11 April 1934, 63-66; W.L. Bryan, "Church Street School: A Non-Academic School for Boys," *Special Class Teacher* 12:3 (February 1938): 12-13, 26.

[18] Murray E. Steele, "An Academic Vocational Class for Boys," *The School* (Elem. ed.) 31:6 (February 1943): 495-499.

[19] TDSBA. Box TDSB 2003-0534. Scrapbook, Vol. 1. Clipping "1,000 Girls Guests of Toronto Women, 4 Dec 1930, n.p.; Women of Toronto Tender Reception to School Pupils, *The Globe*, 8 December: n.p. See also: *TBE Annual Report 1930*, 60-61.

[20] TDSBA. Box TDSB 2003-0534. Scrapbook, Vol. 2. Clipping, "[...] School Open House An Eye-opener for Many."

"The Remarkable Case of Mabel Helen ___": The emergence of theories of specific learning difficulties and the re-emergence of remedial education

I. Theory:

Toronto's special classes were institutionalized, but by no means internally stagnant, in the 1930s and early 1940s. An important conceptual shift in special education in this period contributed significantly to change and reform to the special education system—new theories of specific learning difficulties. In the 1920s, IQ largely defined a child's educational capacity. As we saw in Chapter 3, educational and psychological experts and local officials alike generally conflated IQ and scholastic ability and potential. By the early 1930s, new theories of specific learning difficulties helped to shift ideas about IQ and educational potential in special education. Educational experts continued to believe that a few children failed to learn because of low native intelligence. However, added to this notion was the idea that some children failed to learn because they had a specific learning difficulty not necessarily related to intellectual deficiency. Theorists of specific learning difficulties asked why it was that some children who appeared intelligent, and even excelled at some academic tasks, were almost totally incapable of completing other academic tasks. Why, for instance, could some children who scored well on verbal IQ tests not read at all? Using new diagnostic techniques that they developed, theorists of specific learning difficulties were able to identify the precise parts of the learning process. They demonstrated that teachers could use proper diagnosis, and intensively targeted special instruction, to identify very specific trouble areas and teach past young people's problems with these areas. The rise of the notion of specific learning difficulties in the 1930s and 1940s meant that educators no longer reified practically every child's learning problems as innate intellectual disability. Remedial educators drew upon the science of specific learning difficulties to demonstrate the possibility of targeting a child's specific learning problem and eliminating it. Remedial education, they believed, could improve the academic capacity of many children whose IQ scores had indicated that they fell in the strata of the 'subnormal,' or even 'mentally defective'—and thus could not learn.

Several historians of special education have looked at the emergence of specific learning difficulties in American special education in the 1930s and 1940s.[21] Barry M. Franklin contends that, beginning in the late 1920s, physicians, psychologists, and psychiatrists advanced neurological theories for learning problems. These theories attributed specific learning difficulties in children who appeared otherwise intellectually normal to brain injury. In Franklin's argument, neurological theories for specific learning difficulties held sway until the early 1960s, when a concept carrying the name "learning disabilities" replaced them.[22] In *The Incomplete Child*, Scot Danforth expands on Franklin's argument about the emergence and rise of theories of specific learning difficulties as the theoretical antecedents to "learning disability." Like Franklin, Danforth traces the early history of the concept of "learning disability" to brain injury research in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, Danforth also shows that remedial reading research contributed in an equally significant manner to the emergence of theories of specific learning difficulties in the 1930s and 1940s.[23] My study of Toronto shows how remarkably quickly school authorities and educators in the 1930s and early 1940s adopted into policy and pedagogical practice new theories of specific learning difficulties and the remedial education techniques associated with those theories.

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[21] See: Barry M. Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk': Childhood Learning Difficulties and the Contradictions of School Reform* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 49-77; Danforth; E. Anne Bennison, "Before the Learning Disabled There Were Feeble-Minded Children," in Barry M. Franklin ed., *Learning Disability: Dissenting Essays* (London: The Falmer Press, 1987), 13-28.
[22] Franklin, 64-65.

The study of brain injury was one of the foundational sciences that contributed to the eventual emergence of specific learning difficulties. This research dated from the nineteenth century and the work of mainly German researchers on traumatic brain injuries and their effects on perceptual, language, and learning abilities in afflicted patients.[24] A few North American experts were aware of the German research early on. In fact, as part of an overview of the science of learning problems, Dr. Helen MacMurchy devoted attention to the physiological origins of "word blindness" (the inability of a few intellectually normal people to read) in her 1915 pamphlet, *Organization and Management of Auxiliary Classes*. MacMurchy described the European research that attributed "word blindness" to damage to the "visual speech-centre" in the brain of a child with "normal mental powers."[25] However, in the 1910s, MacMurchy and other eugenicists were less interested in the origins and treatment of learning problems than in what science could do to prevent the birth of people with these learning problems. Brain injury theory would not become a significant part of special education research for another decade or so.

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[23] Danforth, espec. 137-180.

[24] Danforth, 28-58; Franklin, 50-56.

[25] Helen MacMurchy, *Organization and Management of Auxiliary Classes* (Department of Education, Ontario. Educational Pamphlets, No. 7, 1915), 27-33. See also, Nila Banton Smith, *American Reading Instruction* (Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 1970), 189-190; Franklin, 62-63.

In the 1930s and 1940s, German expatriate psychologists Heinz Werner and Alfred A. Strauss, along with their educator colleague, Laura Lehtinen, further developed the brain injury theory of children's learning problems. Working at Wayne County Training School in Northville, Michigan, Werner and Strauss adopted a developmental psychological point of view, arranged around a presumed traumatic brain injury, to explain specific learning difficulty in children. As a state training school, Wayne County provided a stable institutionalized population of 'mentally deficient' youngsters that Werner and Strauss could use as research subjects, a sadly not uncommon practice at this time.[26] Noticing that some children at the training school appeared intellectually normal, but yet could not seem to learn to read or count, Werner and Strauss posited that a localized brain injury, a brain lesion for instance, was responsible for a very specific developmental delay—in reading ability, or arithmetic ability, for instance. Brain injured children, they theorized, had no global delay like 'mentally deficient' children did. Werner and Strauss extended their theory to argue that there were in fact two types of 'mentally deficient' children, the "endogenous" type (intellectually disabled) and the "exogenous type" (brain injured children with specific learning difficulties).[27] In other words, Werner and Strauss theorized that some children who did not learn were mentally 'normal,' with a specific developmental delay; whereas, other children who did not learn experienced global learning delays, and were not mentally 'normal.' In the late 1940s, prominent experts including Seymour Sarason and Leo Kanner, would criticize Werner and Strauss's theory on the basis that they had inferred brain injuries from post facto patient histories without physical confirmation that these injuries had actually occurred.[28] Nevertheless, Werner and Strauss's theory that there were two types of children who had difficulty learning—that is, children who were 'mentally deficient' and intellectually 'normal' children with specific learning difficulties—exerted considerable influence over the new theories of specific learning difficulties that emerged in the 1930s and early 1940s.

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[26] See: Michael D'Antonio, *The State Boys Rebellion* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 55-59.
[27] Danforth, 81-82; Franklin, 50-56

At the same time (if not slightly earlier), another set of experts working in a different area than Werner and Strauss were also developing remarkably similar theories that posited the existence of specific learning difficulties. Reading experts, such as Samuel Kirk (who is credited with coining the term 'learning disabilities' in 1963[29]), and Emmett A. Betts, as well as remedial educators, such as California's Grace Fernald, were not particularly interested in the laboratory or clinical research into the murky origins of learning problems deep within the brain, the research that intrigued Werner and Strauss. The theories of specific learning difficulties that Kirk, Betts, Fernald, and others like them, put forward were eventually more influential in special education practice than Werner and Strauss's brain injury studies. Essentially, as primarily educators and clinicians, pragmatic practical researchers in reading and remedial education, individuals such as Betts or Fernald, wished mainly to address the manifestations of learning problems and apply their findings to real schoolchildren in real classrooms. Only a few brain injury researchers, including Werner and Strauss's colleague Laura Lehtinen, and Samuel Kirk's colleague, Newell C. Kephart, were interested in remedial education for brain-injured children.[30] However, before 1950, brain injury theory seems to have stayed close to the lab.

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[28] Danforth 84-85; Franklin, 56-59.
[29] Danforth, 191-193; Franklin, 64-65.

The research that reading experts and remedial educators conducted on specific learning difficulties was much more closely related to practical concerns. Betts, for example, argued that "a specific disability is a combination of characteristic symptoms which differentiates the difficulty." He had little regard for, or interest in, why these symptoms occurred. In fact, he preferred the term "correlates" of reading difficulty, "to suggest relationship rather than cause." Betts also refuted the concepts that medical science had developed to describe learning difficulties, including diagnoses such as "wordblindness." "Such terms have been bandied about and seized upon all to quickly to account for reading difficulties. The very fact that many so-called word-blind children have been taught to read discounts the emphasis placed upon this condition by early investigators."[31] In his early research on specific reading difficulties and remedial education, Samuel Kirk also adopted a similarly practical orientation. A large part of Kirk's career, according to Scot Danforth, "was devoted to replacing medical explanations of learning difficulties with educational concepts that he believed were more useful."[32]

Reading experts, such as Betts, wanted to develop special instructional techniques that could be used in schools to correct reading problems. Their research and pedagogy developed the most concrete link between the emergence of specific learning difficulties and the reappearance of remedial education in the special education classrooms of cities such as Toronto. By carefully studying the process of learning to read, reading experts were able to break down that process into its constituent parts. Research by experts such as Augusta Bronner, Leta Hollingworth, and Emmett A. Betts (amongst others), as early as the 1910s, later led to an emerging consensus amongst educators that reading was in fact a process made up of various specific reading skills that were related but stood apart from each other.[33] Researchers studying arithmetic reached a very similar conclusion about the "many skills" involved in calculation around the same time.[34]

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[30] On Lehtinen, see Danforth 65; On Kephart, see Danforth 106-135.

[31] Emmett Albert Betts, *The Prevention and Correction of Reading Difficulties* (Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson, and Co., 1936), 51-59.

[32] Danforth, 138.

Theorists of reading difficulty as a specific learning difficulty did their initial research in the midst of the measurement movement in education. Consequently they developed their own diagnostic tests and other tools to help frontline educators locate the specific skill deficit that was causing a particular child's difficulty with reading.[35] "The skilful teacher today no longer gives such descriptions as 'John can't seem to read at all' or 'Florence is such poor reader for a girl in the fourth grade'," wrote David H. Russell, a University of Saskatchewan (later University of California) reading expert, in 1940. "These are blanket statements which mean little or nothing. Rather, the skilful teacher looks for specific causes of reading difficulties; that is, she diagnoses."[36] The diversification of mental testing in the 1930s and 1940s, Jennifer Stephen has shown, led experts to develop testing tools in other areas, such as vocational guidance or the evaluation of personality, that they believed would also help mass institutions such as schools to effectively manage large populations.[37]

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[33] David H. Russell, "Trends and Needs in the Study of Special Abilities and Disabilities," *Teacher's College Record* 42 (December 1940): 139. See also: Betts, 51; Augusta F. Bronner, *The Psychology of Special Abilities and Disabilities* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1919), 78-79; Grace Fernald, "Significance of Mental Tests in Corrective and Adjustment Cases," in Lewis Terman et al. eds., *Intelligence Tests and School Reorganization* (Yonkers-on-Hudson, NY: World Book, 1923), 103-111.

[34] George K. Sheane, "Diagnostic and Remedial Teaching in Arithmetic," *The School* (Elem. ed.) 26:9 (May 1938): 776. See also: Leo J. Brueckner, *Diagnostic and Remedial Teaching in Arithmetic* (Philadelphia: John C. Winston Co., 1930), 1-5, 13-14.

[35] Smith, 157-158.

[36] David H. Russell, "The Prevention and Remedy of Reading Difficulties in Smaller Schools," (Part 2) *The School* (Elem. Ed.) 28:5 (February 1940), 485.

The discovery of specific learning difficulties pointed to another fresh and extremely important direction in the study of learning problems. By the 1930s, educationists began to argue convincingly that low intelligence measured by IQ was not the sole factor in learning difficulty. Reading experts and remedial educators, like their brain injury researcher colleagues, developed new theories about the difference between children with intellectual disabilities and intellectually 'normal' children with specific learning difficulties. Samuel Kirk's mentor, Dr. Marion Monroe, was a central figure who helped to develop the idea of reading difficulty as distinct from intellectual disability. In her 1932 book, *Children Who Cannot Read*, Monroe developed tools that quantified the divergence between reading difficulty and general intelligence, a measure she called "reading index." Monroe and other reading experts found evidence for the same separation of specific learning problems from general intelligence that Werner and Strauss were developing in brain injury studies at practically the same time.[38] Remedial reading research and the brain injury research therefore represented major refutations of the theory, which held sway in special education in the 1920s as we saw in Chapter 3, that low intelligence was the singular explanation for learning difficulty. As American reading expert Emmett Betts wrote in the introduction to his 1936 book, *The Prevention and Correction of Reading Difficulties*: "Scientific discovery is gradually re-defining our problems. No longer can the teacher and school administrator account for all learning disabilities on the basis of low intelligence."[39]

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[37] Jennifer Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State, 1939-1947* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 71-73.
[38] Danforth, 156-158.

In fact, Augusta F. Bronner had observed as early as 1919 that Lewis Terman's intelligence test, and other tests of general intelligence like it, did not account for specific learning difficulties. They did not measure "a wide range of different functions; indeed, many mental functions are not tested at all, and thus we are given very few clues to particular abilities or disabilities."[40] Despite Bronner's early warning, the notion that low IQ did not explain virtually all learning difficulty was not well accepted in the 1920s, a decade in which the ideas of Terman and other intelligence testers dominated the special education scene. Indeed, remedial educator Grace Fernald reported something akin to a virtual continental divide on the subject of specific learning difficulties when she published her first findings on remedial education in 1921. "The supposition that there could be children of normal intelligence who had been unable to learn to read was considered absurd by many educators," she wrote in 1943. Fernald recalled, for example, a 1926 meeting where a Midwestern school superintendent had said to her: "Perhaps you do have children like that on the Pacific coast but we don't have any east of the Rockies."[41]

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[39] Betts, 3-4. See also, Marion Monroe, ***Children Who Cannot Read: The Analysis of Reading Disabilities and the Use of Diagnostic Tests in the Instruction of Retarded Readers*** (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1932), 1.

[40] Augusta F. Bronner, ***The Psychology of Special Abilities and Disabilities*** (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co. 1919), 14-16.

II. Policy change in Toronto:

The continental divide that Fernald described in the 1920s had disappeared by the 1930s. The conceptual shift towards specific learning difficulties spread rapidly across North America after 1930, reaching Toronto school authorities by the first years of the decade. Theorists of specific learning difficulties laid the groundwork for this expansion. However, the smooth translation of the concept of specific learning difficulty into classroom practice, and its ease of use and relevance for teachers, ensured that the concept would gain widespread use in Toronto schools, and in other North American schools as well.

"The Remarkable Case of Mabel Helen ___," the name that Toronto school inspector P.F. Munro gave to the home-grown case that opened his eyes to the new theories of specific learning difficulty, is one example of how conceptual changes in the study of learning difficulties helped to change authorities' outlook and transform school policies as well.[42] Mabel, a Toronto schoolgirl, was nine and a half years old when Inspector Munro first met her in 1931. Mabel, who attended Earl Grey PS, had been in Grade 1 for three years at that point and her "unusual retardation" had become a source of worry. The school principal at Earl Grey PS summoned Toronto school psychologist Dr. Lewis to look into Mabel's peculiar case. Lewis examined Mabel using the Pinter

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[41] Grace M. Fernald, *Remedial Techniques in Basic School Subjects* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1943 [reprint 1971]), 30.
[42] P.F. Munro, "The Case of Mabel Helen B------," *The School* (Elem. ed.) 24:4 (December 1935): 275.

Cunningham Test of general intelligence. Her IQ was 86. Yet, according to Lewis, Mabel "ha[d] a good memory, quite good comprehension, and a splendid idea of form." Lewis also noticed that while Mabel's scores on the mathematical parts of the Pinter Cunningham were up to par, she "fell down on language work" and was incapable of reading "even very simple sentences."

An excited Munro would later write that Lewis's "report showed us Mabel's extremity, but gave us our opportunity."[43] Mabel had a specific learning difficulty in reading. Working with Mabel, the principal at Earl Grey PS, and Mabel's teacher, Inspector Munro himself led an effort "to try to remedy the reading condition that manifestly caused her to score an I.Q. of 86 when it should have been higher." They devoted "six weeks of systematic teaching" to Mabel's reading difficulty.[44] Crucially, they used innovative materials - "*Pre-primer readers* and a *new primer*" that Munro recommended, which were then only in press. The cutting edge texts employed a targeted and individual remedial approach that helped the Toronto educators to correct Mabel's specific learning difficulty.[45]

In June of 1931, Inspector P.F. Munro summoned Dr. Lewis for Mabel's follow-up mental examination. This time the girl scored 92 on an IQ test. Dr. Lewis was extremely impressed, perhaps almost shocked, with Mabel's improvement: "Her teacher has succeeded in getting Mabel to read intelligently. The child knows what she is reading, expresses herself well, and can recall the content. Very important, too, has been the replacement of tears by smiles. An admirable bit of work." Mabel still struggled a little, "'blocking' occasionally in self-expression," however the outlook on her abilities was promising.[46] "Surely this case proves that ability to read, or the lack of it," Munro emphasized in an article on Mabel's case that appeared in *The School*, "has a very important bearing on the matter of determining intelligence quotients."[47]

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[43] Munro, "The Case of Mabel," 276.
[44] *TBE Annual Report 1931*, Inspector P.F. Munro's Report, 97-98.
[45] *TBE Annual Report 1931*, Inspector P.F. Munro's Report, 98.

After his experience with Mabel in 1931, Munro proclaimed that it was time to review the theory of IQ's immutability as that theory was being employed in special education classes. In 1926, five years before he met the remarkable Mabel, Munro had called intelligence tests "the greatest single contribution to the field of education in our time."[48] By 1931 he seemed far less convinced of the claims that IQ testers had made in the 1920s. In fact, Munro wished Mabel's case—with its "psychological implications and pedagogical inferences"— to serve as an example to the teachers and principals in his inspectorate of a method that could augment the achievement of many similar pupils.[49] In closing Mabel's case, Munro asked: "How many other children have been tested and not given the opportunity accorded Mabel? If Mabel's I.Q. in the first test had been 70 and nothing done about it, she would have been recommended for the Auxiliary Class." Children such as Mabel—many of whom had been written off in the 1920s as 'subnormal' and incapable of learning—now had new potential, in Munro's eyes. "How many, therefore are actually relegated to Auxiliary Classes solely because of inability to read well enough to make six extra points in the mental test. Does this case not indicate that the theory *that the I.Q. is constant* should be revised, especially in reference to children between the ages of 7 and 10 years?"[50] Inspector N.S. MacDonald, who like Munro once had deep faith in the intelligence testers' claims that learning capacity was inborn and attempts to improve children's abilities pointless, experienced a similar conversion in the early 1930s. In 1932, he devoted a section of his inspector's report to "*Remedial Teaching*."[51] "In almost every class there are pupils retarded in one or more subjects" who required remedial instruction, MacDonald wrote.[52]

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[46] Munro, "The Case of Mabel," 276.
[47] *TBE Annual Report 1931*, Inspector P.F. Munro's Report, 98-99; Munro, "The Case of Mabel," 277.
[48] P.F. Munro, *An Experimental Investigation of the Mentality of the Jew in Ryerson Public School Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1926), 6.
[49] *TBE Annual Report 1931*, Inspector P.F. Munro's Report, 97-99.

Other provincial and local school officials were converted, like Munro, to the new theories of specific learning difficulties in the 1930s and 1940s. In the early 1940s, Ontario Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, C.E. Stothers, for instance, outlined his concept of "Multiple Handicaps," which drew upon developments in the field of specific learning difficulties. Stothers had prepared a survey, completed over 1941 and 1942, that asked special class teachers to summarize their classes' abilities in reading, arithmetic, and handicrafts, and to report on physical disabilities and other impairments.[53] The survey revealed to Stothers that very large numbers of Ontario special education pupils had specific learning difficulties. Stothers concluded that upwards of 90 percent of the group surveyed in 1942 had a specific reading difficulty and more than 70 percent had a specific math difficulty. The next most recorded handicap was "Economic Deficiency" (poor family background seen as contributing to learning problems), which was common to about 25 percent of the survey group. Stothers also concluded, based on the 1941 data, that low native intelligence was only one of the factors behind learning difficulty. He wrote that "educational handicaps tend to be multiple instead of single, and that the failure in school of retarded, slow-learning, average, and even superior students will likely be due to more than one single, mental, academic, physical, emotional or environmental handicap."[54] More importantly, Stothers—like theorists of specific learning difficulties, such as Emmett Betts or Augusta Bronner (or closer to Toronto, the converted Inspector P.F. Munro)—now also refuted low IQ as a direct indicator or the sole cause of learning difficulty. Speaking about over-age pupils in Grades 4 to 6, Stothers noted that "The surveys of elementary schools which include only the pupils judged by the teacher to be retarded show an unexpected selection from the superior, average, slow learning and direct learning groups." Studies of youngsters over age for their grade ('retarded') in various Ontario cities showed that as many as 28 percent of 'retarded' students in some locales, Stothers observed, might be "Average or Superior Learners" with IQs in the 90 to 125 range. Stothers' data also revealed that in different cities, between 40 and 60 percent of 'retarded' students were "Direct Learners" (the category and terminology associated with the IQ range 50 to 75 that gradually replaced 'subnormal' in the 1930s), leading Stothers to conclude: "The above data are submitted to show that the general ability levels of failing pupils is not necessarily very low, contrary to the opinions of many teachers."[55]

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[50] *TBE Annual Report 1931*, Inspector P.F. Munro's Report, 99. Emphasis in original.

[51] *TBE Annual Report 1932*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 110. For MacDonald's earlier views, see *TBE Annual Report 1919*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 90-91.

[52] *TBE Annual Report 1932*, Inspector N.S. MacDonald's Report, 110-112.

[53] *DOE Annual Report 1941*, Appendix F, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 57-58; *DOE Annual Report 1942*, Report 6, Auxiliary Classes, 48.

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[54] *DOE Annual Report 1942*, Report 6, Auxiliary Classes, 47-48.
[55] *DOE Annual Report 1945*, Report 6, Auxiliary Classes, 53.

In fact, Toronto teachers also embraced the concept of specific learning difficulties. At one point in the 1930s (the exact date is not clear), Superintendent C.C. Goldring conducted an interesting survey on Toronto teacher attitudes towards learning problems. Goldring asked seventeen teachers who taught Grades 1 to 8 at McMurrich PS in the city to record their opinions on the "seriousness and frequency" of "handicaps to progress," amongst Toronto schoolchildren generally, and amongst individual pupils in their classes specifically. On aggregate the teachers rated "Lack of intelligence" and "Special-subject disability" (specific learning difficulty) roughly equally in terms of occurrence and seriousness amongst schoolchildren generally, with a slight bias towards "Lack of intelligence" as a more frequent and a more serious cause of learning difficulty. There was variability amongst individual teachers' responses. A few teachers at McMurrich PS, such as the Grade 3/4 teacher for example, assigned more weight to low intelligence as an impediment to learning; by contrast, two of the five Grade 5 teachers named "Special-subject disability" as a more common obstacle.[56]

Teacher views of learning and teaching affect the possibility that new policies that are intended to alter teaching practices will translate into actual classroom change. A theory or philosophy of learning that teachers do not accept, Larry Cuban argues, will not pass easily through the classroom doorway.[57] The McMurrich PS study, in the least, gives the impression that by the 1930s Toronto teachers were as aware of the concept of specific learning difficulties as they were aware of low intelligence as factors in student learning problems.[58] This awareness, along with other evidence that I will present on pedagogical and curricular changes, suggests that the new theories of specific learning difficulties had a significant impact on classroom practice in Toronto.

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[56] TDSBA. Goldring, Cecil Charles. Papers. (Box 2 of 2). TDSB 2003-0569. "Preliminary Investigation Prevalent Attitudes of Teachers towards Handicaps to Learning."

[57] Larry Cuban, *How Teachers Taught: Constancy and Change in American classrooms, 1890-1990*, 2nd ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993), 19.

The discovery and spread of specific reading disability was also connected to the development and distribution of new progressive, child-centred instructional materials in North American schools in the 1930s. In his report on Mabel, Dr. Lewis had praised the instructional techniques and materials that Inspector Munro and Mabel's teachers had used. "The *methods of teaching* and the text-book used in this case were of great importance," Lewis wrote.[59] The text Lewis referred to was almost certainly an early version of a new pedagogically progressive Ontario primer titled *Mary, John and Peter.* Provincial education authorities officially released this primer in 1933, breaking the *Ontario Readers'* half-century monopoly over authorized textbooks.[60] Theorists of specific learning difficulties were often also pedagogical progressives. They designed child-centred readers to accompany their diagnostic and remedial methods. American educationists William S. Gray and Marion Monroe, who were also prominent theorists of specific learning disabilities, wrote the first books in the Dick and Jane series, which appeared in 1930. The child-centred Dick and Jane primers featured the day-to-day adventures of two supposedly ordinary children and employed mainly the progressive 'look-say' method of reading instruction instead of pure phonics.[61] Mary, John, and Peter should be considered Dick and Jane's northern cousins. The Ontario primer had a controlled vocabulary and employed the 'look-say' approach. Ontario educators developed a series of additional instructional and diagnostic aids to accompany the book in the 1940s.[62] The concept of specific learning difficulties that was reflected in *Mary, John and Peter* and the teaching materials based upon it, followed the new primer into many Ontario classrooms in the 1930s and 1940s.

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[58] See also: M. Isabel Wilson, "Reading Difficulties," *The School* 23:7 (March 1935): 581-585.
[59] *TBE Annual Report 1931*, Inspector P.F. Munro's Report, 98.
[60] *Mary, John, and Peter: The Ontario Readers Primer* (Toronto: T. Eaton Co., 1933); Stamp, 168.
[61] Diane Ravitch, "It Is Time to Stop the War," in Tom Loveless ed., *The Great Curriculum Debate* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), 216; Smith, 216-234; Danforth, 152-153.

All this new attention that teachers, inspectors, and educational experts cast on specific learning difficulties and their varied causes in the 1930s and 1940s, greatly influenced special education policy in Toronto. Most importantly, the attention to specific learning difficulties encouraged reforms that expanded remedial instruction as a policy within the special education system. Toronto school authorities experimented with remedial instructional settings as early as February 1930. At that time, under Inspector C.C. Goldring's supervision, Principal Riddolls, who had grown concerned about the number of primary students who repeated grades at his school, Duke of Connaught PS, opened a special, experimental remedial class to address the problem. Riddolls placed teacher Ms. Junkin in charge of a class composed of 20 youngsters at the school who "needed individual help more than anything else." The pupils spent February and March in Ms. Junkin's class, where they were "taught intensively." Junkin worked purposely with these students in the subject areas their teachers had identified as their weakest. At the end of the first two months Principal Riddolls transferred ten of Ms. Junkin's students back to mainstream classrooms, replacing them in Junkin's class with ten new pupils

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[62] Norman Campbell, "Word List for 'Mary, John and Peter,'" *The School* (Elem. ed.) 31:1 (September 1942): 45-48; Stratford Normal School students, "What Words Are Difficult," *The School* (Elem. ed.) 31:4 (December 1942): 321.

"who needed individual help." In this manner a total of 40 different youngsters passed through Junkin's remedial class by June 1930. Twenty children were promoted to the next grade. Three were sent to auxiliary classes. Ten repeated grades. Five children transferred schools and two left the city. By the time the first year of the experiment wrapped up in June 1930, C.C. Goldring had become the latest convert to remedial instruction for struggling schoolchildren.[63]

We can also likely attribute interest and support for remedial instruction in Toronto to new provincial education policies in the 1930s and 1940s that encouraged remedial instruction in Ontario's special education classrooms. Beginning around the mid-1930s, provincial authorities promoted a policy of "mixed auxiliary training classes" for urban school systems. These classrooms mixed students labelled as 'subnormal' or 'direct-learners' with 'normal' students who were attending the classes for remedial instruction.[64] "With this thought in mind the former name 'Training Class' has been changed to 'Opportunity Class' in recently issued regulations," Ontario Inspector of Auxiliary Classes Harry Amoss wrote, "as an indication that the door of the room should, in the future, swing both ways."[65] By 1939, Amoss's successor C.E. Stothers reported that opportunity classes in Ontario were devoting more attention than ever before to remedial instruction addressing young people's specific reading and arithmetic difficulties. Stothers wrote that: "It is becoming quite common to find on inspection that from two to six pupils have been re-adjusted in reading and arithmetic, and have been returned to regular grade work at the end of the school term."[66]

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[63] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, Inspector C.C. Goldring's Report, 110-112.

[64] *DOE AnnualReport 1935*, Appendix I, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes," 38-39; Gerald T. Hackett, "The History of Public Education for Mentally Retarded Children in the Province of Ontario 1867-1964," (Ed.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1969), 206.

[65] *DOE Annual Report 1937*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 47.

Toronto school officials appear to have recommended implementing mixed classes in 1935, the same year that provincial authorities proposed the concept. In 1935 the Toronto inspectors viewed favourably two proposals from their colleagues that were tabled to address grade repeaters. One inspector's proposal was for more special classes for "slow children." A second proposal was "To have a catch-up class to which a child may be sent at any time for any length of time, then returned to a regular class."[67] Remedial instruction gradually suffused regular education in Toronto in the 1930s and 1940s as well, with school officials encouraging classroom teachers to work individually with struggling students to bring them up to grade level.[68]

Toronto public school officials further enhanced the TBE's remedial education program in 1945 when they announced an important new remedial education policy and the hiring of ten remedial teachers. Toronto school inspectors in 1945 were concerned about the lack of a "widespread programme" of remedial studies and especially concerned that remedial reading instruction was scattered in the Board's schools. As a solution, Inspector Leitch proposed the idea of hiring extra teachers to work with students who were behind in reading.[69] Less than one month later, the Board's Management Committee agreed to hire "ten special, additional teachers" at selected large schools, "for the purpose of assisting regular teachers with slow pupils, with problem cases, and with pupils who are having special difficulty with a particular part of the school work."[70] Chief Inspector Goldring and the other inspectors wanted these teachers to devote their attention to helping primary students with reading difficulties, either in separate small classes or in small withdrawal groups of four to six students who would come to the special teacher for a period or two on alternate days. The Inspectors also directed school principals to assign teachers of senior grades who had "free time" during the school day to spend half of that time with struggling senior students.[71]

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[66] *DOE Annual Report 1939*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 66. See also: *DOE Annual Report 1940*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 62; *DOE Annual Report 1941*, Appendix F, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 57-58; *DOE Annual Report 1942*, Report 6, Auxiliary Classes, 48.
[67] TDSBA. T.B.E.—Curriculum Development—General Files—1907-1972. TDSB 2003-0653. Inspectors' Meetings-P.S.—1933-1960. Minutes of Meeting of the Public School Inspectors, 8 November 1935.
[68] See: *TBE Annual Report 1932*, Inspector Dr. W.E. Hume's Report, 112; TDSBA. VF. T.B.E. —Biography—Goldring, Cecil Charles. C.C. Goldring, *A Forward Look at the Toronto School System* (Toronto: Toronto Board of Education , 1943), 32.

Goldring appointed seven young women as special remedial teachers in September 1945. They were assigned to large schools, including Dewson PS, Ryerson PS, and Regal Road PS. The Management Committee also set aside funds that would allow the teachers to study special education for six weeks over the summer at any American university that Goldring deemed suitable.[72] The TBE's 1945 policy on remedial instruction completed the association between the emergence of specific learning difficulties in the early 1930s and the remedial approach to special education that was fully implemented by the middle of the 1940s. The policy represented a major renovation in how special education operated.

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[69] TDSBA. T.B.E.—Curriculum Development—General Files—1907-1972. TDSB 2003-0653. Inspectors' Meetings-P.S.—1933-1960. Minutes of the Meeting of [the] Public School Inspectors, 16 March 1945.

[70] *TBE Minutes 1945*, Management Report No. 7, Part II, 27 March 1945, Adopted as amended, 5 April 1945, 98-99.

[71] TDSBA. T.B.E.—Curriculum Development—General Files—1907-1972. TDSB 2003-0653. Inspectors' Meetings-P.S.—1933-1960. Minutes of Public School Inspectors' Meeting, 27 April 1945; Minutes of Public School Inspectors' Meeting, 19 December 1945.

[72] *TBE Annual Report 1945*, Appendix, Management Report No. 12, Part II, 19 June 1945, Adopted as amended 28 June, 1945, 199-200.

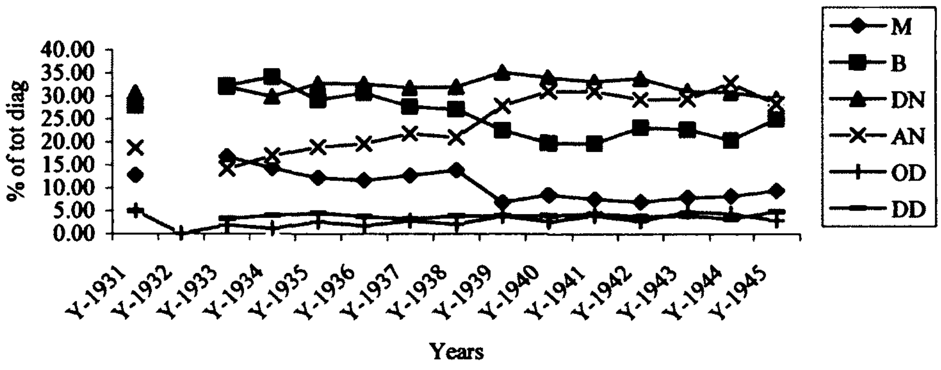
Specific learning difficulties for specific children: Young people's experiences of Toronto's special education classes, 1930-1945

I. Diagnosis and Placement:

After 1930, the conceptual and policy shift in Toronto special education towards theories of specific learning difficulties and remedial education, transformed the educational experiences of some—but not all—young people who enrolled in the elementary school auxiliary and opportunity classes and the junior vocational and handicraft schools. Children whose learning difficulties most closely fit the criteria that the concept of specific learning difficulties introduced into special education experienced the most profound change in their education. Youngsters that authorities labelled as 'subnormal,' or 'direct learners,' usually felt the changes less profoundly. The experiences of 'subnormals' and 'direct learners' more closely resembled the experiences of all special class students in the 1920s, when theories of innate IQ held sway. Diagnosis of learning problems and special education placement recommendations were two of the areas where the effects of new theories of specific learning difficulties and new remedial education policies were especially apparent.

The concept of specific learning difficulties played an important role in the 1930s and early 1940s in the diagnosis of learning problems and in special education placement decisions. Statistics from the Toronto Department of Public Health (DPH) Mental Hygiene Division indicate that locally in Toronto, school psychologists and school authorities had incorporated the concept of specific learning difficulties directly into their diagnostic practices with individual children, and into placement procedures as well. Although psychologists still depended at least in part on IQ scores for help in diagnosing many learning problems, comparatively fewer children were stung with the diagnosis 'subnormal.' Between 1931 and 1945, diagnoses of 'subnormality' at first increased slightly after 1931, but then, after 1933, declined in relative frequency by nearly half (from over fifteen percent of cases to less than ten percent of cases assessed). Meanwhile, the diagnosis associated with remediable learning difficulties—the label "apparently normal"—increased from around eighteen percent of all diagnoses in 1931 to nearly 30 percent by 1945. (See Figure 7.1.)

Figure 7.1. Toronto Department of Public Health, Mental Hygiene Division. Selected diagnoses, 1930-1945.



Legend: M = 'mentally defective'; B = 'borderline'; DN = 'dull-normal'; AN = 'apparently normal'; OD = other diagnoses; DD = "diagnosis deferred."
Source for Figure 7.1: City of Toronto Archives. City of Toronto Fonds, Series 365, Department of Public Health City of Toronto, selected monthly reports and annual statements, 1931 to 1945.
Notes for Figure 7.1: Some data missing in reports.

We may attribute some of the increase in the relative number of "apparently normal" cases to the Mental Hygiene Division's mounting focus on mental health and adjustment in the 1930s and 1940s, which, as we shall see in the next chapter, attracted many intellectually 'normal' boys and girls into the school psychology orbit. Yet the increase in the diagnosis of "apparently normal" also quite likely reflected growth in the number of children who school psychologists categorized as remediable cases of specific learning difficulty, a category that they usually defined by the presence of 'normal' intelligence along with a precise learning problem.

Nevertheless, the persistence of IQ testing and diagnoses of 'subnormality,' and of other forms of supposed 'mental deficiency' after 1930, also meant that not every child benefited equally from the new theories of specific learning difficulties and the new remedial classes. The diagnosis 'subnormal' still defined a child as practically hopeless, in terms of improvement and capacity, and figuratively displaced him or her to the far corners of the opportunity class where remedial help was hardest to come by. Indeed, the emergence of specific learning difficulties, although it caused the number of children labelled 'subnormal' to shrink in size, helped nevertheless to further refine the disability hierarchy that could be found within Toronto's special education system.

Changes in the patterns of placement recommendations, which the Mental Hygiene Division also tracked (from 1935 onwards), seem to further suggest the trend towards diagnosing specific learning difficulties and addressing these difficulties through remedial instruction. (See Figure 7.2.)

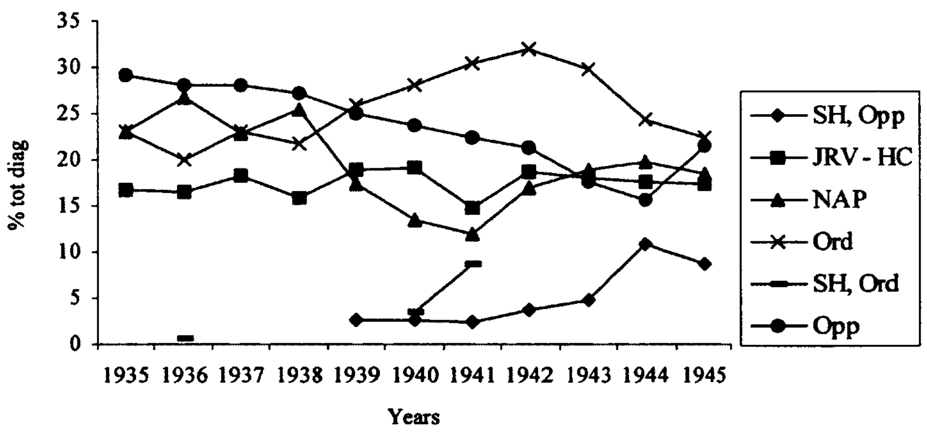


Figure 7.2. Toronto Department of Mental Hygiene, selected recommendations, 1935-1945.

Legend: SH, Opp = special help in opportunity class; JRV-HC = junior vocational/handicraft school; NAP = non-academic program; Ord = ordinary class; SH, Ord = special help in ordinary class; Opp = opportunity class.

Source for Figure 7.2: City of Toronto Archives. City of Toronto Fonds, Series 365, Department of Public Health City of Toronto, selected monthly reports and annual statements, 1931 to 1945.

Notes for Figure 7.2: Some data missing in reports.

By the mid-1940s, Toronto school psychologists recommended around ten percent of the cases they saw for "special academic help" (individual, remedial instruction) in an opportunity class. For example, nine-year-old Imogene R. received Toronto school psychologist Dr. Lewis' diagnosis in 1931 that she would always be "slow" but would nevertheless benefit from instruction in an opportunity class "for a time." Lewis recommended her for the class so that she could "have the benefit of more individual teaching."[73]

Toronto school psychologists did not abandon IQ-based diagnoses in the 1930s and early 1940s, even with the rise of the new theories of specific learning difficulties. Many schoolchildren continued to experience the effects of IQ-based labels that implied limited learning potential. In explaining the learning problems of the group of youngsters who were still labelled 'mentally defective' or 'subnormal' in the 1930s, psychologists tended to continue to assume that low intelligence was the cause of these children's learning difficulties. In other words, the new theories of specific learning disabilities eliminated low intelligence as the cause of *every* child's learning difficulties, but did not eliminate it as the cause of *any particular* child's learning difficulty. As Scot Danforth has argued, the emergence of specific learning difficulties and the development of remedial techniques was largely designed to benefit children diagnosed as intellectually 'normal' but with a specific learning difficulty (and eventually mostly did benefit this group). Children who were 'mentally deficient,' or 'subnormal,' were often still left behind.[74]

Intelligence quotient, and the categories of disability that it shaped, affected young people's access to remedial instruction. Intelligence quotient also helped to create hierarchies even within special education classrooms. The supposed severity of a child's learning difficulty—whether or not the child had a less severe specific learning difficulty, or a more severe mental disability—affected how much access he or she would have to a recommendation for remedial instruction. In order to more closely examine the continued importance of IQ in Toronto psychologists' diagnostic and recommendations process for special education students labelled as 'subnormal' or 'borderline' between 1930 and 1945 (the boys and girls with supposedly more severe mental disabilities) I studied the school records of young people who enrolled in opportunity classes at The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, and East End PS in that period.[75] I located a total of 49 psychological examination results that also included a record of IQ, as well as a record of diagnosis and recommendation. The existence of a record of diagnosis and a record of placement recommendation for these 49 young people allowed me to link diagnosis to placement, something that the Toronto DPH Mental Hygiene statistics do not do. (See Table 7.1. and Table 7.2.)

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[73] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" Office Record Card (O.R.C.) Box TDSB 2003-1308, Box 6, Admission, Discharge, Promotion (A.D.P.) card Box TDSB 2003-0835, 'Imogene R.' O.R.C., A.D.P. See also, for example, "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0834b, Box 2 of 2. 'Homer B.' O.R.C., A.D.P.
[74] Danforth, 160-165.

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[75] Students who enrolled in special classes from East End PS, which did not have opportunity classes, left their school for a nearby school that did have the classes.

Table 7.1. Diagnosis by IQ range, Children attending auxiliary and opportunity classes, The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, East End PS[1], 1930-1945.

Diagnosis	<50 IQ	50-60 IQ	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100	100+	Total
'Subnormal'	1	4	5	0	0	0	0	10
'Borderline'	0	0	5	18	0	0	0	24
'Dull-normal'	0	0	1	2	7	1	0	12
'Normal'	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
Total								49

Sources: From Toronto District School Board Archives, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 11 and Office Record Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 10.

[1] Numbers for East End PS are for students who left the school, which did not have special classes, to attend a special class at a neighbouring school.

Table 7.2 Diagnosis by recommendation, Children attending auxiliary classes, The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, East End PS[1], 1930-1945.

Recommendation	'Subnormal'	'Borderline'	'Dull-normal'	'Normal'	
Exclusion for mental disability	2	0	0	0	
Aux./opp. class (no time limit specified)	5	16	1	0	
Aux./opp. class, and jr. voc/handcrft. later	1	2	0	0	
Jr. voc/handcrft.	0	1	0	0	
Aux./opp. class (definite time limit specified)	0	1	1	0	
Aux./opp. class for remedial	0	0	3	1	
Re-examination later	0	2	1	0	
Church Street PS	0	0	3	0	
Ordinary class	0	0	0	0	
None	0	1	2	0	
Other	0	0	1	1	
N/A	2	1	0	1	
Total	10	24	12	3	49

Sources: From Toronto District School Board Archives, Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-L, M-Z, 1923-24 and Office Record Cards, "The Ward PS," Drawers A-D, E-I, J-M, Mc-Si, Sh-Z; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-0834 (2 boxes); TDSB 2003-0835; TDSB 2003-0836; TDSB 2003-0837 and Office Record Cards, "Armoury Park PS," TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1-4; TDSB 2003-1308, Box 5-7; TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8-11; Admission, Discharge, Promotion Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 11 and Office Record Cards, "East End PS," Microfilm reel 10.

[1] Numbers for East End PS are for students who left the school, which did not have special classes, to attend a special class at a neighbouring school.

Abbreviations: Aux. = auxiliary class; Opp. = opportunity class; Jr. voc = junior vocational school; Handcrft. = handicraft school.

Linking diagnoses to recommendations, I made two interesting findings. First, diagnoses of mental disability, as we might expect, were still tied to IQ in the 1930s and early 1940s. For instance, the vast majority of psychologists' diagnoses of 'subnormality' in this group of 49 students were present in cases where the psychologist had also measured the child's IQ in the range of 50 and 70 points. (See Table 7.1.)

Second, I found that special class placement recommendations in the period 1930 to 1945 were closely related to diagnosis, as they had been in the 1920s. Most of the children assigned to auxiliary or opportunity classes had been diagnosed as 'mentally defective' or 'borderline.' Youngsters that the Board's psychologists assigned specifically to remedial instruction in auxiliary or opportunity classes had been diagnosed as 'dull-normal' or 'normal.' Generally speaking, although the numbers are small, IQs above 75 correlated to recommendations for remedial instruction (that is, to recommendations such as a special class for remedial instruction, or a special class with a definite time limit, e.g. for one year, six months, etc.). On the other side of the coin, IQs below 75 correlated to diagnoses of 'mentally defective' or 'borderline' intelligence, and, we should infer, to less access to remedial instruction.[76]

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[76] Other factors, in addition to low IQ or an identified specific learning difficulty, such as physical appearance and physical condition, poor attendance and frequent moves to new schools, and the English language ability of immigrant children, also continued to determine admissions to Toronto's special education classes between 1930 and 1945. See: TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0837. 'Wesley G.' A.D.P.; "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1308, Box 6, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0834b, Box 2 of 2. 'Ronnie V.' O.R.C., A.D.P.; *Passim* Homer B. In order to make an assessment that involved these factors after 1930, school psychologists depended on classroom teachers to fill out a special form, the DOE's "A.C. 4," that supplied background information on children with learning difficulties and disabilities. See form attached to Rudy G.'s student record. TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1309, Box 8, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0834, Box 1 of 2. 'Rudy G.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

Moreover, despite the growing importance of remedial instruction in auxiliary and opportunity classes, the pattern of keeping some young people in those classes for an extended period of time, a pattern that first appeared in the 1920s, continued after 1930 as well. This suggests that the emergence of specific learning difficulties, and the growth in remedial instruction, in the 1930s did not offer every child the opportunity to return to mainstream classroom. Estelle E., for instance, entered an auxiliary class at The Ward PS in October 1934, at the age of eight. Dr. Stogdill tested her for the class and found that her IQ was 71. Estelle left the class in March 1942, a few weeks after her sixteenth birthday. At no time in the seven years between 1934 and 1942 did the Mental Hygiene Division conduct a follow up examination with Estelle.[77]

Whether or not a child was recommended for remedial instruction could—but did not always—affect the length of that child's stay in an opportunity class. Between 1943 and 1945, Wayne A., for instance, had a remedial education experience, moving back and forth between the opportunity class, where he received special remedial instruction in reading, and a mainstream Grade 4 classroom at The Ward PS.[78] Henry V., like Wayne A., was also recommended for special, remedial instruction in an auxiliary class. Dr. Stogdill wrote in Henry's file: "We feel that it would be worth while [sic] to give this boy individual attention for a few months in the auxiliary class, until he learns to read. His new glasses may make a big improvement. Recommend auxiliary class till June and special help in reading." Henry remained in opportunity classes for a total two years, far longer than Stogdill had initially recommended. By 1938, Henry was obviously frustrated with school. His long stay in the opportunity class had kept him back while many of his same age peers were promoted to the next grade. In 1938, Henry approached the principal at Armoury Park PS for a promotion to Grade 7. But the principal put Henry last on the list, with "No chances." Henry told the principal that he felt the "school ha[d] let him down." The principal replied that Henry was "not honest with himself." Henry, and other boys and girls like him, watched with frustration as classmates and friends were promoted ahead, while they were kept behind in special classes.[79]

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[77] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer A-D, A.D.P. Drawer A-L 'Estelle E.' O.R.C., A.D.P.
[78] TDSBA. "The Ward PS" O.R.C. Drawer Sh-Z, A.D.P. Drawer M-Z 'Wayne A.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

Finally, social promotions also helped to determine the length of time children remained in the auxiliary and opportunity classes. From the 1920s through to the 1940s, Toronto school authorities fairly regularly promoted older auxiliary and opportunity class students to Grade 5, presumably to remove them from a special education classroom that enrolled younger children. Special class pupils who received this sort of social promotion often continued on to the junior vocational and handicraft schools within a short period of time.[80]

A relatively small number of young people were selected from The Ward PS, Armoury Park PS, and East End PS for remedial instruction in the period 1930 to 1945. I only found four such pupils in my sample of 49 students. (See Table 7.2.) This is suggestive. It would seem that school psychologists continued to diagnose boys and girls at these working-class schools as 'subnormal,' and continued to recommend them for more or less indefinite stays in auxiliary and opportunity classes in the 1930s and early 1940s. Working-class children, perhaps, did not benefit as directly from the emergence of specific learning difficulties as middle-class children did. There is a literature that suggests that the category 'learning disability,' when it first appeared in the 1960s, was largely applied to white, middle-class children, especially boys. School officials and psychologists were more likely to label children from racialized backgrounds and working-class children as 'mentally retarded.' 'Learning disability' in the 1960s gave respectability and hope for improvement to middle-class, white parents. The 'learning disability' concept allowed these parents to see their child as normal, with a specific learning problem that could be corrected. Their child bore less of the stigma or hopelessness of 'mental retardation,' a category psychologists applied to children from racialized backgrounds and working-class children [81]

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[79] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 2, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0835. 'Henry V.' O.R.C., A.D.P. See also Walter F. Koerber, "An Evaluation of Some Methods and Procedures in the Teaching of Reading to Non-Academic Adolescent Boys," D. Paed thesis (University of Toronto, 1947), 33-36.

[80] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 2. 'Irma A.' O.R.C.; "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1309, Box 10, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0837. 'Emily S.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

It is possible that the forerunner of 'learning disability,' the category of specific learning difficulties that appeared in practice in the 1930s and 1940s, may have had a similar association with middle-class and white, or Anglo-Canadian students. If school psychologists in the 1930s and early 1940s participated in a classed or racialized distribution of diagnoses of specific learning difficulty, and of access to remedial education, then we might deduce that disability hierarchies intersected with social class hierarchies and hierarchies of race and ethnicity to doubly disadvantage working-class and non-Anglo-Canadian children in special education. As the majority of students enrolling in special education classes in Toronto for any reason, from the 1920s to the mid-1940s, were boys, it seems probable that when specific learning difficulties theories appeared these theories were also associated in practice with boys. However, a further explanation of these hypotheses awaits better evidence on racial and ethnic, class, and gender identities of children diagnosed with specific learning difficulties in the 1930s and 1940s.

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[81] On Canada, see Jean Kealy and John McLeod, "Learning Disability and Socio-Economic Status," *Journal of Learning Disabilities* 9:9 (September 1976): 596-599. See also, Franklin, 70-72. Later on however, in the mid-1970s to the early 1980s, the diagnosis 'learning disability' departed from its middle-class origins and became largely associated with children from racialized and ethnic minority groups and working-class children, who prior to this time had been labelled 'mentally retarded.' See David J. Connor and Beth A Ferri, "Integration and Inclusion—A Troubling Nexus: Race, Disability, and Special Education," *The Journal of African American History*, 90:1-2 (Winter, 2005), 115; Bruce Curtis, D.W. Livingstone, and Harry Smaller, *Stacking the Deck: The Streaming of Working-Class Kids in Ontario Schools* (Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves, 1992), 55-60.

II. Pedagogy and curriculum:

Pedagogy and curriculum were additional areas where theories of specific learning difficulties reshaped young people's experiences in Toronto's special classes for children and adolescents in the 1930s and early 1940s. In fact, while the new theories of specific learning difficulties did relatively little to change diagnostic practices, they brought about pedagogical and curricular changes that had a more profound effect on all young people attending the special classes, regardless of how they were labelled. After 1930, there seemed to be a new interest in teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic in special education classrooms. The desire to better instruct special class students in the '3Rs' helped to alter instructional practices in special education classrooms by injecting into those practices remedial methods to deal with the specific learning difficulties. To children in the classes, including children diagnosed with a specific learning difficulty and children labelled 'subnormal' or 'borderline,' this meant new learning experiences. Toronto special educators in the 1930s and early 1940s introduced new and varied remedial exercises and more individual instructional work into the special education classroom. Special educators broadened the special class curricula in ways that reflected their new hopefulness about the learning potential of many special education students.

"Are the Three 'R's Being Neglected?" asked an article that appeared in the December 1930 edition of *The Bulletin*, a publication for Ontario's special class teachers. "With the great growth of the movement toward giving special attention and teaching to the mentally backward, or mentally different as some would call them, there has been a corresponding increase in manual work as related to this teaching," wrote the author, who signed the piece "J.M." J.M , a special class teacher in an urban school system in Ontario, was not satisfied with the special education curriculum. "Is it more important...," J.M asked, "that a subnormal child should know how to weave a basket than that he should know how to read, and use the simple elements of arithmetic?" J.M. argued that the children she had become acquainted with as a special education teacher were capable of academic learning, but that their academic training had been neglected in order to clear space for the manual curriculum that special educators in the 1920s had thought best adapted to the supposed needs of 'subnormal' pupils. J.M. wrote, "It is an interesting fact that the pupils to whom reference has been made acquired the ability to both read and measure, after considerable instruction, of course, but leaving no room for doubt." J.M. was interested in adding more academic instruction to special class curricula. She wanted to change the popular perception of the "Auxiliary classes as those in which children make brightly painted wooden toys, weave raffia and fashion book covers." One of the consequences of a stagnant manual curriculum, J.M. wrote, was that special class pupils left the public schools without having learned to read. Special educators deserved part of the blame for this record of academic underachievement. They had presumed that 'subnormal' youngsters could not master reading and writing.[82]

J.M. was one of a number of special education teachers in the 1930s and early 1940s who questioned the idea, predominant in the 1920s, that 'subnormal' schoolchildren could acquire only minimal academic skills, including reading and writing skills, and that 'subnormal' youngsters' abilities and their futures determined that they should receive largely manual training.[83] Harry Amoss, in his tenure as Ontario Inspector of Auxiliary classes (which lasted from 1929 to 1939), also supported a more academic curricular and pedagogical approach in special education classes, an approach that gave more recognition to special education pupil's learning potential. Gerald Hackett argued that Amoss "more than any of his predecessors ... regarded Auxiliary Classes as places where children actually learned, rather than as places of isolation with occupational activity for contentment."[84] Amoss's colleague, the Assistant Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, Helen DeLaporte, subscribed to similar philosophy.[85]

We can infer that the curricular and pedagogical changes that J.M., or Harry Amoss, supported were actually implemented in Toronto special classes. Larry Cuban's research on the history of policy implementation in education provides a model that can help us to better understand classroom change in special education in the 1930s and 1940s. Cuban argues that in order to measure implementation we must contrast policies against the contextual background of structural, cultural, and philosophical realities of classrooms. This contrast holds the key to understanding which policies have had a successful impact and why.[86] As we have already seen, there is good evidence (such as C.C. Goldring's study of McMurrich PS) supporting the view that many teachers accepted the new theories of specific learning difficulties as these theories emerged in policy and school practice in the 1930s. However, teachers' awareness or acceptance of theories of specific learning difficulties does not on its own translate automatically into changes in how teachers teach. As Cuban argues, structural factors—such as time-management, classroom layout, and the organization of students into grades—all affect teaching practices in ways that are largely beyond teachers' individual control. Structural factors can both encourage and discourage the implementation of different pedagogical reforms.[87]

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[82] J.M., "Are the Three 'R's' Being Neglected?" *The Bulletin* 7:2 (December 1930): 4.
[83] See: "The Question Answered," *The Bulletin* 7:3 (March 1931): 7-8.
[84] Hackett, 188-189.
[85] L. Helen DeLaporte, "Are We Part of the World?," *Special Class Teacher* 15:3 (May 1941): 68-69.

In Toronto's special education classes in the 1930s and 1940s, several favourable structural features existed that would have permitted or encouraged the use of instructional techniques such as remedial teaching and individualized instruction, the techniques that were associated with emerging theories of specific learning difficulties. For one, Toronto auxiliary and opportunity classes were small. Special classes at the elementary level did not grow beyond an average of 19.5 students at any point in the 1930s or early 1940s.[88] In a small special education class a teacher had a greater opportunity to work with all of her students individually and to meet with each individual for a longer period of time. This is almost precisely what C.C. Goldring reported was happening in Ms. Junkin's special education classroom at Duke of Connaught PS, where Junkin experimented with remedial instruction in 1930. According to Goldring, "In these rooms the number of pupils is smaller than in ordinary classes, the instruction is largely individual, and the purpose is to have each pupil 'catch up' in his weak subject or subjects, so that he may take his place in a regular class again."[89]

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[86] Cuban, 14-19.
[87] Cuban, 17-18.
[88] Calculated from *DOE Annual Reports*, 1931-1945.

Another factor, the development and wide availability by the 1940s of sets of graded readers, also would have helped considerably to facilitate individualized and remedial teaching in Toronto special education classrooms.[90] Each child in the opportunity class could have one or more readers at her or his level, reducing the burden on teachers to produce the voluminous materials required to teach each child at a unique, individual level. In the early 1930s, individual teachers, such as Toronto's Bessie Kellaway, an experienced special education teacher at Kent PS, and Miss Cairns, a special class teacher at Duke of Connaught PS, had developed their own primers for children in their classes.[91] By the early 1940s, graded readers and "remedial reading textbooks" were mass-produced for teachers. These materials were so popular that staff at the Ontario College of Education (OCE) in Toronto who developed them worked overtime to keep up with teacher demand. "So much interest has been evidenced in our collection of graded reading textbook series, and remedial reading texts for both the elementary and secondary school levels," OCE research director J.A. Long reported in

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[89] *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Annual Report 1930*, Inspector C.C. Goldring's Report, 110-112.
[90] Hackett, 245.
[91] *DOE Annual Report 1936*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 48.

1944, "that we have extended it considerably during the year, and now have over 425 books on display, including a special section on remedial reading." OCE staff was also busily preparing diagnostic tests to accompany the materials.[92]

One feature of special class teaching practice, however, interfered somewhat with the full implementation of remedial instruction in classrooms on the terms provincial authorities and local school inspectors desired: diagnostic testing. Ontario Auxiliary Class Inspector Dr. C.E. Stothers expressed concerns in 1941 that Ontario special education teachers were not making wide enough use of the new diagnostic tests that accompanied the new theories of specific learning difficulties. Stothers warned that without proper diagnosis, individual instruction was nothing more than a teacher flying around the room in "spasmodic surges and outpourings of sympathy." This approach might show children their mistakes, but it did nothing to address the underlying causes of those mistakes, Stothers argued.[93] Stothers quickly took steps intended to encourage more use of diagnostics tests in special classes. He enlisted Marion K. Harvie to write three articles about reading diagnostic tests in the public *Special Class Teacher*, a new journal for Ontario special education teachers that replaced *The Bulletin* in the 1930s. Stothers probably hoped to tap into Harvie's considerable experience as special educator, which she shared with special education teachers through the detailed explanations of the

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[92] J.A. Long, "Department of Educational Research Ontario College of Education, Report of Activities, 1943-44," *The School* 32:10 (June 1944): 848.
[93] "Individual Instruction," *Special Class Teacher* 15:2 (February 1941): 36.

"Gates' Reading Diagnosis Test" and "Gray's Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs" that the *Special Class Teacher* published during the 1941-1942 school year.[94]

How many Toronto opportunity class teachers actually read Harvie's articles about Gates and Gray, and then picked up the tests that these two men had developed, mostly remains open to question. Certainly the tests were time-consuming and seem to have been complicated for teachers to administer and interpret. Teachers probably avoided using the diagnostic tests for these reasons. (Ironically, William S. Gray, who developed one of tests, believed that it should not replace more accurate teacher observation of children's reading problems.[95]) That neglect was probably why Stothers enlisted Harvie's help to spread the word about the importance of diagnostic testing in 'proper' remedial teaching in the first place. Yet even if they did not embrace testing to the degree that Stothers, or other authorities had hoped, teachers still took away some of the tips for addressing specific learning difficulties that the diagnostic tests suggested.

The shifts in classroom practice and experience that I have just described most directly affected children who were diagnosed as having specific learning difficulties. As we have seen, children labelled as 'subnormal,' appear to have derived the least direct benefit from the shift towards remedial instruction. However, there were important spill over effects from the emergence of specific learning difficulties that changed classroom experiences for children labelled 'subnormal' as well. All boys and girls attending opportunity classes had access to the broader curriculum that the classes offered in the

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[94] It appears that only two articles were published. Marian K. Harvie, "Oral Reading Tests," *Special Class Teacher* 16:1 (November 1941): 15-19; Marian K. Harvie, "Oral Reading Tests," *Special Class Teacher* 16:3 (May 1942): 74-75, 89-90. On Harvie's career, which took her from the Orillia institution to classrooms in Toronto, see Hackett, 178.

[95] Danforth, 153.

1930s, and especially the early 1940s. Curriculum reform in these years purposely targeted special education curricula. In 1941, for instance, Assistant Auxiliary Classes Inspector Lucy DeLaporte recommended changes that broadened the special class history and geography curriculum. The new curriculum emphasized knowledge related to the conflict in Europe and the duties of Canadian citizens in the context of a people's war. Special class pupils' growing knowledge helped to reassure DeLaporte, who worried that some special education pupils lacked knowledge about Canada while the nation was in the midst of a war with European enemies. (Indeed, as we shall see in the next chapter, Ontario's special class graduates, male and female, would also devote themselves to Canada's war effort as workers and soldiers, provoking further changes in how educators perceived their abilities in the 1940s.) DeLaporte heard many "Schoolboy howlers" in her visits to special classrooms to observe the new curriculum in action in 1941, with boys and girls incorrectly identifying Hamilton as the capital of Ontario, and Mitchell Hepburn as Canada's Prime Minister (he was the Premier of Ontario). But she also saw curricular changes that suggested a generally positive potential for social studies in opportunity classes and handicraft schools.[96]

By the 1940s, children in the opportunity classes experienced a broader, reformed curriculum in other areas as well. DeLaporte introduced Ontario special education teachers to studies in literature. A new graded reading list for "non-academic or dull-normal" learners that graded books by mental age and recommended abridgements and retellings of classics in simplified format was important to this curricular change.

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[96] L. Helen DeLaporte, "Are We Part of the World?," 68-69. See also: F. Pearl Malloy, "Devices in Enterprise Work for Auxiliary Classes," *The School* (Elem. ed.) 32:7 (March 1944): 622-624.

DeLaporte adapted the list from a similar register of graded readers that the Los Angeles County School District had developed a few years earlier. Using the list's suggestions special class teachers could invite well-known literary personages into their classrooms. David Copperfield, Ben Hur, the witches of Macbeth, Tom Sawyer, and Long John Silver all became educational fare for special class pupils in the 1940s. DeLaporte encouraged special class teachers to "give the child as much of the 'loaf' as he [sic] can eat."[97] Changes to what pupils in the opportunity classes learned partly reflected the progressive curricular reforms across the Ontario curriculum in the 1930s. The new curriculum that the DOE introduced in 1937 emphasized an activity based learning model that made wide use of progressive instructional approaches such as the enterprise system.[98] Teachers' willingness to embrace new teaching subjects such as social studies, or literature in opportunity classes, reflected educators' growing confidence in their pupils' abilities, especially by the 1940s.

Theories of specific learning difficulties, remedial instructional techniques, new curriculum, and an increasing focus on the academic, as opposed to the applied, abilities of special education pupils reshaped learning experiences in Toronto's special junior vocational and handicraft schools for boys and girls as well. Remedial reading was one area where the effects of the new theories were felt most deeply. In the early 1940s, teachers in Toronto's handicraft schools became aware of the significant reading deficits of adolescent special education students. Tests that school authorities administered to teenage boys entering the handicraft schools in the early 1940s, for instance, revealed that as many as 25 to 35 percent of the boys admitted each year were effectively "non-readers." Some of these adolescents could not read at all, while others read at only a basic Grade 1 level.[99]

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[97] L.H. DeLaporte, "Books for Retarded Adolescents," *Special Class Teacher* 19:1 (November 1944): 5-7.
[98] Stamp, 164-171.

Handicraft school teachers J. McGivney and Walter Koerber were responsible for administering reading tests to new pupils at the boys' handicraft school from the early 1930s to the mid-1940s. These two teachers were also responsible for reading instruction, and remedial reading instruction. Like many of their colleagues in the special education wings of the elementary schools, and like reading experts such as Thorleif (Ted) Hegge and Samuel Kirk, McGivney and Koerber believed that practically all "non-readers" were capable of learning to read.[100] McGivney, in fact, established only two basic criteria that a pupil had to meet in order to learn to read: an IQ measured at 40 or above and a chronological age of twelve years.[101] While McGivney established a generous IQ range for the capacity to learn to read—this range effectively included every pupil in the handicraft schools—his colleague Walter Koerber played down the IQ's importance in the whole reading question. Koerber's philosophy embraced theories of specific learning difficulties and evolving environmentalist views of learning and intelligence. Koerber's approach represented a push beyond the thinking that characterized junior vocational education in Toronto in the 1920s. Earlier special educators who worked with adolescents relied on the idea that low intelligence was practically the singular cause of learning problems. Koerber, however, wrote that: "Participation for more than a decade in the teaching of reading to these non-academic adolescents led to the conviction that the pattern of achievement was being developed by a combination of contributory factors of which intelligence, or the lack of it, was not necessarily the most influential."[102]

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[99] J. McGivney, "Teaching Reading to Non-Academic Adolescents Who Have Not Completed Grade I of the Primary School," (Part 1) *Special Class Teacher* 19:2 (February 1945): 51. See also: J. McGivney, "Teaching Reading to Non-Academic Adolescents Who Have Not Completed Grade I of the Primary School," (Part 2) *Special Class Teacher* 19:3 (May 1945): 93-95.
[100] See Danforth, 160-165.
[101] J. McGivney, "Teaching Reading," (Part 1), 53.

McGivney and Koerber's strategies for teaching reading incorporated various remedial instructional techniques, as well as psychological adjustment theories. Both men attributed non-reading in many Toronto handicraft school boys to deep-seated adjustment issues. A past school trauma surrounding the boy's very first attempts to learn to read—perhaps the boy did not like a teacher or that teacher did not like him, or he had come into conflict with a classmate—caused non-reading boys to establish "a compensating withdrawal mechanism," McGivney argued. Withdrawal explained, McGivney asserted, why any non-reading boy at the handicraft school would, in an effort to read "give his right arm or his left leg or a million dollars (if he had it) but he would not freely put forward an extra ounce of energy."[103] Koerber advanced the same adjustment-based interpretation of reading difficulty in his 1947 Doctor of Pedagogy (D.Paed) thesis, in which he studied the entire 1944 first-year class at the boys' handicraft school where he and McGivney taught.[104]

In his thesis Koerber also reproduced the syllabi from 1944 for the first-year reading classes at that boys' handicraft school. These syllabi, which record what Koerber and McGivney taught and how they taught it, tell us much about how remedial instruction unfolded in handicraft schools around this time. Notably—pupils in the boys' handicraft schools spent a fair bit of time, an average of 70 minutes per boy, per day, in reading instruction. All first-year students were enrolled in the reading classes, though students were sorted into five different groups, which used three different syllabi. All three syllabi contained three basic elements: reading and discussion of literature; mechanics, especially helping each student to develop a strategy for 'word attack'; and adjusting pupils' attitudes towards reading generally, an element that addressed specifically psychological maladjustments in relation to reading. The syllabus for the most advanced reading groups focussed less on mechanics and devoted more attention to literary studies and, as the students' more frequent use of the library suggests, to developing an appreciation of reading for pleasure. The moderately advanced groups worked more on mechanics than the advanced groups and spent more time practicing silent reading as well. Students in the least advanced group spent "the bulk" of their time figuring out an individual 'word attack' strategy, with considerable individual help from the teacher in word recognition and sounding out words.[105] McGivney used remedial reading instruction methods, including approaches grounded in 'look-say' and its competitor, phonics, although he also warned that phonics could be alienating for adolescents, who branded it "a baby's game."[106] Girls at handicraft schools also had remedial reading instruction at their disposal by 1945. However, we know less about the specifics of the program at the girls' schools. At one girls' handicraft school a teacher named Mrs. Webb was in charge of a program that was similar to reading classes at the boys' school. Webb diagnosed girls "reading ills" and attempted to correct them with remedial instruction. There was also individual teaching at the school for girls who had difficulty with arithmetic.[107]

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[102] Koerber, 2.
[103] McGivney, "Teaching Reading," (Part 1), 52.
[104] Koerber, 2-3.

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[105] Koerber, 2, 138-142.

[106] J. McGivney, "Teaching Reading," (Part 2), 93.

Conclusion

In the 1930s and early 1940s there was a new confidence in the abilities of special education students, especially those with specific learning difficulties. New theories of specific learning difficulties helped to change the perspective that all learning difficulty was caused by low intelligence. Educationists' new confidence in special class students' potential was also forged by the growing repertoire of remedial instructional techniques and the broader curricula special class teachers had at their disposal by the 1930s. Educational policymakers, for their part, translated the new theories into remedial education policies, such as the TBE's decision in 1945 to hire ten remedial special education teachers. Theory did not fit perfectly into practice, something that children labelled 'subnormal' youngsters who attended special classes would have realized. The new theories of specific learning difficulties had their greatest effect on the students in the top strata of the IQ ranges found within the special classes. Children diagnosed primarily on the basis of low IQ, that is children labelled 'subnormal,' mostly continued to experience the special classes as a separate stream, not as an opportunity for remedial instruction. Nevertheless, the emergence of specific learning difficulties, and the policy and pedagogical reforms that accompanied their rise, show that the special education system—although it was an engrained part of the grammar of schooling by 1930—was still open to change.

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[107] TDSBA. TDSB 2003-0534. Scrapbook, Vol 3 (1944-1947). "Parents' Day" September 1945.

These changes, especially the rise of specific learning difficulties, were also related to important changes in the field of psychology in the 1930s and 1940s. As we have seen, by the 1930s the importance assigned to innate IQ was declining in educational psychology, while specific learning difficulties and remedial education gained ground. Florence Dunlop, the head psychologist at the Ottawa Public School Board, summarized the changing role of her profession in the 1940s this way: "The true psychological approach to education is to prevent disabilities from arising in academic subjects and in personality adjustments; failing this prevention, to detect, diagnose and correct maladjustments as soon as they arise."[108] The area of personality adjustment also grew enormously in importance in the 1930s and early 1940s, in school psychology and in special education. The next chapter examines the implications of that growth.

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[108] Florence S. Dunlop, "The School Psychologist," *The School* (Elem. ed.) 28:9 (May 1940): 753. On Dunlop's important contributions to school psychology in Canada, see: Mary J. Wright, "Flashbacks in the History of Psychology in Canada: Some Early 'Headline' Makers," *Canadian Psychology* 43:1 (February 2002): 26-29.

Chapter 8. The Pollyanna Mechanism: Psychology, Personality, and Special Education, 1930 to 1945.

Two related changes in the field of psychology helped to set the tone for reforms to Toronto's special education system in the 1930s and early 1940s. As we saw in the last chapter, educational experts expanded their perspective on the causes of learning difficulties by moving away from the position that inborn intellectual deficit explained practically all learning problems. By the mid-1930s many different elements of an environmentalist approach were integrated into special education policy and practice. This chapter examines the second important shift in the field of psychology that affected special education in the 1930s and early 1940s: the new influence of psychological theories about personality adjustment, child guidance, and mental hygiene. These theories, which were primarily environmentalist rather than hereditarian in orientation, helped to shift the focus and aims of special educators. Notions of ability and disability, however, shaped the new concept of adjustment in important ways. Child guidance experts believed that the personality adjustment of children with disabilities was in danger precisely because these children were disabled. Psychologists in the 1930s and early 1940s also argued that maladjustment contributed to, or even caused, children's specific learning difficulties. Educators at the junior vocational and handicraft schools devoted particular attention to the guidance and adjustment needs of their adolescent students, whom they believed were more likely than 'normal' young people of the same age to become maladjusted.

This chapter also examines the decline of eugenics' direct influence on special classes in the 1930s and 1940s, as environmentalist psychological theories came to occupy a greater role in special education. The chapter's final section looks at the changing outlook of educationists on the capacities of adolescent special class students in World War II (WWII). Adolescent special class pupils themselves helped to change these views. The new childcare responsibilities successfully assumed by handicraft school girls during the war, and the military service of handicraft school boys, helped to convince educationists that adolescent special class students were capable of attaining new educational and vocational heights that they had previously believed were unreachable for these pupils.

The rise of mental hygiene and child guidance in special education

The new psychology of the late 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, devoted increasing attention to personality adjustment. Adjustment theories drew on the work of child guidance professionals, educational and child psychologists, and mental hygienists who pursued new environmentalist approaches to psychology. Mental hygienists, for instance, believed that children's mental states were built in environments, and that changing the environment could change, and improve, a child's mental condition. Believing that the child's mental condition was malleable, the mental hygienists rejected the hereditarian view that mental ability and personality were innate and impervious to change.[1] Mental hygienists and psychologists had a professional interest in adopting this new more positive view that allowed for the improvability of mental conditions. As Mona Gleason argues, in the 1930s and 1940s: "The future of psychology as a vibrant and viable social science depended on its movement away from the hereditary, and therefore unchangeable, basis for mental hygiene to the environmental, and therefore treatable and pliable, basis."[2] The new psychology talked a lot about adjusting children to their environments. A well-adjusted child was adapted to, and comfortable, with his or her place in the world, cheerful and well behaved, and got along well with his or her parents and peers. As Gleason and others have shown, experts considered adjusted children the pinnacles of youthful 'normality.'[3] By the 1930s and 1940s, the quickly expanding child guidance movement was one of the ways that mental hygienists brought adjustment theories to bear on schools and intervened in the day-to-day lives of schoolchildren.[4] In the United States, Sol Cohen argues, the 1930 White House Conference on Child Health

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[1] Mona Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling, and the Family in Postwar Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 23-24; Jennifer Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State, 1939-1947* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 80-84; Sol Cohen, "The Mental Hygiene Movement, the Development of Personality and the School: The Medicalization of American Education," 23:2 (Summer 1983): 128; Scot Danforth, *The Incomplete Child: An Intellectual History of Learning Disabilities* (New York: Peter Lang,

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2009,) 108-112. See also, Sheila L. Cavanagh, "From a belief in 'biology as destiny' to an environmental perspective of mental health: The impact of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene on Education in Ontario, Canada, 1920-1950," *Change: Transformations in Education* 4:1 (May 2001): 48-62; Hans Pols, "Divergences in American Psychiatry During the Depression: Somatic Psychiatry, Community Mental Hygiene, and Social Reconstruction," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 37:4 (Fall 2001): 369-388; Sharon Yvonne Wall, "Making Modern Childhood, the Natural Way: Psychology, Mental Hygiene, and Progressive Education at Ontario Summer Camps," *Historical Studies in Education* 20:2 (Fall 2008), 76.

[2] Gleason, 23-24. See also, Stephen, 77-78.

[3] Gleason, 30-31. See also, Theresa Richardson, *The Century of the Child: The Mental Hygiene Movement and Social Policy in the United States and Canada* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989) 112; Kathleen W. Jones, *Taming the Troublesome Child: American Families, Child Guidance, and the Limits of Psychiatric Authority* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 72-73; Hans Pols, "Between the Laboratory and Life: Child Development Research in Toronto, 1919-1956," *History of Psychology* 5:2 (2002): 136.

[4] Gleason, 24-31; Cohen, 128-139; Stephen, 80-83; Richardson, 87; Gerald E. Thomson, "'Not an Attempt to Coddle Children': Dr. Charles Hegler Gundry and the Mental Hygiene Division of the Vancouver School Board, 1939-1969," *Historical Studies in Education* 14:2 (Fall 2002): 247-78.

and Protection represented a major turning point where the mental hygiene movement entered the schools.[5]

An important example of child guidance and adjustment theories in action in Toronto was the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene's (CNCMH's) longitudinal five-year study of Regal Road PS, a school located in the northwest corner of the city. The renowned Canadian child psychologist W.E. Blatz (at one time psychologist to the famous Dionne quintuplets) directed the study. University of Toronto colleagues Dr. William Line and Dr. E.D. MacPhee assisted Blatz. The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial provided the funds. The study, which began in 1924, examined the causes of maladjustment in 'normal' schoolchildren, and the prevention and treatment of the maladjustments over time. A main component in the study was an investigation of the effects of ability-tracking on educational adjustment, with the hypothesis that better tracking helped to reduce maladjustment by placing children in the correct instructional environment. The study wrapped up in 1929 when the Rockefeller money ran out. In October 1930, CNCMH director Dr. Clarence M. Hincks led a deputation composed of Dr. E.A. Bott, Dr. Line, and Dr. Blatz to the school board, where the men asked trustees to continue to fund their project. The trustees agreed to consider the idea, but later changed their minds and the project ended for good.[6]

The Regal Road PS study's demise, however, did not signal the end of mental hygiene in Toronto education. With the growth in child guidance in the 1930s the schools expanded their interest in mental health. In 1931, Dr. C.G. Stogdill replaced Dr. E.P. Lewis as Director of the Toronto Department of Public Health's (DPH's) Division of Mental Hygiene and as Toronto's school psychologist. Stogdill had been a boys' junior vocational school teacher in Toronto in the 1920s. He returned to school to become an MD, graduating in 1931.[7] Under Stogdill in the 1930s, DPH's mental hygiene diversified its focus beyond diagnosing mental disability. One area of growing importance was treatment of childhood mental illness. Stogdill expanded the clinic's services for severely emotionally disturbed children.[8] Prior to Stogdill arriving the clinic had taken only slight interest in psychiatric work in addition to psychological testing. Beginning in 1919, school psychologist Dr. Eric Clarke, in addition to his main focus on intelligence testing, was responsible for identifying and placing in the special classes a very small number of young people "showing an early tendency towards insanity, most of whom will be benefited by special classes." Clarke originally named this group "Psychopathic" children.[9] By 1929, the clinic, which was then still under Lewis, employed a "children's psychiatric social worker," responsible for children's psychiatric health.[10] Isabel Dalzell was responsible for about sixty schoolboy and schoolgirl mental health cases where supposedly "anti-social conduct" had been exhibited at school and at home.[11]

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[5] Cohen, 135.
[6] *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Annual Report 1925*, Chief Inspector Cowley's Report, 91-95; *TBE Minutes 1930*, 2 October 1930, 197-198. See: Richardson, 118-119; Hans Pols, "Laboratory and Life," 142-148; Gleason, 26.

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[7] A. Buie, "Dr. Charles G. Stogdill Appointed Director, Division of Mental Hygiene," *The Bulletin* 8:2 (November 1931): 10.

[8] See: C.G. Stogdill, "Mental Hygiene in Toronto Schools," *The Bulletin* 9:2 (November 1932): 4-5; Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Archives (CAMHA). Burdett McNeel Fonds. Provincial Psychiatric Clinics: Lectures. B.T. McGhie (ed.). E.P. Lewis, "Psychiatric Clinics in the Toronto Public Schools," 19 May 1930; City of Toronto Archives (CTA). Former City of Toronto Fonds. Department of Public Health Reports. File 16, Box 224909, Folio 1, "Monthly Reports of the Medical Officer of Health, 1932", Report No. 11 of the Medical Officer of Health, October 1932, 2.

[9] *TBE Annual Report 1920*, Chief Inspector's Report, 55.

[10] See, J. Kilburn, "The Home Adjustment of the Problem Child," *Canadian Journal of Public Health* 20:9 (1929): 437-441.

However, the most significant transformation that took place under Stogdill did not have to do with a small number of children diagnosed with childhood mental illnesses. The clinic's quickly growing roster of otherwise 'normal' children with relatively minor personality problems that needed adjustment represented the most significant new area of interest under Stogdill. Indeed, by about 1930, 'normal' children were quickly emerging alongside children with intellectual disabilities, the group primarily receiving services in the 1920s, as a new and growing clientele for mental hygiene services in the schools of North America.[12] By 1938, Toronto's Medical Officer of Health reported: "The development of socially satisfactory personalities and the prevention of mental disabilities in later life is a primary function of mental hygiene, as part of our public health programme."[13]

The new focus on 'normal' children and 'normality' in school mental hygiene clinics after 1930 affected the school experiences of children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Many of the things that made a child well adjusted—health, capability, and security—were implicitly not available to children with disabilities and learning difficulties. This helped to push these children, in the experts' views, towards permanent maladjustment, or at best partial adjustment. Child guidance experts looked at children with disabilities and learning difficulties against the backdrop established by their studies of 'normal' children. The adjustment of children such as Stuart P., a "healthy" ten-year-old boy of "average mental ability," whose father was a clerk (an 'average' white collar job), for example, set the standard against which school authorities also judged the adjustment of children with disabilities and learning difficulties. In 1945, Stuart was drifting along aimlessly in Grade 5 at East End PS. That October, the school psychologist met with Stuart to assess his personality and his problems. The psychologist's notes capture the adjustment discourse as it affected 'normal' children and the lines along which adjustment fractured for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Stuart's report:

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[11] Isabel J. Dalzell, "Psychiatric Social Work with the Maladjusted Child of Normal Intelligence," *Canadian Public Health Journal* 25:12 (January 1934): 602. William Line, J.D.M Griffin, and Samuel R. Laycock also did an examination under mental hygiene auspices of shy schoolchildren in the Toronto area, a group that mental hygienists at the time believed showed the early signs of schizophrenia. John D. Griffin, *In Search of Sanity: A Chronicle of the Canadian Mental Health Association*, (London, ON: Third Eye, 1989), 91-93.

[12] Jones, 120-124.

[13] CTA. Former City of Toronto Fonds. Department of Public Health Reports., File 16, Box 224909, Folio 7, "Monthly Reports of the Medical Officer of Health, 1938", Monthy Report of the Medical Officer of Health, March 1938, 2.

> [Stuart] is of average mental ability and should be able to work up to that capacity. At times of course he no doubt does. When [he] does not, his vagueness is over-shadowing his ability. This is largely due to the fact that he is confused about many questions in life. His lack of social sense accentuates this confusion. He seems apprehensive of losing even the security he has. Therefore his mind is not at school but elsewhere. He has to be made to feel at ease and brought to realize that his duty is to himself, to be educated for a to-morrow of which he has more control, [he] should be assured that he is a healthy average and capable person.[14]

Stuart P.'s evaluation captures many of the themes that had developed in adjustment discourse by the end of WWII. Stuart is representative of the "everyday child" that Kathleen Jones argues emerged as the child guidance clinics' primary client by the 1930s. The "everyday child" was a universalizing category that covered children from all classes. By extending the problem of maladjustment to the supposedly 'normal' middle class, child guidance experts brought the concept of adjustment to families in every part of town, from the slums to the suburbs. At the same time they also redefined maladjustment as having more to do with 'normal' children and emotions, than with inherent badness and "delinquency and degeneration." According to Jones, the concept of the "everyday child" therefore abridged the importance of class (and by implication race and ethnicity), by extending maladjustment to middle-class children as well as working-class children.[15] By the mid-1930s, child guidance professionals could no longer cling to the old failsafe explanations related to working-class status and low IQ that they had used prior to that time to account for children's maladjustments. As these explanations declined in relative importance in clinical work, explanations of maladjustment that mentioned categories of gender and age increased. Jones argues that the growth in the numbers of middle-class children who visited child guidance clinics, children whose class identity was normative and whose IQs were (or were presumed to be) 'average,' propelled the "subtle" transition away from class and towards gender.[16] Indeed, in Toronto the middle class's interest in child guidance grew to the extent where, by the late 1930s, over twenty child study groups, organized for middle-class women through partnerships between the Institute of Child Study at the University of Toronto and the Toronto Home and School councils, existed around the city.[17] Yet, as Jennifer Stephen shows, the rise of adjustment theories, and environmental theories about the malleability of the individual's mental condition more generally, did not completely eliminate considerations related to race and class from mental hygiene discourses either.[18]

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[14] Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA). "East End PS" Office Record Card (O.R.C.) Microfilm Reel 10, 'Stuart P.' O.R.C.

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[15] Jones, 93-94.
[16] Jones, 150-162.
[17] Kari Dehli, "Women and Class: The Social Organization of Mothers' Relations to Schools in Toronto, 1915-1940," Ph.D. diss. (University of Toronto, 1988), 354-364.

By the mid 1930s, helping supposedly 'normal' boys such as Stuart P. had come to occupy much more of child guidance experts' time and attention than previously.[19] The psychologist's references to Stuart's "security" in his report also meshed well with the functionalist theory of "security" that Canadian psychologist W.E. Blatz promoted from his Toronto base during the Depression. "Blatzian security," historian Theresa Richardson writes, had risen to prominence in Canadian child guidance circles by the late 1930s. "It was not a static state of safety but a state of mind characterized by serenity, meaning a faith in ones own ability to successfully deal with future events."[20] Finally, a child such as Stuart P., might avoid blame for his problems altogether, if the psychologist could implicate his parents. Psychologists in the pre- and post-WWII decades, as Mona Gleason has shown, often searched in the 'normal' child's family, and most often his or her mother, for the source of "insecurity" or "confusion" and maladjustment.[21]

Adjustment and security were more difficult for children with disabilities and learning difficulties to attain than they were for 'normal' children such as Stuart P. The concept of adjustment was shaped by categories of ability and disability in very important ways. Yet scholars have not generally looked at the important role that the concept of adjustment played in the education of children with disabilities and learning difficulties. In fact, special educators in the 1930s made adjustment one of the most important goals of the opportunity classes and handicraft schools, as well as the mainstream classes. "Modern education takes as its aim the helping of children to make a wholesome adjustment to life and to develop well-integrated, socially-effective personalities. This is the goal of *all* teachers, whether they teach in elementary schools, high schools or special schools," the noted Canadian educational psychologist and child guidance expert Samuel R. Laycock wrote in 1943.[22]

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[18] Stephen, 82-83.
[19] Jones, 93-94; Gleason, 24-31.
[20] Richardson, 121.
[21] Gleason, 30-31; Stephen, 7.

Special educators who were sensitive to adjustment theories worried that 'children with disabilities and learning difficulties were in fact at a much greater risk of maladjustment than their non-disabled peers. To be adjusted, and therefore 'normal,' in English Canada usually required a style of behaviour, an appearance, and set of means ample enough to guarantee self-assurance. This standard was mainly available to children and adults who were white, Anglo-Canadian, middle-class, and of able body and mind, as Mona Gleason has argued.[23] To educators, these children with normative traits were certainly also susceptible to maladjustment. But 'exceptional' children seemed even more susceptible. Indeed, child guidance experts often attributed maladjustment in children to body type or disability. "It is a well known fact," Laycock wrote, "that nothing is so likely to cause a sense of inferiority in boys as lack of adequate size and strength or the presence of deformities." Girls too, he believed, became discouraged and frustrated, from "unattractive appearance, obesity or the presence of physical blemishes."[24] Laycock wrote in an article on children with disabilities and mental hygiene that 'exceptional' children with disabilities were especially likely to be victimized by their bodies or minds. "It is the frustration of this kind that faces many types of exceptional children—the blind, the deaf, the crippled, the epileptic, the cardiac, the tuberculous, and so forth." He believed that children whom educators designated "subnormal or dumb," became frustrated by their incapacities as well.[25] A curriculum poorly adapted to the needs of 'exceptional' children was "likely to cause a sense of frustration and thereby create a problem for adjustment," Laycock and others argued.[26] Child guidance experts also contended that maladjusted children with disabilities who made "bad compensations" for their supposed incapacities became braggarts or bullies, or became touchy or prickly.[27] Even children who departed from the norm because they were 'gifted' were not immune from personality problems, Laycock thought. "Strangely enough," he wrote "the gifted too, often have acute problems of adjustment in achieving a sense of personal worth. The desire not to be different and not to be thought a *pansy* drives many a gifted child to the level of mediocrity in mental tests."[28]

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[22] S.R. Laycock, "Meeting the Needs of Children in Special Classes," *Special Class Teacher* 17:2 (February 1943): 43. See also S.R. Laycock, "Mental Hygiene in Special Education," *Journal of Exceptional Children* (October 1936): 2.
[23] Gleason, 4-5.
[24] Samuel R. Laycock, "The Mental Hygiene of Exceptional Children," (Part 1), *Special Class Teacher* 15:3 (May 1941): 75.; S.R. Laycock, "Mental Hygiene in Special Education," 3. See also, J.D.M. Griffin,

Gendered notions of children's bodies—which were essential to adjustment discourses, as Kathleen Jones shows—played an extremely important role in adjustment as it pertained to children with disabilities and learning difficulties.[29] Boys in the 1920s

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S.R. Laycock, and W. Line, *Mental Hygiene: A Manual for Teachers* (New York: American Book, 1940), 151.

[25] Laycock, "Mental Hygiene of Exceptional Children," (Part 1), 75-76.

[26] Laycock, "Mental Hygiene of Exceptional Children," (Part 1), 76. See also, C.G. Stogdill, "Mental Hygiene in Toronto Schools," 6; Kilburn, 438; Griffin et al., 117-121.

[27] S.R. Laycock, "Mental Hygiene in Special Education," 4-5.

[28] Laycock, "Mental Hygiene of Exceptional Children," 76. Emphasis in original.

[29] Jones, 150.

and 1930s regularly unleashed gendered insults such as 'pansy,' 'fairy,' or 'sissy' to question the masculinity, and sexuality, of certain of their peers with physical differences. In this way, ability and disability also shaped gendered categories—that is, girlhood and boyhood. Jones argues that physical disabilities signified to boys "a lack of the stuff it took to be a real boy."[30] The proper response to such an insult, or the one that signalled adjustment to child guidance professionals anyway, was for the boy to fight back and claim his boyhood. For example, Daisy Hally, a psychiatric social worker at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, described adjustment in relation to gender and embodied difference in a case study she presented as an address at the Ontario Educational Association in 1934. The case involved "John J.", fourteen years old, "a stockily built youngster with a high colour and rather feminine contour." Hally described John's problems with bullies and commented approvingly on John's actions when he finally got up the gumption to fight back and "lick" a boy who had called him a "fatty." Formerly sullen and dejected, John's growing backbone and defence of his boyhood signalled to Hally that John was making progress towards an appropriately gendered adjustment.[31]

Changing (often lowering) children's expectations to meet adult perceptions of their physical or mental limitations (as well as limitations supposedly imposed by the child's gender) was another crucial component of adjustment theory. This element of adjustment affected children with disabilities and learning difficulties in particular. Theresa Richardson argues that for mental hygienists: "It was implied that a child's character and ambition should be adjusted according to the reality of their circumstances as well as their innate potential."[32] Thus, for example, one pupil at a Toronto boys' junior vocational school, who had a heart problem and "mental handicap," was said to have made a good adjustment because "he was taught to understand his handicap and accept it."[33] In their mental hygiene manual for teachers the Canadian mental hygienists J.D.M. Griffin, S.R. Laycock, and William Line wrote:

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[30] Jones, 165.

[31] Daisy Hally, "Mental Hygiene Approach to A Better Understanding of Children's Reactions," *Proceedings of the Seventy-Third Convention of the Ontario Education Association* (hereafter, *OEA*) (Toronto: OEA, 1934): 76-78.

> Too often [crippled] children, through the optimistic attitudes and encouragement of enthusiastic teachers, come to feel they can get a job and be completely self-supporting. While in some cases this is true, most of the children who are badly crippled must eventually be content with employment in some sheltered workshop or in their own home; and this is often disappointing in its remuneration.[34]

Samuel Laycock emphasized the importance of teaching children with disabilities to accept and live with their supposed limitations. "They should be led to frankly assess their own handicaps and limitations as well their assets and talents." No child should be allowed to hope and strive beyond the limitations that experts such as Laycock had determined for him or her. "The Pollyanna mechanism is not a sound adjustment," Laycock wrote. The fictional Pollyanna, who looked for the bright side in even the worst situation, was no role model for real children with disabilities. "It is *not* nicer to be blind or deaf or crippled or to be a slow learner or have weak heart. It is the part of mental health to frankly face situations not only the liabilities but also the assets and then determine on wise courses of action." Laycock, and other mental hygienists, added a new tone to accompany discourses of pity that, as we saw, often surrounded children with physical disabilities in particular.[35] Special educators who handled children with disabilities, Laycock believed, ought to forthrightly instil in them qualities such as self-reliance and mature emotional independence that were vital to their later lives as adults with disabilities.[36] "Unwise parents," Laycock wrote, were one source of 'exceptional' children's maladjustment because these mothers and fathers "often convey to the child their disappointment over the fact that he is deaf, crippled, blind, small in stature, ungainly, or of poor mental ability." These parents also over-pitied and over-protected their children.[37] Child guidance experts blamed mothers for 'normal' and 'exceptional' children's maladjustments.[38]

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[32] Richardson, 89.

[33] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, 51.

[34] Griffin et al., 156.

By the late 1930s, a few mental hygiene proponents of adjustment theory even argued that maladjustment was the underlining cause of specific learning difficulties. Paul Witty, of the School of Education at Northwestern University, for instance, believed that remedial education should address specific learning difficulties, but added that "reading is now conceived as a continuous *functional* process, important in the educational scheme only in so far as it contributes to the expanding understanding of children, their [own] appreciations, wholesome satisfactions, and adjustment."[39] C.G. Stogdill, also wrote in a piece that was critical of theories of specific learning difficulties, that maladjustment was the true cause of "special subject disabilities" and that the most important reason for educators to address specific learning difficulties was to cultivate the child's proper adjustment.[40]

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[35] See also J.D.M. Griffin, "Educating the Victim of Polio," *The Special Class Teacher* 12:3 (February 1938): 20.

[36] S.R. Laycock, "Mental Hygiene in Special Education," 5. Eleanor H. Porter, *Pollyanna* (New York: A.L. Burt, 1913). See also, Griffin et al., 154-155.

[37] S.R. Laycock, "Meeting the Needs," 66-68

[38] Jones, 174-188; Cynthia R. Comacchio, *Nations Are Built of Babies: Saving Ontario's Mothers and Children, 1900-1940* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 118-138.

[39] Paul Witty, "Diagnostic Testing and Remedial Teaching," *Understanding the Child* 7:1 (April 1938): 3-4.

Toronto school psychologists practiced a treatment approach for maladjusted children with disabilities or learning difficulties that stressed an academic change, usually to a program deemed more appropriate to the boy or girl's supposedly inferior academic ability. School psychologists believed that maladjustments were especially common amongst children whose learning difficulties or disabilities saw them wind up in classes where they were much older than most of the other students, or in classes where their abilities supposedly did not enable them to keep pace with the curriculum. In Daisy T.'s case, for example, Dr. Stogdill determined that academic frustration brought on by improper school placement was the cause of Daisy's maladjustment. In 1938, Daisy was fifteen years old and only in Grade 5 at Armoury Park PS. Her "marked limitation of ability with resultant unsatisfactory school progress has no doubt caused [the] girl much unhappiness and is at the root of her defensive attitudes toward and unwillingness to continue longer in school," Stogdill wrote. Yet he also thought that if Daisy entered an academic program better suited to her abilities as a 'direct-learner' (he had in mind a girls' handicraft school) she could become well adjusted. "Attractive in appearance and apparently a likeable sort of person when on her own and relieved of undue strain, [Daisy] has much in her favor if she can be guided to a better academic and vocational adjustment."[41] The reference to Daisy's appearance might have referred to adjustment, as mental hygienists believed that young people with 'normal' appearances were more apt to be well adjusted. Or, the reference could have been to the enduring concern of mental hygienists that 'subnormal' adolescent girls were especially susceptible to being easily lured by men into immoral sexual behaviour.[42] In any case, fifteen-year-old Daisy returned to Grade 5 at Armoury Park PS in the fall of 1938. She stayed in that class for about three months, before leaving school permanently less than two weeks before her sixteenth birthday.[43] Other youngsters whose experiences were similar to Daisy T.'s were also recommended for program changes in order to avert or conquer maladjustment due to improper placement.[44]

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[40] C.G. Stogdill, "Subject Disabilities: A Symptom," *Understanding the Child* 7:1 (April 1938): 7-9.
[41] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1, Admission Discharge Promotion (A.D.P.) card Box TDSB 2003-0835 'Daisy T.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

Beginning around the early 1930s, Toronto's junior vocational schools and handicraft schools increasingly made producing well-adjusted young adults one of their key goals, alongside academic and training objectives. As Superintendent C.C. Goldring told a radio audience in 1933: "The keynote of the success of the Junior Vocational School ... is that the principal and teachers advise and adjust the boys, help them to overcome their difficulties, teach them, and then place them in industry if possible. The Girls' Vocational Schools are also doing splendid work of a similar sort."[45] The boys' handicraft school implemented a guidance program in 1931 that was based on adjustment principles and assigned each boy to a carefully selected homeroom. The principal designated a homeroom teacher for each class based on personality. "Teachers of different personality traits are chosen [for each homeroom]," principal W.J. Tamblyn wrote, "because it has been found that a teacher of one personality will not appeal to certain children, while those of a different disposition will appeal to others." The homeroom teachers guided each adolescent boy in their class academically, vocationally, and socially.[46]

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[42] See Stephen, 92-93.
[43] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 1, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0835. 'Daisy T.' O.R.C., A.D.P.
[44] TDSBA "East End PS" O.R.C. Microfilm Reel 10. 'Yvonne T.' O.R.C.; "Armoury Park PS" O.R.C. Box TDSB 2003-1309, Box 10, A.D.P. Box TDSB 2003-0834, Box 1 of 2. 'Ella V.' O.R.C., A.D.P.
[45] TDSBA. Goldring, Cecil Charles. Papers. (Box 2 of 2). TDSB 2003-0569. C.C. Goldring, "Vocational Guidance," Radio Talk, 15 March 1933: 1-2. See also: Jane Little, "Vocational Guidance in the [Girls' Junior Vocational] School," *Special Class Teacher* 13:3 (February 1939) 90; CAMHA. Burdett McNeel Fonds. Provincial Psychiatric Clinics: Lectures. B.T. McGhie (ed.). W.J. Tamblyn, "The Junior Vocational School," n.d.

The girls' junior vocational and handicraft schools also used the homeroom system to assess each new student's level in order to find for her the right place in the school.[47] At one girls' school there were three divisions—junior, intermediate, and senior—with three classes in each division. This arrangement was intentionally "elastic," enabling school officials to transfer girls between homerooms in order to help them vocationally, academically—or, especially, socially. Personality adjustment assumed a greater importance than IQ in classroom groupings in this system. "For instance," wrote Grace Mackenzie, principal at one of the girls' schools, "a sensitive girl with a high I.Q. quite often obtains the confidence she needs by working with a group where she can lead; while on the other hand, a girl with a low I.Q., who is inclined to parade her accomplishments would be checked by association with a superior group."[48] Personality adjustment, according to Mackenzie, was part of the training in girls' junior vocational schools that was necessary to establish the basis for the remainder of the schools' work. "The social adjustments made in these ways are of infinitely greater importance both to the girl and to her prospective employer than the additional academic, or vocational work she might receive through a very accurately graded system," Mackenzie wrote.[49]

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[46] CAMHA. Burdett McNeel Fonds. Provincial Psychiatric Clinics: Lectures. B.T. McGhie (ed.). W.J. Tamblyn, "The Junior Vocational School", n.d.; *TBE Annual Report 1931*, 50-51.

[47] *TBE Annual Report 1930*, 55-56.

[48] Grace I. Mackenzie, "Vocational Training for the Adolescent Girl," *Proceedings of the Sixty-Ninth Convention of the OEA* (Toronto: OEA, 1930): 80-81. See also: Marjorie Larkin, "A Social Worker Discusses 'Backward' Children," *Special Class Teacher* 13:2 (September 1938), 50; Little, "Vocational Guidance," 107. See also, TDSBA. Vertical Files (VF). T.B.E. Schools-Sec.-Jarvis C.I. 1940-1959. W.J. McIntosh, "Follow-Up Study of One Thousand Non-Academic Boys," *Journal of Exceptional Children* 15 (March 1949): 169-170.

A new deal in special education: The decline of eugenics

By the 1930s Toronto special educators largely accepted the fundamental notion that child guidance and mental hygiene experts had built up. That is, they accepted that developing the child's personality was one of education's most important goals. As we saw in Chapter 3, Ontario Inspector of Auxiliary Classes S.B. Sinclair was working at reducing the CNCMH's involvement in special education to merely examining 'psychopathic' cases as early as 1922. Gerald Hackett argued that Sinclair and his successor, Harry Amoss, both intentionally moved special education away from the CNCMH.[50] According to Hackett, teachers resented the air of professional superiority that mental hygienists tried to hold over them and tended to resist the experts attempts to get into the classroom with them.[51] The frank talking mental hygienists could also be harshly critical of teachers. J. Kilburn, a Toronto psychiatric children's social worker who would have worked regularly with educators, commented that teachers deliberately stood in the path of mental hygiene because "the teacher's reactions are too often determined in a direct relation to the immediate effect of the behaviour upon herself."[52]

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[49] Mackenzie, 80-81.

[50] Hackett, 139, 160, 210. See also, Harvey G. Simmons, *From Asylum to Welfare* (Downsview, ON: NIMR, 1982), 119-120.

[51] Hackett, 210-213.

[52] Kilburn, 438-439. See also, J.D.M. Griffin, "The Contribution of Child Psychiatry to Mental Hygiene," *Canadian Public Health Journal* 29:11 (November 1938): 552.

Kilburn's view of teachers can be traced to a significant shift in the mental hygienists' thinking in Canada, which Hans Pols argues drove a wedge between them and their former allies, teachers. Mental hygiene experts moved towards the point of view that teachers interfered with children's healthy personality adjustment. Researchers in the Regal Road Study in the 1920s had defined adjustment as the capacity to adapt to the school environment by following school rules. By the 1930s, experts such as William Line believed that children needed to develop independence, mastery and self-expression in order to be mentally healthy. In this sense, Pols contends, from the mental hygienists' point of view teachers' demands for obedience now stood in the way of healthy childhood personality development. This created further conflict between teachers, and the organized mental hygiene movement represented by the CNCMH.[53]

Mental hygienists, such as William Line, may have alienated teachers in the 1930s and contributed to the parting of ways between special educators and the CNCMH. But at least teachers and mental hygienists could agree that environmental explanations of mental defect and disability should have an important place in special education. The rift that opened between special education and the most ardent eugenicists in the 1930s and early 1940s was not nearly so easily bridged. This gap separated the more heredity-oriented eugenicists from the more environment-oriented special educators. The Ontario Royal Commission on Public Welfare (the Ross Commission), which reported in 1930, helped to widen the gap between eugenics and special education that had begun to open in the 1920s. The commission's several recommendations on education for children with disabilities and learning difficulties were deeply coloured by eugenics. Chair P.D. Ross and the other investigators took the position that mental ability was innate and unchangeable. The commission also resurrected Helen MacMurchy's farm colony, suggesting that the province establish two training school colonies for 'mentally defective' adolescents. Some of these adolescents would be paroled, but only under supervision.[54] Eugenicists who embraced parole in fact showed themselves amenable to the mental hygienists' view that 'mental defectives' could adjust to life outside the institution. Sterilization, however, often accompanied parole, as a sort of fail-safe measure.[55] Indeed the Ross Commission's recommendations on education for 'defectives' and 'backward' children argued specifically for the sterilization of 'paroled' inmates from the training schools "who are known to be immoral ... but about to be discharged into the community where they may propagate indescribable misery."[56]

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[53] Pols, "Laboratory and Life," 148-149.

Gerald Hackett showed that Ontario teachers and school officials panned the Royal Commission on Public Welfare's recommendations on education. Teachers and educationists were moving away from hereditarian explanations of children's learning difficulties and disabilities, and away from eugenically aligned educational policy proposals, such as a farm colony.[57] Moreover, Canada's leading eugenics group in the 1930s, the Eugenics Society of Canada (ESC), was out of synch with educationists' environmentalist views. Dr. Madge Thurlow Macklin, the brilliant physician and geneticist at The University of Western Ontario, was a founding and leading member of the not so shining ESC in 1930. Macklin delivered a speech on eugenics and education at the 1934 Ontario Education Association (OEA) meetings in Toronto. In her speech, which she called "The New Deal in Education," Macklin proposed a radical plan to end compulsory education for "the mental defective" by no longer funding these youngsters in the province's schools. With the burden of 'mental defectives' thus removed from the 'normal' taxpayers' shoulders, Macklin told the OEA, the public school system could focus on "a new outlook, in which education again aligns itself with aristocracy, but this time with aristocracy of intellect."[58] Macklin's views were clearly out of line with the perspectives of most educationists. As we saw in the first section of Chapter 7, Toronto schoolmen and schoolwomen, and allies that included women's groups and teacher federations, remained committed to the principle of special classes even during the Depression. They held fast to special education as (what they believed was) a pedagogically and administratively progressive and socially just policy for an urban school system to pursue. Macklin and the eugenicists in the ESC swam against the strongest currents in special education in the 1930s.

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[54] The Royal Commission on Public Welfare, *Report* (Toronto: Government of Ontario, 1930), 41-44.

[55] James W. Trent Jr., *Inventing the Feeble Mind: A History of Mental Retardation in the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 198-207. See also: Molly Ladd-Taylor, "The 'Sociological Advantages' of Sterilization: Fiscal Policies and Feeble-Minded Women in Interwar Minnesota," in Steven Noll and James W. Trent Jr., *Mental Retardation in America: A Historical Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 288-294.

[56] Royal Commission on Public Welfare, 44.

[57] Hackett, 212-213.

Reform in handicraft schools during World War II

There was a new air of confidence in the potential of young people with disabilities and learning difficulties within Toronto's special classes after 1930, as we have seen in this chapter, and as we saw in Chapter 7. New educational and employment opportunities during WWII, as well as the possibility of serving in the armed forces, provided youngsters with intellectual disabilities or learning difficulties with stages on which they could demonstrate their full capacities. There was a noticeable transformation in the opportunities open to people with intellectual disabilities because of the war, which as Margret Winzer notes, contributed to a broadening of special education curricula in recognition of new views of disabled children's abilities.[59] The war-time experiences of young women who enrolled in the infant training course at Toronto's girls' handicraft schools, and male graduates of handicraft schools who served in the armed forces—two groups who successfully helped to transform adult views of young people with disabilities and learning difficulties during WWII—further show how categories of 'mental disability' are socially constructed and historically contingent.

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[58] Madge Thurlow Macklin, "The New Deal in Education," *Proceedings of the Seventy-Third Convention of the OEA* (OEA: Toronto, 1934): 46-54. On Macklin and the ESC, see: Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990), 128-145.

The events of WWII, and the rise of new infant care curriculum in girls' handicraft schools, offered adolescent pupils at these schools opportunities to prove themselves to school officials. An insatiable wartime labour market created new demand for women workers.[60] As women entered the workforce demand for childcare workers grew as well.[61] By 1942, a significant number of young women who had graduated from handicraft schools were beginning to fill the demand in Toronto for "nursemaids," as daycare workers were then called.[62] Handicraft school graduates' early successes in the childcare field during the war greatly surprised school authorities, encouraging them to rethink the girls' handicraft school curriculum as well as the capacities of handicraft school girls. "Previously," principal Jane Little wrote in 1942, "it was considered unwise to train these students (with mental limitations) to care for young children—yet while we had never recommended our students as nursemaids they were holding positions successfully." Well-adjusted adolescent girls, school authorities started to think, had qualities that made them employable as nursemaids. (Although school officials appear to have made no mention of any reassessment of these girls' ability to parent their own children in the future.) "It was felt that what these girls lacked in mental equipment they might make up to the children by their extraordinary kindness, good manners, and good character."[63] Moreover, Little observed, many of the girls already had childcare experience looking after their siblings and neighbours, families. Indeed, Little wrote, as mothers were drawn into the workforce, "the problem of caring for children is rapidly becoming a national emergency." A nursery training course would help solve the problem and would serve "as part of our defence program."[64]

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[59] Margret A. Winzer, *From Integration to Inclusion: A History of Special Education in the 20th Century* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 2009), 99-100.
[60] See: Stephen, espec. 18-65.
[61] Ruth Roach Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 49-60.

As a consequence of the girls' successes as nursemaids, educators' changing attitudes, and wartime labour demands, one Toronto girls' handicraft school started a specific training course in infant care for future nursemaids in 1941.[65] School officials were initially cautious with the new curriculum, reflecting their lack of complete conviction that girls attending handicraft schools were actually capable of caring for other people's children. School authorities allowed only fifteen-year-olds to enrol in the new infant care program. "Undesirables" who were without "character, appearance, and good manners," and who lacked interest or experience in caring for younger siblings, were left out of the classes.[66] At first, students enrolled in infant care were permitted to bring their pre-school siblings to school once a week for practice.[67] However, the course's main goal appears to have been to train the young women enrolled to care for other people's children. School authorities often expressed that they were so impressed with the successes of young women enrolled that they now believed that the training in childcare the young women were receiving would help them enter the childcare profession after the war.[68]

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[62] "Nursery Training Course [...] Toronto, Canada," *Special Class Teacher* 16:2 (February 1942): 42; Jane Little, "The Nursery Training Course [...]," *The School* 31:2 (Elem ed.) (October 1942): 110; "Girls Trained to Care for War Workers' Babes," *Toronto Star* (7 March 1942): 35.

[63] "Nursery Training Course," 42.

[64] Little, "The Nursery Training Course," 110.

School officials' confidence in the girls grew quickly. In a few short years, the nursery became a fixture of girls' handicraft schools. By 1945, at one school's nursery for instance, which was located in a "large, sunny room on the second floor," adolescent handicraft school pupils were in charge of caring for twelve two- to five-year-olds from the neighbourhood. Staff from the Institute of Child Study of the University of Toronto oversaw some of the operations and trained the girls. Also in 1945, senior girls enrolled at one of the schools took on supervisory roles in the nursery for three weeks, under the direction of Mrs. Gordon Bolton, a teacher who had graduated from the Institute of Child Study. When the teacher in charge of one of the nurseries was absent for a week at the close of the 1945 school year, an adolescent student successfully took over complete supervisory responsibility.[69]

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[65] Ibid. There is mention of infant care as a part of the junior vocational and handicraft school curriculum before 1941. But there appears to have been no specialized course. See *TBE Annual Report 1932*, 59.

[66] "Nursery Training Course," 42. See also: Ethel V. Thompson, "A Safety Project," *Special Class Teacher* 17:3 (May 1942): 100.

[67] Little, "The Nursery Training Course," 110.

[68] "Nursery Training Course," 42.

The practical and academic curriculum that school authorities developed for what had become a nursery training course acknowledged that the girls possessed the supposedly higher order abstract thinking abilities that special educators in the 1920s had argued were absent from the intellectual repertoire of 'subnormal' and even 'dull-normal' girls. The nursery training curriculum of the 1940s had abstract and concrete components:

> Before coming into the Nursery each girl is taught the fundamentals of child training. She learns, both theoretically and practically, the type of discipline best suited to the young child, the kind of play equipment which is of the most interest and value, the kind of social life he enjoys and the satisfaction a child receives in doing things himself, be it making a picture, washing himself, putting on his own coat or pulling a wagon full of blocks.[70]

The instructional model in the nursery training course, and its full theoretic and practical curriculum, were very demanding. The young women attended six weeks of lectures by a psychologist and parent educator that the Toronto DPH's Mental Hygiene Division sent out to the school. They also learned practical aspects of childcare, such as how to lead children in "ring-around-a-rosy," and other play activities.[71]

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[69] Josephine Budden, "[...] Nursery School," *Special Class Teacher* 19:3 (May 1945): 114-115; *TBE Minutes 1943*, Appendix, Advisory Vocational Committee Report No. 1, 14 January 1943, Adopted 21 January 1943, 9; TDSBA. TDSB 2003-0534. Scrapbook, Vol 3 (1944-1947). Prize Day, 15 June 1945; Richardson, 119-123.

[70] Budden, 114-115.

The girls rose to the nursery training course challenge. They demonstrated to school officials that they had the capacity to learn an abstract and practical curriculum and that they could handle the important responsibility of caring for children. In 1943, C.C. Goldring, speaking about the Board's responsibility to expand nursery education in the public schools, commended the girls' handicraft schools for their "pioneer work" in the nursery training course and in the day nurseries the schools had established.[72]

Toronto's male handicraft school graduates also found new ways to demonstrate their abilities to school authorities during WWII. Handicraft school students who served King and Country did much to convince educationists, and others, that 'non-academic' boys could make significant social contributions. A 1949 study of 1000 graduates of a boys' handicraft school in Toronto showed that 270 of the graduates had served in the war. Dozens were on active service, spread across the branches that went from the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), to the infantry, to the merchant marine. Eight boys' handicraft school graduates made the ultimate sacrifice and were killed in action.[73] Historian Steven Gelb explains how 'mentally deficient' Americans who enlisted in the armed services and who joined the workforce consistently surpassed the expectations that experts who were members of the American Association for Mental Deficiency (AAMD), set for this group before the war. "As war progressed," Gelb writes, "institutional superintendents were surprised by, impressed by, and frequently proud of the war contributions made by 'their boys.'"[74] In Toronto, other handicraft school graduates not serving in the forces worked in factories, in delivery, or as skilled tradesmen.[75] Across the country, in Vancouver, there was a similar demand for vocational boys' skills. War industries drained enrolments in the Vancouver School Board's (VSB's) special class at Templeton Junior High School. The VSB closed the class in 1942 as a result.[76]

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[71] Little, "The Nursery Training Course," 111-112; "Nursery Training Course," 43-44; Thompson, 100.
[72] "Favours Community Feeding in Toronto Public Schools," *Toronto Star* (9 January 1943): 3. See also: TDSBA. VF. T.B.E. - Biography- Goldring, Cecil Charles. C.C. Goldring, "A Forward Look at Toronto School System," (Toronto: Toronto Board of Education, 1943), 26-27; Budden, 114.
[73] TDSBA. VF. T.B.E. Schools-Sec.-Jarvis C.I. McIntosh, 166-170; Box Marked "T.B.E. Records, Archives & Museum, Parkview S.S." (Unaccessioned material). Spiral bound note book, "Record of Graduate Visitors"; War Group [...] Home and School Association Overseas Cigarette List" 18 April 1945. On the war record of other male special class graduates across Ontario see: "War Service by Graduates of a Boys' Handicraft Class," *Special Class Teacher* 16:2 (February 1942): 45; *Ontario Department of Education Annual Report 1941*, Appendix F, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 55.

The girls' and boys' experiences of the handicraft schools in the 1940s demonstrate how World War II helped to reshape categories of ability and disability, opening up new opportunities for young people with disabilities. Writing about Canada's World War II mobilization, Jennifer Stephen argues: "The only answer to the recurring labour shortages that threatened to derail the war effort was to mobilize the dormant 'female labour reserve.'"[77] Disability and age also shaped WWII labour mobilization. Building on Stephen's work, and on scholarship by Steven Gelb, we may see how young people with disabilities, male and female, were also mobilized in new ways. The success that these young people demonstrated in school, on the labour market, in the army, and in every day life, helped to prove to educators that they could accomplish more than school authorities or others had previously thought possible. Moreover, the actions of these men and women during the war years serves as a reminder that while many people with disabilities were horribly victimized during WWII—in Nazi Germany particularly, where state policies authorized the mass murder of the disabled[78]—at least some people with disabilities had agency during the war as well.

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[74] Steven A. Gelb, "'Mental Deficients' Fighting Facism: The Unplanned Normalization of World War II," in Noll and Trent Jr. eds., 312.

[75] TDSBA. VF. T.B.E. Schools-Sec.-Jarvis C.I. McIntosh, 166-170; Box Marked "T.B.E. Records, Archives & Museum, Parkview S.S." (Unaccessioned material). Spiral bound note book, "Record of Graduate Visitors"; War Group [...] Home and School Association Overseas Cigarette List" 18 April 1945.

[76] Gerald Thomson, "'Remove from Our Midst These Unfortunates': A Historical Inquiry Into the Influence of Eugenics, Educational Efficiency as well as Mental Hygiene Upon the Vancouver School System and Its Special Classes, 1910-1969," Ph.D. diss. (The University of British Columbia, 1999), 198.

[77] Stephen, 5.

In the immediate post-war period, experts in the field of mental deficiency generally agreed, Gelb argues, that 'mental deficients' had "earned a better place for themselves." Yet this feeling shortly dissipated, as demobilization unfolded and labour markets changed. Faced with the return of men of able body and mind, 'mental deficiency' experts participated in a process of "retroactively relabeling those who had been normalized during the war as 'pseudo-feebleminded'." They argued that supposed 'mental deficients' who had served in the war were, in fact, men who where 'normal' and had been 'misdiagnosed.'[79] In a parallel manner, as Jennifer Stephen has shown, women's demobilization in Canada also involved re-writing femininity through a new vocational counselling and rehabilitation discourse that shunted women out of the workforce.[80] It is not entirely clear how people with disabilities were demobilized in Canada after WWII. However, evidence that is available from the schools suggests that, despite proving themselves capable workers, soldiers, and citizens, people with disabilities were expected to leave the workforce once the troops returned.[81]

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[78] See Henry Friedlander, "The Exclusion and Murder of the Disabled," in Robert Gellately, Nathan Stoltzfus eds., *Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 145-164.

[79] Gelb, 315-316.

[80] Stephen, 165-204.

Conclusion

The growing influence of environmental theories and mental hygiene on psychology and child guidance, the development of personality adjustment theories, as well as new theories of specific learning difficulties, all helped improve the outlook amongst special educators on the possibilities and potential of young people with disabilities and learning difficulties. Yet, children with disabilities and learning difficulties still struggled to attain educators' standards of adjustment and 'normality,' because they had different body and mental types.

The new environmentalist perspective on the capacities of young people with disabilities and learning difficulties nevertheless also created policy and philosophical changes in special education. As the direct influence of hereditarian thinking declined significantly, by the mid-1930s to early 1940s, special education moved away from its roots in eugenics. Educationists' realization that adolescents with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties had greater capacities opened up new opportunities for these youngsters to prove themselves as well.

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[81] See, for example: Little, "The History of the ... School," 16; Archives of Ontario. Correspondence of the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Ontario Society for Crippled Children—Meetings Minutes Reports" (1942-1943),_RG-29-1-0-1752. Ontario Society for Crippled Children, W.G. Frisby, "Education and Vocational Training Committee Report" [1943], 1.

Conclusion: From Segregation to Inclusion?

By 1945, the year that marks the end of my study, Toronto's special classes were a well-engrained part of the city's public school system. The year 1945 also marks the beginning of a Royal Commission on Education in Ontario. The Hope Commission, appointed by Progressive Conservative Premier George Drew and named for chair, Justice John Andrew Hope, was assigned the task of looking at Ontario's education system and suggesting any improvements necessary to bring the schools into line with the demands of the dawning post-war age. The Commission would make many recommendations by the time it eventually issued its final report in 1950, including recommendations that set the stage for a significant expansion of special education services in Ontario schools in the second half of the twentieth century.[1] As part of their mandate, the 22 commissioners reviewed the special education services that were available to approximately 17,000 "exceptional" Ontario students at the end of World War II (WWII).[2] The Hope Report did not challenge the policy of segregated separate classes, or the medical model of disability and learning difficulty that went with it. In fact, the commissioners declared the special education system sound in all but one respect. Massive increases in services and funding were necessary, the commissioners argued, to expand the special class system so that it would touch the schooling of an estimated 30,000 or more Ontario pupils who were eligible for services, but not yet receiving them because of "the deficiency of adequate facilities for special education" in many different school districts.[3]

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[1] On the Royal Commission, see: R.D. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario's Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 23-24.

[2] *Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario* (Toronto: Province of Ontario, 1950), 363-377.

The system that the Hope Report endorsed was in its essence the same type of system of separate special classes that Toronto school authorities had built from a modest base of four part-time classes for 'mentally defective' children opened in 1910. It was the same system that many other North American urban school boards also developed and employed in the pre-WWII period—and the same system that is still today familiar to us as one of the most important elements of public schooling. Familiar as separate special classes may be, the history of special education calls into question the view that they are an organic part of the school system. Educational policies and practices are never inevitable, educational history reminds us, because they result from the choices school officials and others make in specific sets of historical circumstances.[4]

This dissertation examined three major aspects of the history of special education in the formative 1910 to 1945 years: the historical context for the development of special education policy in Toronto and the rise of a system of separate special classes for educating children with disabilities and learning difficulties in the city's public schools; the experiences of young people in that system; and, the significant contributions that special education made to the construction of shifting disabled and deaf identities in the first half of the twentieth century.

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[3] *Royal Commission on Education*, 381-383; Gidney, 23.

[4] David Tyack and Larry Cuban, *Tinkering Toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 6-11; Michael B. Katz, *Reconstructing American Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 1-4; Barry M. Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk': Childhood Learning Difficulties and the Contradictions of School Reform* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), 3.

As I showed in this dissertation, many different factors shaped the development of the special class system and special education policies in the 1910 to 1945 period. In the 1910s, the rise of eugenics, and bureaucratic school reforms, encouraged the early development of special classes in Toronto public schools. Eugenicists believed that by identifying and segregating 'mentally defective' youngsters, special classes could play a part in a coordinated strategy to control the population of 'feebleminds' in Ontario. This strategy, which involved a farm colony for the province's 'mental defectives,' never fully materialized. In any case, the more enduring effects of eugenics on special education were subtler. Eugenicists contributed important ideas about the learning capacities and social characteristics of 'feebleminded' youngsters that left an imprint on special class curricula and pedagogies for years.

Eugenics was not the only important early influence on the development of special education. Toronto's first special class policies went hand in hand with the bureaucratic school reforms that administrative progressives brought to various North American city school systems in the early twentieth century.[5] Special classes fit especially well with one of the key feature of educational bureaucracy: the functional differentiation of schooling. Administrative progressive school reformers viewed differentiated instructional settings for children with disabilities and learning difficulties—"special courses adjusted to their particular needs"[6]—as an essential school reform. New special classes for 'backward' children, first established in Toronto in 1912, also helped Toronto school officials to address the city's so-called 'retardation' crisis. In the 1910s, 'retardation' or 'backwardness' referred primarily to the condition of being over age for one's grade. Educators believed that 'retardation' had a long list of causes that included parental indifference, overcrowded primary classes, a one-size-fits-all school program, prolonged illness and school absence, as well as 'mental defectiveness.'[7] Toronto's classes for 'backward' children in the 1910s were remedial, a fact that recognized the many different causes of 'backwardness'—a few that were environmental in nature—and distinguished classes for 'backward' children from the city's special classes for 'mentally defective' children as well.

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[5] See, especially, Marvin Lazerson, "The Origins of Special Education," in Jay G. Chambers and William T. Hartman eds., *Special Education Policies: Their History, Implementation, and Finance* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 15-46. On the administrative progressives, see: David B. Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974).
[6] *Ontario Department of Education Annual Report 1930*, Report of the Minister of Education for the Year, xi.

In the 1920s, Toronto school authorities reorganized, expanded, and consolidated, a maturing special class system. In the early part of that decade, the distinction between 'backwardness' and 'mental defectiveness' all but disappeared with the rise of a new category of educational disability: 'subnormality.' What followed was significant reorganization of Toronto's special class system. These events were deeply influenced by the rush of ideas about intelligence, testing, and school reform that appeared in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Intelligence testers after World War I, most notably the American psychologist Dr. Lewis Terman, tirelessly promoted the notion that intelligence was fixed and that it could be measured by means of the intelligence quotient, or IQ. This perspective on the nature of intelligence had a profound effect on how educationists viewed children's learning difficulties and how the schools organized special classes. In the 1910s, the American 'retardation' expert Leonard Ayres had argued that causes other than low native intelligence were primarily responsible for the learning difficulties that were expressed as widespread 'backwardness' or 'retardation' in the schools.[8] The IQ testers suggested, to the contrary, that low IQ was the likely cause of practically all learning problems. Terman argued that "innate differences in intelligence" were "chiefly responsible" for learning difficulties and 'retardation.[9] This view, that learning problems were inborn, and that low IQ was their primary cause, helped to displace remedial instruction from Toronto's special classes, which by the 1920s, had become a separate stream of 'auxiliary' classes for 'subnormal' young people.

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[7] On 'retardation,' see: Leonard P. Ayres, *Laggards in Our Schools: A Study of Retardation and Elimination in City School Systems* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1909). On Toronto's response to 'retardation,' see: *Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Elliott's Report, 39-41; *TBE Annual Report 1913*, Inspector Whyte's Report, 48-49.

The early and influential involvement in special education of IQ testers, and of eugenicists, also helped to ensure that the medical model of disability both groups subscribed to would become a lasting explanation for many types of educational disadvantage and difference. By defining difficulties of school integration, physical and other differences, and learning problems, as disability—that is, as problems located in the individual—schoolmen and schoolwomen shifted onto boys and girls themselves the burden for pedagogies, curricula, and administrative structures that failed to reach all of the diverse young people who attended the schools. That burden still today too often remains disproportionately on the shoulders of youngsters who struggle academically.

Even in a medical model framework, there were still important shifts across the 1910 to 1945 period in categories of disability and learning difficulty. The category

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[8] Ayres, 3.

[9] Lewis M. Terman, *The Intelligence of Schoolchildren* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1919), 24-25.

'backward,' which dated from the 1910s, was, for instance, different than 'subnormality,' which replaced it in the 1920s. Categories were variable and defined by particular historical circumstances. The disability categories that the schools, particularly special education programs, helped to shape also influenced popular views of disability in early-twentieth-century Canada.

In addition to reorganizing classes for 'backward' children into a separate stream of auxiliary classes for 'subnormal' children, Toronto school authorities in the 1920s also extended special education services to other groups of young people in the city's public schools. They added new junior vocational schools and handicraft schools for adolescent 'subnormals' and 'dull-normals.' The latter category increasingly overlapped with the former in the junior vocational and handicraft schools, which came to occupy a dual, and often overlapping role, as special schools for young people with disabilities and learning difficulties and vocational schools for working-class young people.

In the 1920s, the Toronto Board of Education also expanded its special class system by opening sight saving, orthopaedic, and speech correction classes, as well as special classes for children who were deaf and classes for children who were hard of hearing. All of these classes helped to shape ideas about childhood and disability in the schools, and beyond them as well. Classes for children with physical disabilities and perceptual impairments encouraged young people to 'overcome' what educators perceived as their embodied challenges, in order to become 'integrated' into public schools. Yet popular and educational attitudes shaped by pity, which cast children with physical disabilities as inferior, worked against these children's meaningful integration into the school environment. Moreover, in special education discourses, where there was a noticeable disability hierarchy, overcoming and integration were practically never available to children with intellectual disabilities, although these concepts were sometimes available to children with learning difficulties, especially after 1930. As Dr. Helen MacMurchy matter-of-factly told a group of special educators in 1925: "It is easier to establish children who have some physical disability in the community than to find a place for those who are mentally defective."[10]

Special classes for physically disabled and perceptually impaired children usually pursued a single pedagogical and rehabilitative methodology and tended to place the onus on boys and girls to adapt to schooling and society, while the schools and the community barely moved to meet young people's needs. Special classes banned sign language, eschewed Braille, and looked unfavourably on the use of wheelchairs and braces. Children with physical disabilities and perceptual impairments were encouraged, if not even admonished, to speak, read, and move like 'normal' children did—even if the child with a disability had access to other methods of doing these things that were better suited to her or his capacities. At times this approach was quite controversial. The debate over methods in Toronto's oralist day school classes for children who were deaf was especially charged. "The policy of the Department of Education insofar as the deaf are concerned is to force the method on the child," Deaf activist David Peikoff told the Hope Commission, in response to the policy of using only lip reading in classes for children who were deaf. "In other words, there is one system that must be adhered to regardless of the aptitude of the child."[11]

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[10] "After Care," Auxiliary Class Teachers' Section, *Proceedings of the 64th Annual Convention of the Ontario Educational Association* (Toronto: Ontario Educational Association, 1925): 178.

In the 1930s and 1940s, the Depression and WWII presented financial and social challenges that might have caused Toronto's special class system to crumble. In fact, the upheavals of the 1930s and early 1940s did not shake the special class system from its structural foundations. Yet, internally in the 1930s and early 1940s, special education was reshaped by the rise of new theories of specific learning difficulties. These theories partially unseated IQ from its place as practically the sole explanation of learning difficulties. Theories of specific learning difficulties posited that intellectually 'normal' children could have learning problems in specific areas. "Scientific discovery is gradually re-defining our problems," reading expert Dr. Emmett Betts wrote in 1936. "No longer can the teacher and school administrator account for all learning disabilities on the basis of low intelligence."[12] As a result of this conceptual shift, remedial instruction reappeared in Toronto special education classrooms after 1930. The idea that many special education pupils could learn, a notion that the new theories of specific learning difficulties helped to support, contributed to changes in special class curricula as well. Reading instruction and other academic teaching supplanted to some extent the greater manual and vocational focus that had existed in special education in previous years. Yet, not all young people attending the special classes were equally affected by the new theories of specific learning difficulties. Special class students who scored the lowest on IQ tests were very often still defined as the least likely to improve. They also had the least access to remedial instruction.

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[11] Tanis Maureen Doe, "Ontario Schooling and the Status of the Deaf: An Enquiry into Inequality, Status Assignment and Educational Power," M.S.W. thesis (Carleton University, 1988), 118.

[12] Emmett Albert Betts, *The Prevention and Correction of Reading Difficulties* (Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson, and Co., 1936), 3-4.

The influence of personality adjustment theories, child guidance, and mental hygiene, especially after 1930, helped to further transform special classes in Toronto. Mental hygienists advanced the view that environment was important to childhood development, and that children needed to be emotionally well adjusted to develop properly. This attention to environments helped to further shift the focus in explanations of learning problems away from low innate IQ. Yet, as we saw in Chapter 8, mental hygiene experts, such as Dr. Samuel Laycock, also believed that disabled children's physical and mental differences made them more susceptible to maladjustment than 'normal' children.[13]

As environmental explanations of mental disabilities and difficulties gained influence over special educators after 1930, there was also a decline in eugenics' direct role in special education. By the mid 1930s, educationists had noticeably distanced themselves from the hereditarian views of eugenicists such as Dr. Madge T. Macklin, of the Eugenics Society of Canada, who believed that special instruction could do little to improve the learning capabilities of special class pupils. During WWII, adolescent female special education pupils, who successfully took on new employment responsibilities in the childcare field, and male handicraft school pupils who joined the armed forces, helped to further convince educationists that children labelled 'subnormal' or 'non-academic' had greater potential than the experts had previously believed.

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[13] See, for example, Samuel R. Laycock, "The Mental Hygiene of Exceptional Children," (Part 1), *Special Class Teacher* 15:3 (May 1941): 74-77.

Student experiences are crucial to the history of special education. The history of special education from the pupil's perspective reveals complex interactions with school bureaucracies, educators, school psychologists, parents, and other adults in positions of authority. Clearly, some boys and girls benefited from the system as school officials designed it. Differentiated instruction and curriculum, technical and vocational options, progressive pedagogy, and remedial instruction (when it was available) offered some young people with disabilities and learning difficulties opportunities that the mainstream classes did not. Separate settings were a blessing to a few young people as well. Edna Barg, a Toronto sight-saving class pupil in the 1930s, recounted year later how the special class gave her the confidence she needed to succeed in school for the first time.[14] For some children, those with physical disabilities and perceptual impairments particularly, Toronto's special classes offered important accommodations, such as bus transportation, and opportunities to attend school that might not otherwise have existed. One of the unintended consequences of segregated special classes was that by placing disabled children in the same separate special classes with each other, school officials created the conditions under which these young people formed peer cultures organized around shared disabilities. Even today, many Deaf people continue to prefer segregated educational settings to inclusive ones.[15]

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[14] Toronto District School Board Archives (TDSBA). Vertical Files. Toronto Board of Education—Curriculum—Special Education. Edna Barg, "Sight Saving Class," *Recording Recollections at Ryerson* 8:3 (December 1989): 7.

[15] On opposition to inclusion by advocates for different groups represented within the 'exceptional' category, see Robert Osgood, *The History of Inclusion of Inclusion in the United States* (Washington: Gallaudet University Press, 2005), 166-200.

Other young people benefited less from special classes but tried to adapt themselves to the system as best they could. As we saw in Chapter 6, Julius Wiggins, who attended oral day school classes for deaf children at Clinton PS, struggled to make the difficult process of learning to read lips work for him. The lip reading instruction Wiggins received as elementary school pupil at Clinton PS was of relatively little use in the high school classes he was finally allowed to attend in the 1940s. Wiggins's high school teachers did not accommodate him by speaking clearly or by always facing the class when they spoke.[16] A small minority of young people who experienced special education rejected elements of the system outright, for different reasons. Some of these girls and boys resisted intelligence testing. Emma C., for instance, refused to cooperate with Dr. Lewis on an intelligence test, informing him "I'm not going to do that. I am not so crazy."[17] Parents, and even outside organizations, such as the Ontario Association of the Deaf, also criticized or rejected special classes, although more often than not their criticisms went unheeded. Yet a few parents also petitioned school authorities and elected officials for access to special education for their children.

The dissonance between policy intentions and students' actual experiences, which only the pupil perspective reveals, underlines one of the biggest difficulties with separate special classes in the early twentieth century. The disappointing fact is that—despite claims to the contrary and sometimes despite best intentions—separate special classes in the first half of the twentieth century were never as responsive to schoolchildren's varied individual needs as they were supposed to be. The main motivation for program differentiation, which created special classes, was to serve administrators' bureaucratic agendas, primarily fulfilling their need to create a more specialized and therefore a supposedly more efficient approach to instructing large, heterogeneous school populations. Historically, the special education system has differentiated the classroom setting by separating *groups* of children with disabilities and learning difficulties from their peers and has created broadly-conceived special curricula and pedagogies for these *groups*. Yet it has done this without differentiating or tailoring education to the very specific and very diverse *individual* educational requirements of each *individual child.* The special education system has failed to address individual needs that are beyond what labels can identify.

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[16] Julius Wiggins, *No Sound* (New York: The Silent Press, 1970).

[17] TDSBA. "Armoury Park PS" Office Record Card (O.R.C.) Box TDSB 2003-1307, Box 8; Admission-Discharge-Promotion (A.D.P.) Box TDSB 2003-0834b, Box 2 of 2. 'Emma C.' O.R.C., A.D.P.

As a social and policy history of childhood, disability, and education, this dissertation contributes to several different historiographies. As a policy history, it builds on historical scholarship on urban school reform in Canada and the United States. Special education in Toronto was typical, I have argued in this thesis. The development of special education policies in Toronto public schools was very similar to the development of special class policy in other Canadian and American city school systems in the early twentieth century.[18] My student-centred approach to this history, which is supported by my analysis of young people's schools experiences using student record cards, and my disability history focus, contribute perspectives on the history of urban school reform and special education history that are relatively uncommon in these two historiographies.[19] Richard Altenbaugh argues that in special education history the centre of attention has too often been adults, institutions, and the medial model of disability.[20] As I show in this dissertation, a social model of disability focus and a student-centred approach help to clarify the important divergences between the educational and administrative goals of school authorities and the reality of how special classes actually worked (or did not work) for the pupils who attended them.

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[18] See, especially, Lazerson, "Origins of Special Education."

The dissertation also contributes to children's history, especially to the historiography on Canadian children, an area in which there are only a few studies of young people with disabilities or learning difficulties.[21] Disability and learning difficulty were fairly common childhood experiences in the first half of the twentieth century. In 1948, according to one study, nearly one in ten elementary school pupils in Ontario were "handicapped." [22] There remain many stories yet to be told about Canadian youngsters with disabilities and learning difficulties. The dissertation also contributes the social history of Canadian children more generally, especially to the history of their school experiences. Although they were historical actors, who dealt admirably with complex situations, children with disabilities and learning difficulties faced more powerful adults in a fairly rigid school system. Yet a number of young people still found ingenious ways to make the system work for them. The history of children's experiences in special classes calls into question one-sided explanations of special education as social control or as unmitigated educational opportunity.[23]

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[19] Other scholars have also used student records to examine the history of special classes in the first half of the twentieth century. See: Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk'*, 43-47; Barry M. Franklin, "Progressivism and Curriculum Differentiation: Special Classes in the Atlanta Public Schools," *History of Education Quarterly*, 29:4 (Winter, 1989), 586-592; E. Anne Bennison, "Creating Categories of Competence: The Education of Exceptional Children in the Milwaukee Public Schools, 1908-1917," Ph.D. diss. (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1988).

[20] Richard J. Altenbaugh, "Where are the Disabled in the History of Education? The Impact of Polio on Sites of Learning," *History of Education* 35:6 (November 2006): 705-730.

[21] Veronica Strong-Boag, "'Children of Adversity': Disabilities and Child Welfare in Canada from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century," *Journal of Family History* 32:4 (October 2007): 413-432; Veronica Strong-Boag, "'Forgotten People of All the Forgotten': Children with Disabilities in English Canada from the Nineteenth Century to the New Millennium," in Mona Gleason, Tamara Myers, Leslie Paris, and Veronica Strong-Boag eds., *Lost Kids: Vulnerable Children in Twentieth-Century Canada and the United States* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 33-50; Nic Clarke, "Sacred Daemons: Exploring British Columbian Society's Perceptions of 'Mentally Deficient' Children, 1870-1930," *B.C. Studies* 144 (2004-2005): 61-89; Jessa Chupik and David Wright, "Treating the 'idiot' Child in Early 20th-Century Ontario," *Disability & Society* 21:1 (2006): 77-90.

[22] *Royal Commission on Education*, 378-379.

As a disability history of special education, this dissertation also incorporates many of the insights from 'the new disability history' on the socially and historically contingent nature of disability, as well as on disabled people's agency.[24] The dissertation makes an important contribution to Canadian disability history as well. Nic Clarke argues that studies of the experiences of people with disabilities in public settings, such as schools, are especially needed to advance the field beyond its initial focus on disability experts and custodial institutions.[25] The schools were one of the most important public spaces where ideas about disability were formed in Canada during the 1910 to 1945 period, the era when special education policies first took shape. Public schools were also a crucial venue for young people with disabilities, who often met each other for the first time in special classes and formed peer groups and peer cultures there, as well as an important space where non-disabled adults and young people encountered young people with disabilities and learning difficulties.

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[23] On the former see Joseph L. Tropea, "Bureaucratic Order and Special Children: Urban Schools, 1890s-1940s," *History of Education Quarterly*, 27:1 (Spring, 1987): 29-53 and Joseph L. Tropea, "Bureaucratic Order and Special Children: Urban Schools, 1950s-1960s," *History of Education Quarterly*, 27:3 (Autumn, 1987): 339-361. On the latter, see Kimberly Kode and Kristin E. Howard, *Elizabeth Farrell and the History of Special Education* (Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children, 2002).

[24] Catherine J. Kudlick, "Disability History: Why We Need Another 'Other'," *American Historical Review* 108:3 (June 2003), 763-793; Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky, "Introduction: Disability History from the Margins to the Mainstream," in *The New Disability History: American Perspectives,* Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky, eds. (New York: New York University Press, 2001): 1-29.

[25] Nic Clarke, "Opening Closed Doors and Breaching High Walls: Some Approaches to Studying Intellectual Disability in Canadian History," *Social History/Histoire Sociale* 39 (2006): 467-485.

Special education and school reform, 1945-present

In the more than six decades since the end of WWII, there have been different attempts to reform special education. Until the mid-1980s, and the rise of a movement for inclusive education, most of these reforms affirmed the basic principle that special education required separate classes. Nor did reforms up to this point question the medical model of disability. From the mid-1940s to the mid-1980s, reformers almost always asked for more special education services, especially services for students left out of the special education system. They also asked for more money in order to provide those services. As outgoing TBE chair Mrs. H.E. McCullagh declared in 1944: "If we are to serve handicapped pupils, let us do it generously."[26] In the decades that followed the Ontario government, supported by the increasingly prosperous Ontario taxpayer, drastically increased the financial outlay on special education. By the time the late 1970s rolled around, annual provincial special education spending had risen to $369 million.[27]

Until the 1980s, reforms in the post-WWII period extended special education to children who were left behind by the special education reforms of the first half of the twentieth century. From the time of the Auxiliary Classes Act of 1914 onward, special classes in the province's public schools were permitted to exclude children with intellectual disabilities who scored lower than 50 on an IQ test.[28] 'Trainable mentally retarded' children (as children with IQs in the sub-50 range were known by the 1950s), were one of the groups excluded entirely from special education before 1945 that eventually gained access to services in the public schools after WWII.[29] Reform began in 1947, when the first day school class for 'mentally retarded' young people to have provincial oversight opened in the Northern Ontario community of Kirkland Lake. Two years later, a similar class opened in Toronto. Until 1969, classes for these children received public funding but were not administrated by school boards, nor usually were the classes located in school board buildings. Parent activists played an important role in reform, helping to get day school classes and even running many of the early classes themselves under the auspices of the Ontario Association for Retarded Children. In 1969, Ontario school boards took over some classes for 'mentally retarded' boys and girls.[30] However, it was not until Ontario passed Bill 82, in 1980, that the Ontario government issued a 1985 deadline for all school boards to offer special classes—still segregated—for 'mentally retarded' children in public and Catholic separate school buildings.[31] The law resembled similar American legislation passed in 1975—Public Law 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act.[32]

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[26] *TBE Minutes 1944*, Appendix, Address of Trustee Mrs H.E. McCullagh, Chairman of Board, 1944, at Testimonial Dinner, King Edward Hotel, December 28, 1944.

[27] This figure is for 1978. Gidney, 154.

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[28] Initially this was set at a "mental age" of eight years, or approximately 50 percent of the adult "mental age" of sixteen. Gerald T. Hackett, "The History of Public Education for Mentally Retarded Children in the Province of Ontario 1867-1964," (Ed.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1969), Appendix E, 391.

[29] Vera C. Pletsch, *Not Wanted in the Classroom: Parent Associations and the Education of Trainable Retarded Children in Ontario, 1947-1969* (London, ON: Althouse Press, 1997), 118-120.

[30] See Harvey G. Simmons, *From Asylum to Welfare* (Downsview, ON: National Institute on Mental Retardation, 1982), 152-159; Pletsch, 35-124.

[31] Gidney, 154-155.

[32] Osgood, 165-166.

However, the main expansion of special education in the post-war period occurred not in programs for 'mentally retarded' children, but in programs for a new group of exceptional children 'discovered' in the 1960s: young people with 'learning disabilities.' Dr. Samuel A. Kirk, an American special educator who grew up in rural Manitoba, coined the term 'learning disabilities' in 1963, helping to initiate significant reforms in special education categories. 'Learning disability,' always a nebulous category, referred to children's learning difficulties that were caused by factors other than low IQ.[33] From approximately the 1960s to the early 1990s, the diagnosis 'learning disabilities' exploded, as did the number of special education classes for children diagnosed 'learning disabled.' The first National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, completed by Statistics Canada in 1994-95, showed that 51 percent of all Canadian special education students at the elementary school level were labelled 'learning disabled.'[34]

The concept of 'learning disabilities' that Samuel Kirk described in the early 1960s can be traced back to the theories of specific learning difficulties that, as we saw in Chapter 7, emerged mainly in the 1930s.[35] The remarkable success of 'learning disability' as a category may have been due to its characterization of children who struggled academically as intellectually 'normal,' with a specific learning problem that could be corrected. The diagnosis 'learning disabled' lacked the stigma of bad heredity, immorality, and lower-class status that had haunted the category 'mental retardation' since the early twentieth century. This might have made 'learning disability,' as a label, more palatable to middle-class parents—whose children at one time were more likely than working-class children to be labelled 'learning disabled.' However, historians do not agree on a single explanation of the category's success. Nor do they even agree on whether middle-class and white children are over-represented in the category, or if working-class children and children of colour are, as both of these findings have appeared in various studies. It seems possible that in the early 1960s, 'learning disability' was primarily a middle-class category. Later on, however, by the 1970s to the early 1980s (if not sooner than that), the diagnosis 'learning disability' departed from its middle-class origins and became largely associated with children from racialized and ethnic minority groups and working-class children.[36]

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[33] See Robert McG. Thomas, "Samuel A. Kirk, 92, Pioneer Of Special Education Field," *New York Times* (28 July 1996): 32; Scot Danforth, *The Incomplete Child: An Intellectual History of Learning Disabilities* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 190-193; Franklin, 64-65.

[34] Statistics Canada, "Diversity in the Classroom: Characteristics of Elementary Students Receiving Special Education," *Statistics Canada Educational Quarterly Review* 6 (2000): 7-17. For American statistics showing and similar explosion in diagnosis and enrolment, see Beth Handler, "Who's in the classroom down the hall? An examination of demographic shifts within segregated special education classrooms, 1975-2005, *American Educational History Journal* 34:2 (2007): 387.

[35] See also, Danforth, espec. 137-180.

Reformers in the post-WWII period questioned the streaming of specific groups of children into special education programs, and the quality of these programs as well. By the early 1970s, parents and educational activists and reformers in Toronto were accusing the city's public schools of unfairly streaming working-class children and children from racialized and ethnic minority backgrounds into special education classes that, parents and activists alleged, were of inferior quality compared to the mainstream classes.[37] The controversy contributed to the Toronto public schools becoming one of the only school systems in Canada to compile and analyze demographic data on each and every one of its students. The TBE, and the amalgamated board that replaced it in the late 1990s, the Toronto District School Board, have gathered this data at different intervals ever since the TBE conducted its first "Every Student Survey" (ESS) in 1970.[38] The 1970 survey revealed starkly the systemic tracking of working-class and poor students, as well as children whose families had recently immigrated to Canada, into special classes. Some of the details had changed by 1970, but the contours of the ESS survey suggested that the over-representation of working-class and racialized and ethnic minority children that was apparent in Toronto special education classes from the very beginning, in the late 1910s and early 1920s, was still present 50 years later. In fact, the most recent ESS data available (from 1997 and for secondary school students only) still shows that some racialized groups are over-represented in special classes. In 1997, eight percent of all Toronto public high school students received services from so-called "learning disabled" programs. The rates of participation in those programs amongst black students and aboriginal students were much higher. Sixteen percent of all black pupils in Toronto high schools, and eleven percent of all aboriginal students, received services from "learning

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[36] See Franklin, *From 'Backwardness' to 'At-Risk,'* 70-72; David J. Connor and Beth A Ferri, "Integration and Inclusion—A Troubling Nexus: Race, Disability, and Special Education," *The Journal of African American History*, 90:1-2 (Winter, 2005), 115; Handler. See also: Bruce Curtis, D.W. Livingstone, and Harry Smaller, *Stacking the Deck: The Streaming of Working-Class Kids in Ontario Schools* (Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves, 1992), 55-60 and Jean Kealy and John McLeod, "Learning Disability and Socio-Economic Status," *Journal of Learning Disabilities* 9:9 (September 1976): 596-599.

[37] See: "Downtown Kids Aren't Dumb: They Need a Better Program. A Brief to the Management Committee of the Toronto Board of Education from the Park School Community Council, November 16,

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1971," in George Martell ed., *The Politics of the Canadian Public School* (Toronto: James Lewis & Samuel, 1974), 44-64. See Curtis et. al., 53-64, 84-92.

[38] See: E.N. Wright, "Student's Background and its Relationship to Class and Programme in School, the Every Student Survey," (Toronto: Toronto Board of Education Research Service, 1970); Janis Gershman, "The 1975 Every Student Survey: The Background of Students in Special Education and New Canadian Programs," Report No. 141 (Toronto: Toronto Board of Education Research Service, 1975); Maisy Cheng, "The Every Secondary Student Survey, Fall, 1987," Report No. 191 (Toronto: Toronto Board of Education Research Service, 1989); Robert S. Brown, "The 1991 Every Secondary Student Survey: Initial Findings," Report No. 200 (Toronto: Toronto Board of Education Research Service, 1992); Maisy Cheng and Maria Yau, "The 1997 Every Secondary Student Survey: Detailed Findings," Report No. 230 (Toronto: Toronto District School Board Research Service, 1999).

disabled" programs in 1997. There was less noticeable stratification by class in these same programs, with about equal rates of participation from students from different class backgrounds.[39]

The reforms that created the special classes for 'trainable mentally retarded' children that began in 1947, as well as the special classes and programs for children with 'learning disabilities' that appeared in the1960s, reaffirmed both the model of separate, special classes for children with disabilities and learning difficulties and the medical model of disability.[40] The first school reform of the post-WWII period to *challenge* those two models did not appear until the 1980s. The movement for inclusive education confronted special education at a fundamental level and in an unprecedented way. By the mid- to late-1980s, advocates for inclusion disputed the segregated approach to instruction for children with disabilities and learning difficulties and the medical model of disability as well. Inclusion advocates sought to integrate special education students seamlessly into mainstream classes and asked for the abolition of segregated special education and its replacement with "one unified system structured to meet the unique needs of all students."[41]

Even when special educators in the first half of the twentieth century spoke about integration, as they sometimes did, they did not imagine the degree of integration that inclusion advocates now promote. In the ideal inclusive model, children with disabilities are not merely present in the classroom space. Classrooms are wholly (instead of partially) adapted to their needs. Students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms contribute to classroom learning on their own terms and are equal participants in every aspect of the classroom and school, including peer and school cultures. Disabled children's individual educational needs are met in inclusive classes, but there are no labels and no specialized curriculum designed to 'treat' labelled children, beyond what adaptations each and every child in the class—disabled or not—receives from a school program that is adjusted to his or her individual requirements.[42] Inclusion advocates also often now claim that disability must be reassessed according to the social model view. In the social model, as we have seen, disability is presented as a social difference, not as a medical condition, pathology, or deficiency. Changeable social structures, as opposed to unchangeable embodied differences, are seen as the obstacles that 'disable' individuals.[43]

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[39] Cheng and Yau, 36-37.

[40] See also Bruce Uditsky, "From Integration to Inclusion: The Canadian Experience," in Roger Slee ed., *Is There A Desk with My Name On It?: The Politics of Integration* (London: Falmer Press, 1993), 81-83.

[41] William Stainback and Susan Stainback, "A Rationale for the Merger of Special and Regular Education," *Exceptional Children* 51:2 (October 1984), 102. See also, Osgood, 134-165.

The movement for inclusive school reform achieved significant early success in the last two decades of the twentieth century. In Canada, successful legal and constitutional challenges in the late 1980s and early 1990s, led by parents who wanted their disabled children included in mainstream classes, helped to advance the inclusion agenda.[44] But inclusive reforms have encountered strong opposition as well. This should not surprise us. Inclusion advocates have attacked the pillars of a special education system that has become a common-place and—as many Canadian educators, policymakers, and members of the Canadian public still see it—a common-sense feature of public schooling.[45] As David B. Tyack and Larry Cuban argue in their history of school reform, *Tinkering Toward Utopia*, reforms that "departed too much from the consensual model of a 'real school,'" have always caused the most intense controversy.[46] Unfortunately, opposition has begun to wear on inclusion. Optimism and momentum gained in the 1980s and 1990s have given way in the twenty-first century to a sense amongst many reformers that inclusion is stalled, and that the goal of full inclusion stubbornly remains just beyond the grasp of educational reformers and the children who they wish to serve.[47] A quick glance at Statistics Canada data on inclusion seems to bear out these concerns. The "Participation and Activity Limitation Survey" (PALS) reports on the number of children with disabilities (age 5 to 14) in Canada and on their access to education in the different provinces. Survey data from 2001 and 2006 shows that only around 50 percent of all Ontario schoolchildren with disabilities (physical, perceptual, intellectual, and learning disabilities) are fully included at school—that is, are attending regular classes full time. The other half of Ontario's disabled school population is attending separate special classes either part of the time or all of the time. The national average of fully included children with disabilities (again, disabled children who attend regular classes all of the time) was 57 percent in 2006, down from 59 percent in 2001. Even in Prince Edward Island, the province with the highest rate of attendance in regular classes in 2001 and 2006, only approximately 75 percent of children with disabilities are fully included.[48]

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[42] Uditsky, 86-88; Osgood, 182; Stainback and Stainback, 104-108.

[43] Stainback and Stainback, 102. See also: Marcia H. Rioux and Paula C. Pinto, "A Time for the Universal Right to Education: Back to Basics," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 31:5 (September 2010), 637.

[44] S. Dulcie McCallum, "Access to Equality in Education: The Power of Parents," in Gordon L. Porter and Diane Richler eds., *Changing Canadian Schools: Perspectives on Disability and Inclusion* (Toronto: The Roeher Institute, 1991), 61-70 and Pletsch, 122-124.

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[45] Gordon Porter, "Making Canadian Schools Inclusive: A Call to Action," *Education Canada* 48:2 (Spring 2008): 63-64.

[46] Tyack and Cuban, 9.

[47] Rioux and Pinto; Porter, 62. Implementation of inclusion is uneven in Canada. British Columbia, New Brunswick, the Northwest Territories, and Nova Scotia are the only provinces, and territory, to mandate inclusion by statute. Margret Winzer and Kas Mazurek, "Including Students with Special Needs: Implications for Social Justice," in Joseph Zajda ed., *Globalization, Education and Social Justice* (Heidelberg: Springer, 2010), 90.

As long-time Canadian inclusion advocate Gordon Porter recently argued, inclusion needs a final push: "we need a new wave of principled school reform that will contribute to accommodating the diversity of our student population, to inclusion as a guiding principle, and to school improvement on a broad basis for all our students."[49] My hope is that this dissertation may contribute in some small way to renewing the very important debate about exceptional children, educational reform, and public schooling.

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[48] See: Dafna Kohen, Sharanjit Uppal, Anne Guevremont, and Fernando Cartwright, "Children with Disabilities and the Educational system—A Provincial Perspective," *Education Matters: Insights on Education, Learning and Training in Canada* (Statistics Canada) 4:1 (May 2007): n.p. and Statistics Canada, "Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2006: A Profile of Education for Children with Disabilities," (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2008), 8-13. An analysis of PALS data by Vianne Timmons and Maryam Wagner for the "Inclusive Education Knowledge Exchange Initiative" is helpful when interpreting these numbers. Timmons and Wagner developed an "inclusion index" as a way classifying children's experiences of inclusion in relation to a definition of "robust" inclusion, instead of simply counting the number of included children, as the data straight from the PALS report does. According to Timmons and Wagner, in Ontario 31 percent of children with disabilities experienced a "high" level of educational inclusion in 2001. That is, these children were not merely present in regular classes, their educational needs were met there, they were included in peer cultures and in school activities, and had meaningful relationships with adults and young people at school. Ontario's rate of schoolchildren who experience "high" levels of inclusion—about one third of all children with disabilities—was lower than the Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick rates of over 50 percent. More details on the index and development of the definition of "robust" inclusion that Wagner and Timmons use may be found in: Vianne Timmons and Maryam Wagner, "An Analysis of the Statistics Canada Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, Final Report," (Ottawa: Canadian Council on Learning, 2010).

[49] Porter, 62.

Appendix A. Special classes and enrolment, Toronto Board of Education.

The following statistical tables on special education in Toronto public schools show the enrolment in the different special classes from the 1920s (when statistics became available) to the 1940s.

Abbreviations:

TBE—Toronto Board of Education

DOE—Ontario Department of Education

TDSBA—Toronto District School Board Archives

Table A.1. Auxiliary/opportunity classes and enrolment, TBE schools, 1920-21 to 1944-45[1].

Year[2]	Classes[3]	Students	% of tot. enrol. (elem)	Tot. enrol. (elem)[4]	Year	Classes	Students	% of tot. enrol. (elem)	Tot. enrol. (elem)
1920-21	13	271[5]	0.38%	72,104	1933-34	54	934	0.96%	97,177
1921-22	24	378	0.51%	74,823	1934-35	55	1010	1.04%	97,288
1922-23	38	590	0.76%	77,301	1935-36	54	999	1.21%	82,411
1923-24	42	697	0.89%	77,941	1936-37	52	954	1.16%	82,453
1924-25	47	701	0.76%	92,065	1937-38	52	940	1.16%	81,263
1925-26	46	754	0.83%	90,937	1938-39	51	904	1.12%	80,465
1926-27	49	775	1.02%	76,299	1939-40	51	947	1.24%	76,519
1927-28	41	849	1.10%	77,358	1940-41	48	886	1.20%	74,030
1928-29	47	761	0.81%	93,552	1941-42	43	759	1.04%	73,134
1929-30	47	760	0.80%	94,837	1942-43	40	768	1.07%	71,797
1930-31	53	872	0.91%	96,077	1943-44	40	779	1.07%	72,998
1931-32	53	898	0.93%	96,301	1944-45	41	747	1.07%	70,113
1932-33	54	936	0.96%	97,049					

Sources: *TBE Annual Report 1920...1928*, Attendance Report; *DOE Annual Report*, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 1929 ... 1940, 1942 ... 1945; TDSBA. TDSB 2003-0375, T.B.E. Attendance Statistics 1933-1943. "Toronto Public School Summary of Enrolment - June 1941."

[1] The first statistics available are from 1920-21. Auxiliary classes were renamed opportunity classes in 1937. *DOE Annual Report 1937*, Appendix G, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 47.

[2] Statistics for 1920-21 to 1927-28 school years are based on the month of December; 1940-41 is based on June. The DOE did indicate what month it used for its statistics.

[3] Does not include regular classes at the Hospital for Sick Children and the Shelter sometimes listed as auxiliary classes.

[4] Kindergarten to Grade 8, and a few Grade 9 and 10 classes located in elementary schools.

[5] Estimate. Based on reported class average of 21 pupils.

Table A.2 Junior vocational and handicraft school enrolment, Toronto, 1925-26 to 1944-45.[1]

	Boys	Girls	Total[2]	% of sec. enrol.	Sec. enrol.[3]
1925-26	244	249	493	3.18%	15,505
1926-27	473	296	769	4.65%	16,544
1927-28	470	349	819	4.60%	17,802
1928-29	518	369	887	4.27%	20,786
1929-30	537	475	1012	4.71%	21,492
1930-31	607	513	1120	4.96%	22,592
1931-32	638	565	1203	4.82%	24,943
1932-33	622	585	1207	4.61%	26,191
1933-34	696	767	1463	5.99%	24,413
1934-35	704	680	1384	5.86%	23,612
1935-36	614	588	1202	5.18%	23,203
1936-37	609	589	1198	5.22%	22,944
1937-38	624	545	1169	4.68%	24,955
1938-39	624	545	1169	4.64%	25,167
1939-40	541	592	1133	4.46%	25,376
1940-41	471	553	1024	4.25%	24,066
1941-42	441	434	875	3.91%	22,353
1942-43	430	537	967	4.70%	20,578
1943-44[4]	250	571	821	3.76%	21,853
1944-45[5]	na	na	na	na	21,525

Sources: *DOE Annual Report 1926 ... 1945*, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes and Detailed Statistics.

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[1] The first statistics available are from 1925-26. Junior vocational schools were renamed handicraft schools in 1935. *TBE Minutes 1935*, Appendix No. 24, Advisory Vocational Report No. 3, 12 February 1935, Adopted 21 February 1935, 152.

[2] Based on enrolment at inspection date.

[3] Based on complete enrolment (part- and full-time), in May of school year.

[4] May enrolment not available. Based on net enrolment for the year.

[5] Enrolment statistics for handicraft schools in 1944-1945 were combined with a non-special-education vocational program.

Table A.3. Sight-saving classes and enrolment, TBE schools, 1922-23 to 1944-45.

Year[1]	Classes	Students	Year	Classes	Students
1922-23	1	17	1934-35	5	78
1923-24	3	41	1935-36	5	76
1924-25	3	45	1936-37	5	67
1925-26	3	41	1937-38	5	72
1926-27	3	38	1938-39	5	65
1927-28	3	46	1939-40	5	77
1928-29	4	57	1940-41[2]	5	65
1929-30	4	59	1941-42	5	73
1930-31	5	70	1942-43	5	91
1931-32	5	75	1943-44	5	67
1932-33	5	68	1944-45	5	65
1933-34	5	81			

Sources: *TBE Annual Report 1922*, 119; *TBE Annual Report 1923*, 100; *TBE Annual Report 1924 ... 1927*, Attendance Report; *DOE Annual Report,* Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 1937 ... 1940, 1942 ... 1945; TDSBA. TDSB 2003-0375, T.B.E. Attendance Statistics 1933-1943. "Toronto Public School Summary of Enrolment - June 1941."

[1] Statistics for 1922-23 to 1927-28 school years are based on the month of December; 1940-41 is based on June. The DOE did not indicate what month it used for its statistics.

[2] DOE statistics not available. TBE attendance statistics are substituted instead.

Table A.4. Orthopaedic classes and enrolment, TBE schools, 1926-27 to 1944-45.

Year[1]	Classes	Students	Year	Classes	Students
1926-27	2	33	1936-37	5	75
1927-28	3	44	1937-38	5	70
1928-29	3	48	1938-39[3]	5	181
1929-30	4	49	1939-40	5	75
1930-31	4	59	1940-41[2]	4	69
1931-32	5	62	1941-42	5	68
1932-33	5	73	1942-43	5	95
1933-34	5	76	1943-44	5	88
1934-35	5	73	1944-45	5	88
1935-36	5	73			

Source: *TBE Annual Report*, 1927, 1928, Attendance Report; *DOE Annual Report*, Report of the Inspector of Auxiliary Classes, 1929 ... 1940, 1942 ... 1945; TDSBA. TDSB 2003-0375, T.B.E. Attendance Statistics 1933-1943. "Toronto Public School Summary of Enrolment - June 1941."

[1] Statistics for 1926-27 and 1927-28 school years are based on the month of December; 1940-41 is based on June. The DOE did not indicate what month it used for its statistics.

[2] DOE statistics not available. TBE attendance statistics are substituted instead.

[3] Polio outbreak in Toronto, fall 1937. (See Chapter 5.)

Table A.5 Hard of hearing classes and enrolment, TBE schools, 1924-25 to 1944-45[1].

Year[2]	Classes	Students	Year	Classes	Students
1924-25	1	11	1935-36		
1925-26	1	13	1936-37		
1926-27	1	13	1937-38		
1927-28	2	22	1938-39		
1928-29	Statistics for 1928-29 to 1938-39 combine hard-of-hearing classes, oral day school classes for the deaf, and speech correction classes.		1939-40	4	61
1929-30			1940-41	na	na
1930-31			1941-42	4	61
1931-32			1942-43	4	62
1932-33			1943-44	4	56
1933-34			1944-45	4	59
1934-35					

Sources: *TBE Annual Report 1924 ... 1927*, Attendance Report; *DOE Annual Report*, 1940, 1942 ... 1945.

[1] Statistics for 1928-29 to 1938-39 combine hard-of-hearing classes, oral days school classes for the deaf, and speech correction classes.

[2] Statistics for 1924-25 to 1927-28 school years are based on the month of December. The DOE did not indicate what month it used for its statistics.

Table A.6. Oral day school deaf classes and enrolment, TBE schools, 1924-25 to 1944-45[1].

Year[2]	Classes	Students	Year	Classes	Students
1924-25	1	11	1935-36		
1925-26	2	15	1936-37		
1926-27	3	25	1937-38		
1927-28	3	28	1938-39		
1928-29	Statistics for 1928-29 to 1938-39 combine hard-of-hearing classes, oral day school classes for the deaf, and speech correction classes.		1939-40	3	23
1929-30			1940-41	na	na
1930-31			1941-42	3	32
1931-32			1942-43	3	30
1932-33			1943-44	3	30
1933-34			1944-45	4	38
1934-35					

Sources: *TBE Annual Report 1924 ... 1927*, Attendance Report; *DOE Annual Report*, 1940, 1942 ... 1945.

[1] Statistics for 1928-29 to 1938-39 combine hard-of-hearing classes, oral days school classes for the deaf, and speech correction classes.

[2] Statistics for 1924-25 to 1927-28 school years are based on the month of December. The DOE did not indicate what month it used for its statistics.

Table A.7. Speech correction classes and enrolment, TBE schools, 1924-25 to 1944-45[1].

Year[2]	Classes	Students	Year	Classes	Students
1924-25	na	90	1935-36		
1925-26	na	100	1936-37		
1926-27	na	na	1937-38		
1927-28	na	na	1938-39		
1928-29	Statistics for 1928-29 to 1938-39 combine hard-of-hearing classes, oral day school classes for the deaf, and speech correction classes.		1939-40	6	1,214
1929-30			1940-41	na	na
1930-31			1941-42	6	1,122
1931-32			1942-43	6	1,114
1932-33			1943-44	6	1,090
1933-34			1944-45	6	1,094
1934-35					

Source: *TBE Annual Report 1924*, 67; *TBE Annual Report 1925*, 78; *DOE Annual Report*, 1940, 1942 ... 1945; TDSBA. TDSB 2003-0375, T.B.E. Attendance Statistics 1933-1943. "Toronto Public School Summary of Enrolment - June 1941."

[1] Statistics for 1928-29 to 1938-39 combine hard-of-hearing classes, oral days school classes for the deaf, and speech correction classes.

[2] Statistics for 1924-25 to 1927-28 school years are based on the month of December. The DOE did not indicate what month it used for its statistics.

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Abbreviations:

Journals:

CJMH—Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene

PHJ—The Public Health Journal

SPT—The Special Class Teacher

TB—The Bulletin

TS—The School

TSE—The School (Elementary edition).

TSS—The School (Secondary edition).

Reports and Minutes

DOE—Ontario Department of Education

TBE—Toronto Board of Education

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