Chapter 1
Historical Perspectives

Chapter Objectives
• discuss the underlying dynamics that affect the history of the study of intellectual disability
• identify major historical eras associated with certain dominant trends
• discuss the contributions of persons who have had a significant effect on the development of the field
Chapter Objectives Cont’d

• explain how various sociopolitical events have affected the treatment of people who are mentally retarded
• trace the evolutionary development of contemporary issues

Mental retardation is a concept that developed with history. It has changed through time in its nature and in its significance.

- Burton Blatt (1987)

The Recycling Phenomenon

...today’s issues and problems are remarkably similar to those of long ago. Issues, problems, and ideas arise, flower, go to seed, and reappear when the conditions are again right for their growth.

- Patton, Blackbourn, & Fad (1996)
Historical Categories

• Antiquity (Prior to 1700)
• Emergence and Disillusionment (1700 – 1890)
• Facilities-Based Orientation (1890 – 1960)
• Services-Based Orientation (1960 – 1985)
• Supports-Based Orientation (1985 – present)

Antiquity
Prior to 1700
• Differences in treatment across cultures, ranging from angelic to demonic
• Mild intellectual disability generally not recognized
• Services were custodial in nature
• Renaissance thinking laid the foundation for later changes

EMERGENCE & EARLY DISILLUSIONMENT
1700-1890
Emergence of a Field

- Humanistic philosophy begins to trickle down:
  - All men have rights
  - Fortunate should care for the less fortunate
- Early pioneers in special education:
  - Itard
  - Seguin
  - Guggenbuhl
  - Howe
  - Dix
  - Wilbur

Jean-Marc Itard

- Undertook the education of the feral child, Victor, through systematic instruction
- Believed Victor’s deficits were due to environmental experiences
- Became frustrated with Victor’s lack of progress in expressive language
- Progress in other areas led to accolades

Seguin

- Established an educational program in Paris
- Emphasized physiological and moral education
- Included individualized instruction and behavior modification
- Emigrated to U.S. and became a leader in the field through publishing and advocacy
Guggenbuhl's Abendberg

- The first comprehensive residential treatment facility for people with intellectual disability
- The goal was community re-integration
- Abendberg became a model facility

American Pioneers

- Dorothea Dix
  - Advocated for all underprivileged and oppressed persons
- Samuel Howe
  - Established the first public training facility in the United States, which was located in Boston
- Hervey Wilbur
  - Established the first private training facility in the United States, which was located in Barre, Massachusetts

Disillusionment

- Arose from grandiose claims that mental retardation could be cured
- Bred from a lack of common understanding of intellectual disability
- Led to a shift from teaching and instruction to caretaking and warehousing
- Coincided with post-Civil War social changes
FACILITIES-BASED ORIENTATION
1890-1960

Contributing Factors
Three factors:
• The Eugenics Scare
• An influx of immigrants
• The mental test movement

The Eugenics Scare
• A scientific movement designed to improve the human race by manipulating breeding
• Based on the works of Darwin and Galton
• Selective breeding
The Eugenics Scare

The Influence of The Kallikak Family

- Five-generation pedigree study conducted by H.H. Goddard, and published in 1912
- The central theme: “feeblemindedness” was inherited
- Many years later, Goddard’s research on the Kallikaks was called into question

The Eugenics Scare

- Sterilization laws in 26 states early 1900s
- Upheld by the Supreme Court in the famous case of *Buck v. Bell* (1927)

*Three generations of imbeciles are enough.*

(Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote in the majority opinion of *Buck v. Bell*, 1927, p. 50)

The Influence of Immigration

- Immigration from eastern Europe increased in the early 1900s
- Most Americans were of Western or Northern European heritage
- Discriminatory feelings and legislation emerged
- Goddard conducted another study that linked these groups to “feeblemindedness”
The Testing Movement

• First mental test: Binet & Simon in France, 1905
• The original purpose
• Binet had misgivings about the test

The Testing Movement

• Translated into English
• US Army used the mental test
• Hysteria that mental retardation was widespread

Related Sociopolitical Influences

Public Opinion

• The end of World War I meant many newly disabled veterans were returning home
• The Great Depression led many people to experience neediness, fostering empathy for people with disadvantaged circumstances.
• Times of prosperity following World War II led to “feel-good times,” in which social programs thrived and optimism returned
Sociopolitical Influences

Legislation
• The Vocational Rehabilitation Act (1920)
• The Cooperative Research Act (1954)
• PL 85-926 (1958)

Sociopolitical Influences

Litigation
• The Supreme Court decision in the Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

Sociopolitical Forces

Advocacy
• International Council for the Education of Exceptional Children
• President Herbert Hoover role
• The National Association of Parents and Friends of Mentally Retarded Children
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<td>Opportunities</td>
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<td>• President Franklin Roosevelt</td>
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<td>• Escalation of factory jobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The cause of PKU was identified in 1934</td>
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<td>• The Soviet effect</td>
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<td>• Doll’s contribution</td>
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<td>• <em>Mental Subnormality</em> (1958)</td>
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<td>Science &amp; Research: Eugenics Revisited</td>
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<td>• Harold Skeels</td>
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<td>• The science of genetics</td>
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<td>• Reviews of studies</td>
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<td>• Subsequent studies resulted in very different, more hopeful findings</td>
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Services-Based Orientation

1960-1985

Philosophy & Practices

• Typical services included:
  – Self-contained classrooms
  – "Pull-Out" educational programs
  – Sheltered workshops
• The nature-nurture debate

Sociopolitical Influences

• President John F. Kennedy
• President Lyndon B. Johnson
A Proposed Program for National Action to Combat Mental Retardation

- First Report of the PPMR (1962)
- Made recommendations such as:
  - Research
  - Preventive Health Measures
  - Lifelong, Enriched Education Programs
  - Improved Services
  - Civil Rights Protections
  - Training for Professionals

Legislation

- Mental Retardation Facilities and Mental Health Centers Construction Act (1963)

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA; 1965)

Legislation

- Civil Rights Act of 1964

- Vocational Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1973

- Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) (PL 94-142; 1975)
Legislation

- Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 1978

Litigation


Litigation

- Wyatt v. Stickney (1971)
- Larry P. v. Riles (1972)
Trends in Service Delivery

• Normalization

• Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver (1981)

Supports-Based Orientation

1985 - Present

Paradigm Shift?

• Since 1985
  – conceptualization & treatment

• What’s happened?
Supports vs. Services

- Supports are personalized and individually determined
- Supports are controlled by the person using them
- Supports are designed to promote inclusion

Supports vs. Services cont’d

- Services are designed by the providers to meet the needs of the majority
- Services are controlled by the provider
- Services are not always designed to promote inclusion

A Changing Definition

- The 1992 and 2002 AAMR definitions
- Changing definitions
Legislation

• Americans with Disabilities Act (1990).
  – Protections?
  – who is covered?
  – What is affected?

• Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (1994 Revision)
  – Services
  – Environment
  – Standards
  – Services designed for optimal outcomes

• Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997 and 2004 Revisions)
  – Free, Appropriate Public Education for All
  – Appropriate [Culturally Fair] Evaluation
  – Individualized Education Plans
  – Least Restrictive Environment
  – Parent and Child Participation in Planning
  – Procedural Safeguards
Legislation

- No Child Left Behind Act (2002)
  - goal
  - “all” defined
  - Expectations

Litigation


Service Delivery

- Positive Behavior Support
- Genetic research
- Empowerment and self-determination
- Quality of life
Education

- Inclusion
- What happens to most children with ID?
- The use of technology is growing rapidly in the classroom
- Early intervention

Adulthood

- Supported employment
- Deinstitutionalization efforts
- The graying of America

Summary
General

- Significant sociopolitical factors have contributed to the evolution of the field of intellectual disability.
- Intellectual disability is very much a social phenomenon.
- Many contemporary issues are not new.

Antiquity: Prior to 1700

- Before 1700, intellectual disability was misunderstood and treated in a variety of mysterious ways.
- Milder forms of intellectual disability were not recognizable.
- Custodial care was provided in certain settings.

1700-1890

- Itard worked with Victor (the Wild Boy).
- Seguin developed instructional methodologies
- In the United States, key individuals such as Dix, Howe, and Wilbur pioneered care for individuals with special needs.
- Toward the end of the 19th century, important social forces (urbanization and industrialization) were occurring that would have effects on those with cognitive limitations.
- Pessimism about what could be done for persons with intellectual disability developed.
1890-1960

- Institutions became custodial in nature.
- The eugenics movement began, affecting many persons with intellectual disability through sterilization, segregation, and limitations on immigration.
- The mental test was developed, and milder forms of retardation were now recognizable.
- A major professional organization for special education teachers was founded.

1890-1960

- Standardized scales for measuring social maturity and intelligence were introduced.
- The largest and most powerful parent organization advocating for people with intellectual disability (now called the Arc) was formed.
- Most states enacted legislation for educating some students with intellectual disability; many of those with more significant cognitive impairments were still excluded.

1960-1985

- President Kennedy established a national agenda for mental retardation.
- The War on Poverty was initiated.
- The principle of normalization began to take hold.
- A series of major court cases began to force important changes.
1960-1985

- The Vocational Rehabilitation Act reauthorization of 1973 became a landmark piece of legislation.
- A free, appropriate public education became available to all students with disabilities with the passage of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.
- Community services and placement were championed by advocates.

1985 - Present

- The placement of children, youth, and adults into inclusive settings is advocated by parents and professionals.
- The number of residents in institutional settings continues to drop.
- Continued attention on early intervention is promoted.
- The number of students identified by schools as mentally retarded continued to drop, with a slight increase in recent years.

1985 - Present

- Employment possibilities are enriched by the implementation of practices such as supported employment.
- The notion of supports is validated and encouraged.
- New medical discoveries (e.g., genome research) offer exciting possibilities.