



Human TWELFTH EDITION  
Exceptionality

SCHOOL, COMMUNITY, AND FAMILY

Michael L. Hardman | M. Winston Egan | Clifford J. Drew



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## Dedication

*This book is dedicated to people with differing abilities everywhere, who have risen to the challenge of living in a world that is sometimes nurturing, but all too often ambivalent.*

*To our spouses, Monica, Linda, and Linda, our loving appreciation for being so patient and caring during the writing of this 12th edition and the more than 30 years of writing, rewriting, and revising this text. Their insightful contributions and constant support have been invaluable to the quality and success of this book.*

**M L H**

**M W E**

**C J D**



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# Preface

The realization that we are all basically the same human beings, who seek happiness and try to avoid suffering, is very helpful in developing a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood; a warm feeling of love and compassion for others.

— Dalai Lama

Welcome to *Human Exceptionality: School, Community, and Family!* In this, our new 12th edition, we are very pleased to continue as a member of the Cengage Learning family. As authors in a partnership with Cengage Learning, we fully agree with our publisher's mantra that “engagement is the foundation of learning... engagement is at our core and our focus is on engaging with learners, both in the classroom and beyond, to ensure the most effective product design, learning solutions, and personalized services—all to help people learn.”

In doing so, our goal in writing this new edition is to provide you, our readers, with a textbook that is current, informative, relevant, user-friendly, and meaningful in both your professional and personal life—a book that rises to the Cengage vision of fostering academic excellence and professional development, as well as providing *measurable and meaningful learning outcomes* to you, the readers.

For some of you, this book is the beginning of your journey into the lives of people who are exceptional, their families, and the schools and communities in which they live. This text is first and foremost about people—people with many different needs, desires, characteristics, challenges, and lifestyles—people who for one reason or another are described as *exceptional*. What does the word *exceptional* mean to you? For that matter, what do the words *disabled*, *challenged*, or *different* mean to you? Who or what influenced your knowledge and attitudes toward people with differing abilities and the labels we often use to describe them? You are most influenced by your life experiences. You may have a family member, friend, or casual acquaintance who is exceptional. It may be that you are a person who is exceptional in some way. Then again, you may be approaching a study of human exceptionality with little or no background. In reading and interacting with this book, we believe you will find that the study of human exceptionality is the study of being human. Perhaps you will come to understand yourself better in the process. As suggested by the novelist Louis Bromfield,

*There is a rhythm in life, a certain beauty which operates by a variation of lights and shadows, happiness alternating with sorrow, content with discontent, distilling in this process of contrast a sense of satisfaction, of richness that can be captured and pinned down only by those who possess the gift of awareness.*

## About This Edition Organization

We have thoughtfully listened to the needs of our current adopters, the university instructors, and most importantly, you—the students who use our book. In doing so, we have organized our book into 15 chapters to easily coordinate with a 15-week semester, a common time frame for many university and college courses. Additionally, this book is organized into four parts that can be taught easily within a 10-week period, with each part addressed over a two-week period, which better accommodates universities or colleges that follow a quarter system.

The four parts reflect the major themes of the book. In Part 1, we begin with a focus on understanding exceptionality through the lifespan. Also, we examine exceptionality from the perspectives of many different disciplines. Part 2 looks into the meaning of diversity and the role of family and is followed by Part 3, a study of individuals who are identified as exceptional. Our new edition concludes with Part 4, an in-depth discussion on people with exceptional gifts and talents. In responding to the needs and desires of our audience of students and adopters who are currently using this text, as well as those who are considering adopting it for future use, we have completely rewritten and updated three chapters in Parts 2 and 3: “Cultural and Linguistic Diversity” (Chapter 5), “Learning Disabilities” (Chapter 7), and “Autism Spectrum Disorders” (Chapter 11).

## New and Updated Features

- In this edition, you will find that each chapter begins with the heading “A Changing Era in the Lives of People Who Are Exceptional” and concludes with “Looking Toward a Bright Future.” The narratives within these headings begin and end each chapter on a positive note on the past, present, and future, while acknowledging the challenges that people with differences face and will continue to encounter in the years to come.
- The feature, *Learning through Social Media*, introduced in the 11th edition, is updated this edition to reflect the ever-increasing and changing use of social media in the 21st century. Social media on the Internet, which began more as a personal convenience, is moving rapidly into the realm of a necessity in every

student's learning experience. In this new edition, many of the chapters highlight new and updated on-line blogs and social media sites by and for people who are exceptional, the purpose of which is to use this ever-changing technology to promote greater inclusion in schools, families, and communities.

- The features that have been so popular with our readers in past editions, including *Reflect on This*, *Case Study on Embracing Diversity*, and *Assistive Technology*, continue to appear in the 12th edition. Many of these have been updated and expanded to provide the most accurate and current information available in both the professional literature and the popular press.
- We continue to update and expand our unique topical coverage of multidisciplinary and collaborative approaches to education, health care, and social services with the *Community Support for Lifelong Inclusion* feature (formerly *Inclusion and Collaboration through the Lifespan*) that you'll find in Chapters 7 through 15. The change in this feature's title is reflective of the increasing emphasis on the important role the entire community plays in supporting social and academic inclusion throughout the life of a person who is exceptional.
- The content of this new 12th edition corresponds with the 2012 Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards as highlighted in the margin icons within every chapter. The Standards Correlation Chart at the end of the book details where specific standards are addressed in the book.
- MindTap for Education is a first-of-its-kind digital solution with an integrated e-portfolio that prepares teachers by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and competencies they must demonstrate to earn an education degree and state licensure, and to begin a successful career. Through activities based on real-life teaching situations, MindTap elevates students' thinking by giving them experiences in applying concepts, practicing skills, and evaluating decisions, guiding them to become reflective educators.
- We are also very proud of the fact that the 12th edition contains nearly **1,200 citations** from sources that have been published within the last decade and many of which have been published within the last two years. As authors, we are very comfortable in saying to you, our readers, that the

12th edition of *Human Exceptionality* provides the most current sources available on the lives of people who are exceptional.

## Pedagogical Features and Student Learning System

In addition to providing you with current and informative content, we are committed to making your experience with this textbook, interesting, enjoyable, and productive. To this end, each chapter in this 12th edition contains new and continuing features that will significantly enhance your desire to learn more about human exceptionality.

### Learning Objectives and Chapter Review

At the beginning of each chapter, we have provided tools to assist you in locating and more effectively learning and retaining key content. A set of **learning objectives** opens each chapter and serves as an advanced organizer for your reading. Learning objectives are directly linked to **first-order headings** within the chapter narrative. For example, Learning Objective 4-3 at the beginning of Chapter 4 reads:

- Identify the purpose of person-centered transition planning and the basic steps in its formulation.

The first-order heading that corresponds with Learning Objective 4-3 can easily be found in chapter narrative since it has the same numbering (4-3) as its corresponding learning objective.

Each chapter concludes with a **Chapter Review** that reiterates the chapter's learning objectives, summarizing key concepts and content.

#### Learning Objectives

After you complete this chapter, you will be able to:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>9-1</b> Describe how the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have changed since the advent of IDEA.</p> <p><b>9-2</b> Explain the various definitions and classifications of intellectual disabilities.</p> <p><b>9-3</b> Describe the characteristics and prevalence of children and youth with intellectual disabilities.</p> | <p><b>9-4</b> List the causes and risk factors associated with intellectual disabilities.</p> <p><b>9-5</b> Describe the assessment procedures used to identify intellectual disabilities in children and youth.</p> <p><b>9-6</b> Describe the different interventions for children and youth with intellectual disabilities from early childhood through adulthood.</p> |
|--|---|

#### Chapter Review

- 9-1 Describe how the lives of people with intellectual disabilities have changed since the advent of IDEA.**
- As more children with intellectual disabilities enter school, developmental delays have become more apparent. Prior to the passage of IDEA, it was common for the cognitive and social differences of children with intellectual disabilities to be attributed to immaturity. Today, educators recognize the need for specialized services to support a child's development in the natural settings of school, neighborhood, and home.
  - People with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities have challenges that often transcend the classroom. Today, we recognize that these children are able to learn and use adaptive skills that allow independence, with varying levels of support.
- 9-2 Explain the various definitions and classifications of intellectual disabilities.**
- Definition
    - There are significant limitations in intellectual abilities.
    - There are significant limitations in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills.
- Although dependent upon others for basic life needs, people with profound intellectual disabilities benefit from education and treatment beyond routine care and maintenance. The extent of profound disabilities is one reason why this group of children was excluded from the public schools prior to the passage of IDEA. Exclusion was often justified on the basis that schools did not have the resources, facilities, or trained professionals to deal with the needs of these students.

## Snapshot

*Snapshot* features are personal insights into the lives of real people. These insights may come from teachers, family members, friends, peers, and professionals, as well as from people who are exceptional. Each chapter in the 12th edition opens with a narrative *Snapshot* of people who are exceptional, their family members, or teachers. We believe you will find *Snapshots* to be one of the most enriching aspects of your introduction to human exceptionality. For example, you'll learn about:

- Tara Hillegas's eight tips for new Special Education Teachers (Chapter 2)
- Jennifer and Linea and their unique mental health challenges (Chapter 8)
- Actress Lauren Potter from TV's *Glee* (Chapter 9)
- Trinity, a 7th grader with a fluency disorder (Chapter 10)
- Diagnosing "C", a mother's reflection on her son being diagnosed with autism (Chapter 11)
- Sarina's experiences in her neighborhood junior high school (Chapter 12)

## Community Support for Lifelong Inclusion

Another updated feature in this edition with a new title is *Community Support for Lifelong Inclusion*. This feature provides helpful information on ways to interact with, include, communicate with, or teach people who are exceptional across a variety of settings (home, school, and community) and age spans (early childhood through the adult years). We hope these ideas will provide motivation for further thinking about ways to fully include these individuals as family members, school peers, friends, or neighbors, as well as collaborate with other professionals concerned with improving the lives of people who are exceptional.

## Reflect on This

Every chapter includes one or more *Reflect on This* boxes. Each box highlights additional interesting and relevant information beyond the chapter narrative that will add to your learning and enjoyment of the topic, such as:

- "What's My Role on the Multidisciplinary School-Wide Assistance Team?" (Chapter 3)
- "Redefining Learning Disabilities Using a Response to Intervention Model" (Chapter 7)



## Living with NO Boundaries: Meet Hector

### By the Disability.gov team

Some people collect baseball cards. Others save coins or stamps. But Hector's collection is much more valuable. He is the proud owner of more than 24 library cards, which he actively uses around the state of California. It was simply by chance that the Disability.gov team chose a library as the setting for Hector's photo shoot. Little did we know that libraries are such an intricate part of his story.

Hector's insatiable thirst for knowledge started at a young age. After teaching himself to read, Hector spent hours on end at the local library, poring over books in every genre. One time, when he was living with his grandmother in Mexico, he learned that a new library was opening in town. Hector, who was only six years old, decided to skip school to visit it. Needless to say, his family wasn't too pleased with his little adventure.

Throughout the years, libraries became a safe haven from the overstimulation Hector sometimes experienced as a result of his autism and other invisible disabilities. Even though he wanted to socialize with his classmates, Hector said he couldn't always handle the stress after a long day at school. Library books offered access to the intimate thoughts of thousands of "friends" in a quiet environment. Hector still

reads every chance he gets, and the Internet has only enhanced his ability to learn, enabling him to quickly reach out to authors to ask them questions about their books.

Knowledge leads to not only awareness, but also understanding. Hector knows this fact all too well. As a Two Spirit member of the Chiricahua Apaches, Hector brings light to the presence of autism and mental health conditions (e.g., bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder) in the Native American community. Because his culture only recognizes disability as a limitation imposed by environmental factors, accessibility and accommodations for people with disabilities are scarce. Without increasing awareness, this situation is unlikely to change.

For this reason, Hector advocates for turning one's disability into what he calls a "purpose-ability," that is, finding a way to make a difference despite the challenges that may be presented by one's disabilities. A large part of his focus is on issues affecting people, families, and communities impacted by disabilities. He regularly volunteers for a number of organizations, including the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the Women Shelter of Long Beach, Organizing for Action (a grassroots movement to enroll U.S. citizens in

health care), the California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission, and the Workforce Education and Training Consumer and Family Member Employment Advisory Committee.

In addition, Hector lends his expertise in mental health conditions to local government agencies and other organizations. As a self-employed public policy analyst, he provides consulting services, such as reviewing budgets for local mental health programs and evaluating whether they are research-based or successful after implementation. Hector says he enjoys owning his own business because it gives him more control of the end product, but sometimes it's hard waiting for a check to arrive. Even still, Hector appreciates the independence his job provides.

"I force myself to adapt and be independent," he says. "I traveled to Washington, D.C., for the first time by myself for this photo project. I was nervous, but I just said I was going to do it...and I did."

The Disability.gov team would like to thank the staff at the Arlington Public Library for graciously donating their time and space to the No Boundaries Photo Project.

SOURCE: Retrieved January 6, 2015, from <http://disability.gov/library.com/2014/10/15/living-with-no-boundaries-meet- Hector/> (image-4542).



## People with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders (EBD)

### Early Childhood Years

#### Tips for Families

- Become involved with parent training and other community support services.
- Work collaboratively with multidisciplinary personnel (educators, social workers, health care professionals, and parent-group volunteers) in developing effective child management strategies.
- Use the same evidence-based intervention strategies at home that are applied in the preschool settings.
- Establish family routines, schedules, and incentive systems that reward and build positive behaviors.
- Participate actively in advocacy or parent-support groups.
- Understand your rights regarding health care, education, and social services benefits.

#### Tips for Preschool Teachers

- Work collaboratively with the mul-

managing children with challenging behaviors.

- Make every effort to involve children with EBD in school-wide activities and special performances.
- Orient and teach preschool children without disabilities about how to appropriately respond to classmates with challenging behaviors such as teaching them to ignore, walk away, get help from the teacher, and so on.
- Collaborate with parents in using the same management systems and strategies in your preschool classroom as those used in the home.

#### Tips for Neighbors and Friends

- Become familiar with the things you can do as a neighbor or friend in responding to the challenging behaviors of a neighborhood child with EBD.
- Be patient with parents who are attempting to cope with their child's temper tantrums or other challenging behaviors in community settings, such

as your spouse from community mental health agencies or other public or private sources.

- Help your other children and their friends understand the things they can do to support your child with EBD.

#### Tips for General Education Classroom Teachers

- Provide a positive, structured classroom/learning environment (i.e., with clearly stated rules, helpful positive and negative consequences, well-conceived classroom schedules, carefully taught classroom routines, and solid relationship-building activities).
- Teach social skills (how to deal with bullying, accept criticism, etc.) to all of the children with the help of members of the school's multidisciplinary teacher assistance team.
- Teach self-management skills (goal selection, self-monitoring, self-reinforcement, etc.) to all children with the aid of members of the school's multidisciplinary



## What's My Role on the Multidisciplinary School-Wide Assistance Team?

A team is a group of professionals, parents, and students who join together to plan and implement an appropriate educational program for a student at risk or with a disability. Team members may be trained in different areas of study, including education, health services, speech and language, school administration, and so on. In the team approach, these individuals, regardless of where or how they were trained, sit down together and coordinate their efforts to help students. For this approach to work, all team members must clearly understand their roles and responsibilities as members of the team. Let's visit with some team members and explore their roles in working with students.

### Special Education Teacher

It's my responsibility to coordinate the student's individualized education pro-

gram. I work with each team member to ensure that our child is involved in an appropriate educational program. We give the team information about our child's life outside school and suggest experiences that might be relevant to the home and the community. We also work with our child at home to reinforce what is learned in school. As members of the team, we give our written consent for any evaluations of our child and any changes in our child's educational placement.

### School Psychologist

I select, administer, and interpret appropriate psychological, educational, and behavioral assessment instruments. I consult directly with team members regarding the student's overall educational development. It is also my

responsibility to coordinate the student's individualized education program. I work with each team member to ensure that our child is involved in an appropriate educational program. We give the team information about our child's life outside school and suggest experiences that might be relevant to the home and the community. We also work with our child at home to reinforce what is learned in school. As members of the team, we give our written consent for any evaluations of our child and any changes in our child's educational placement.

### Adapted Physical Education Teacher

I am an adapted physical education specialist who works with the team to determine whether the student needs adapted physical education services as a component of his or her individual-

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

### Apps for Autism

The phenomenal success of tablets with the general public has spawned thousands of applications for individuals with ASD, many of which are free or low in cost. Having strong visual skills, students with autism are motivated to participate in learning activities presented on electronic devices. Some apps are designed for individuals without disabilities (e.g., academic programs such as names of the U.S. presidents, math flash cards, spelling, graphic organizers), while other apps are designed specifically for individuals with disabilities such as ASD (e.g.,

social skills, eye contact, visual timers, sign language). Apps that have the greatest impact on nonverbal students are those that can be used for augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). Typical electronic AAC devices are expensive, but apps for tablets provide similar functionality at a lower price and with greater portability.

Because thousands of apps are available online and many of them are appropriate for individuals with ASD, it can be overwhelming to parents and

professionals to choose the most appropriate app for the right purpose for each person. Some apps and websites have been designed to address this issue. On the AppyAutism site, users select their operating system, type of device, category of app (e.g., communication, social, learning), and keyword, and the site lists the apps matching the user's search criteria. Prices, screenshots, videos, and scholarly articles accompany some of the app listings. The site is available updated monthly and presented in English and Spanish.

## CASE STUDY ON EMBRACING DIVERSITY

### Don-Wook Shin

Don-Wook Shin was doing long division in his head before the age of 5. He began learning calculus in fifth grade, took his first Advanced Placement (AP) test in seventh grade, and then proceeded to teach himself the curriculum to seven other AP math and science courses over the next three years. By the end of 10th grade, he'd done so well on all those AP tests that he was named a Siemens Award winner as the highest-scoring male student in California.

Catherine Cloughesy, his kindergarten teacher, noticed Shin's unusual facility with math and started throwing out long division with three-digit numbers. She stated, "I would sit next to him and I could see that he did it in his head and then wrote it down. It was quite shocking." She added, "You wouldn't know if you just met him. I've met a lot of gifted children and it's a rare trait to be able to joke and laugh about yourself like he can."

Catherine Harrington, a part-time inclusion specialist, worked with Shin before or after school, "giving up her own time to tutor me one-on-one," said Shin, to make sure he could continue progressing at his own rate in math. Harrington eventually enlisted another teacher to help Shin with calculus.

The story of this gifted child is also the story of a community of family and



riding his bike, swimming, and playing," Harrington said. That insistence that this child should remain a child is why, Harrington and Cloughesy said, Shin has become such a well-rounded teenager. Keeping him with his peers—who academically were all over the place—not only taught him humility, Harrington said, but how to be socially appropriate.

"My parents wanted to give me time to enjoy high school and develop on my own," Shin said of his journey. "It was my own decision to skip one year ahead. I'm really looking forward to college and being able to study what I want to study."

#### Application Questions

teachers who decided when Shin was still very young that this exceptional student, who could have gone to college as early as seventh grade, should be given a true childhood—a chance to grow up among his peers and become a well-rounded individual. The whole idea of Shin taking AP tests at such a young age was really more about measuring what he was learning. By the time he was in the ninth grade, Shin had taken and received top scores of 5 on calculus BC, statistics, both physics tests, and biology.

When his parents asked Harrington what Shin should work on over the summer, "I told them he needed to work on

1. What difficulties would you anticipate if Shin was a student in your first-grade class? Be sure to consider and address academic, social, emotional, and behavioral concerns.

2. How did Shin's school address the disparity between his cognitive functioning and his chronological age?

3. In what other ways could his school have addressed Shin's needs if teachers were unwilling or unable to provide out-of-contract service?

Source: Terras-Bellamy, A. (2013, March 7). "The Story of a Gifted Child." *The Davis Enterprise*, p. A1. Retrieved from [www.davisenterprise.com/local-news/the-story-of-a-gifted-child/](http://www.davisenterprise.com/local-news/the-story-of-a-gifted-child/).

## LEARNING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

### My Life with Cerebral Palsy: Removing the Fence Around Social Barriers One Post at a Time

Laura Forde is a young adult. She has been blogging for several years. As a child, she felt quite lonely and secluded because others her age did not know how to communicate with her. However, as she moved through her schooling, she developed greater independence, becoming a "spunky and determined adult." She now communicates regularly from her blog. What follows is one of her recent postings:

#### Why I Am Glad I Grew Up in the Time I Did

In coming up with today's post, I found myself in a reflective space... [O]ut my window, the snow is softly falling and the forecast later today looks bleak so I am told. It is this weather that leaves the thought of

going out to be an undesired one, and yet I have a strong need: the need for community.

#### The Digital Age Helps the Disabled

I often wonder what my life would be like if I grew up in a different time. The Internet helps to maintain or build a community that I otherwise wouldn't have. The digital age has helped me be less lonely, less aware of my physical limitation. That isn't just because of this blog: it's Facebook, Twitter, AbilityOnline, and the other places online that I frequent.

#### Why I Love Blogging and Think We All Should Have a Blog

We all have a story worth telling, and I love how the blog for me does

not require any adaptation to participate: it simply requires learning and a learning curve and some dedication. But I don't "look" different nor do I do things differently from the next guy that runs a blog. Blogs are about shared experience and I hope you will do me the honor of sharing my blog with your friends and family and your community online. I feel like this blog is helping to reduce social stigma, and without the internet, this blog wouldn't be here.

SOURCE: Copyright © 2012 by Laura Forde. Laura Forde is a blogger and public speaker from Ontario, Canada; you can learn more about her at <http://lfordeblogdifferentlyabled.com>.

## Assistive Technology

The 12th edition offers new information on the expanding use of technology for people who are exceptional. *Assistive Technology* features highlight important innovations in computers, biomedical engineering, and instructional systems. The following are examples of *Assistive Technology* features:

- "Assistive Technology for People with Intellectual Disabilities" (Chapter 9)
- "Apps for Autism" (Chapter 11)
- "VGo: The Ultimate School-Based Robot" (Chapter 14)
- "From Science Fiction to Reality: Ekso Exoskeletons" (Chapter 14)
- "Renzulli Learning: Differentiation Engine" (Chapter 15)

## Case Study on Embracing Diversity

Each chapter includes a *Case Study on Embracing Diversity* feature, which is an in-depth look at a personal story of exceptionality. Each *Case Study on Embracing Diversity* also includes Application Questions to extend your knowledge and apply what you learned from each vignette. You'll find a variety of stories, such as:

- Ana, a first-grader from an impoverished and abusive home environment where English language usage is limited (Chapter 5)
- Ten-year-old Leon's challenging day as a boy with emotional/behavioral disorders (Chapter 8)
- Culturally and linguistically diverse children with ASD (Chapter 11)
- Xeeb, an 8-year-old Hmong boy with a hearing loss (Chapter 13)

## Learning through Social Media

The *Learning through Social Media* boxes provide interesting and informative online blogs and social media sites by and for people who are exceptional, and the use of this technology to promote inclusion in school, family, and society. Examples of *Learning through Social Media* boxes include:

- "10 Helpful and Compassionate Comments Heard at an IEP Meeting" (Chapter 2)
- "Edutopia on Culturally Responsive Teaching" (Chapter 5)
- "Bring Change 2 Mind" (Chapter 8)
- "Design Challenge: DIY Assistive Game Controllers" (Chapter 12)
- "Experiences of People with Sensory Impairments" (Chapter 13)
- "My Life With Cerebral Palsy: Removing the Fence around Social Barriers One Post at a Time" (Chapter 14)

## End-of-Chapter Features

In addition to the Chapter Review mentioned earlier, other end-of-chapter features include a list of Council for Exceptional Children standards (updated in 2012) addressed in the chapter and Mastery Activities and Assignments.



## Supplement Package

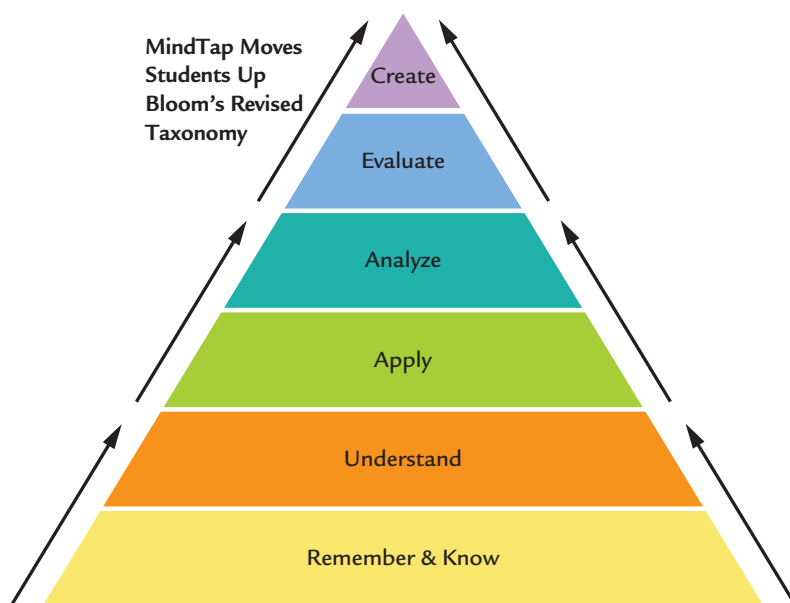
### MindTap™: The Personal Learning Experience

MindTap for Hardman/Egan/Drew, *Human Exceptionality: School, Community, and Family*, 12th edition, represents a new approach to teaching and learning. A highly personalized, fully customizable learning platform with an integrated e-portfolio, MindTap helps students elevate thinking by guiding them to:

- Know, remember, and understand concepts critical to becoming great teachers;
- Apply concepts, create curriculum and tools, and demonstrate performance and competency in key areas in the course, including national and state education standards;
- Prepare artifacts for the portfolio and eventual state licensure, to launch a successful teaching career; and
- Develop the habits to become reflective practitioners.

As students move through each chapter's Learning Path, they engage in a scaffolded learning experience, designed to move them up Bloom's taxonomy, from lower- to higher-order thinking skills. The Learning Path enables preservice students to develop these skills and gain confidence by:

- Engaging them with chapter topics and activating their prior knowledge by watching and answering questions about authentic videos of teachers teaching and children learning in real classrooms;
- Checking their comprehension and understanding through Did You Get It? assessments, with varied question types that are autograded for instant feedback;



Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. (Eds.). (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. New York: Longman.

- Applying concepts through mini-case scenarios—students analyze typical teaching and learning situations, and then create a reasoned response to the issue(s) presented in the scenario; and
- Reflecting about and justifying the choices they made within the teaching scenario problem.

MindTap helps instructors facilitate better outcomes by evaluating how future teachers plan and teach lessons in ways that make content clear and help diverse students learn, assessing the effectiveness of their teaching practice, and adjusting teaching as needed. MindTap enables instructors to facilitate better outcomes by:

- Making grades visible in real time through the Student Progress App so students and instructors always have access to current standings in the class.
- Using the Outcome Library to embed national education standards and align them to student learning activities, and also allowing instructors to add their state's standards or any other desired outcome.
- Allowing instructors to generate reports on students' performance with the click of a mouse against any standards or outcomes that are in their MindTap course.
- Giving instructors the ability to assess students on state standards or other local outcomes by editing existing or creating their own MindTap activities, and then by aligning those activities to any state or other outcomes that the instructor has added to the MindTap Outcome Library.

MindTap for Hardman/Egan/Drew, *Human Exceptionality: School, Community, and Family*, 12th edition, helps instructors easily set their course because it integrates into the existing Learning Management System and saves instructors time by allowing them to fully customize any aspect of the learning path. Instructors can change the order of the student learning activities, hide activities they don't want for the course, and—most importantly—create custom assessments and add any standards, outcomes, or content they do want (e.g., YouTube videos, Google docs). Learn more at [www.cengage.com/mindtap](http://www.cengage.com/mindtap).

### Online Instructor's Manual with Test Bank

An online Instructor's Manual accompanies this book. It contains information to assist instructors in designing the course, including sample syllabi, discussion questions, teaching and learning activities, field experiences, learning objectives, and additional online resources. For assessment support, the updated test bank includes true/false, multiple-choice, matching, short-answer, and essay questions for each chapter.

## PowerPoint Lecture Slides

These vibrant Microsoft PowerPoint lecture slides for each chapter assist you with your lecture by providing concept coverage using images, figures, and tables directly from the textbook.

## Cognero

Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero is a flexible online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content from multiple Cengage Learning solutions; create multiple test versions in an instant; and deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want.

## Acknowledgments

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To those professors who have chosen this book for adoption, and to those students who will be using this book as their first information source on people with differences, we hope our 12th edition of *Human Exceptionality* meets your expectations.

A loving thank you to our families who have always been there during the past three decades of writing and rewriting this text. We have strived "oh so hard" to produce a book of which you can be proud.

*Michael L. Hardman*  
*M. Winston Egan*  
*Clifford J. Drew*

# Human TWELFTH EDITION Exceptionality

SCHOOL, COMMUNITY, AND FAMILY

# Understanding Exceptionalities in the 21st Century



Jim West/Alamy

## Learning Objectives

After you complete this chapter, you will be able to:

- 1-1** Describe why we continue to label people even when we know it may have a negative effect on an individual.
- 1-2** Identify three approaches to describe human differences.
- 1-3** Explain how societal views on people with disabilities changed from widespread discrimination to an era of inclusion and support in the 21st century.
- 1-4** Identify the catalyst, effects, and provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- 1-5** Describe the role of health care, psychology, and social services professionals in meeting the needs of people with disabilities.



### A Blog by Joe Dolson

Many of those who could be considered disabled would not choose to self-identify as disabled. *Disability* is a label, and like any label, the members of the labeled group are diverse and may exhibit the label in unexpected ways. How many people with color blindness self-identify as disabled? How many people with children in strollers are unable to climb stairs with their child—would they self-identify as disabled? How many left-handed people struggle with right-handed scissors? Is this disability? An issue may appear trivial, but that makes the problem no less frustrating when encountered.

### What Is Disability?

Disability, at some level, affects every part of our day-to-day existence. Disability is nothing more than an inability to make use of a particular resource as it is presented to you. This is how disability is particularly differentiated from usability: With disability, you *cannot* use the resource on your own. If a resource has poor usability, you are *able* to use it, albeit with difficulty.

This is why disability is not an absolute. Disability only prevents you from using tools if alternatives are not made available to you in a manner that you *are* able to use. The blind can “see” if an object or action is described well enough.

The previous examples are situations that may only disable the person in certain circumstances. People with color blindness are disabled when a circumstance requires them to distinguish red from green with no other



Courtesy of Joseph Dolson

clarifying indicators. Some people may be able to carry their children and stroller up the stairs; others may not. An elevator, moving walkway, or escalator platform can resolve the problem. Some left-handed people can successfully switch to the right hand, or at least can manipulate right-handed scissors in such a manner as to successfully cut paper—but can many switch hands to write a letter?

Physical strength or handedness is not classically considered a disability, but there can be no question that they affect one’s ability to accomplish certain tasks.

### But Some People Really Are “Normal”

Oh, yes, of course. I mean, *I’m* normal. But *you*? Well, I have some doubts.

I mean, there are tons of things that I can do that you can’t. Doesn’t that mean you’re disabled? No? It just means that you have a different set of abilities than I do. Or, alternatively, a different set of *disabilities*. **Neither of us is necessarily disabled; but we are “differently abled.”**

That’s right...I forgot. Everybody has a different and independent

capability to perform tasks. Some people are impaired when it comes to math; others, art. Some people don’t run very fast; others can’t walk. These disabilities will always affect one’s life. The degree to which disability affects one’s life is highly variable. People who are classically considered disabled tend to have limitations that are severe enough to affect their life every day.

What is commonly called “normal” is truly just an abstract concept that we apply to our personal experience: Whether by attributing it to ourselves or to others, it is relative to our own perceptions and our environments.

The Web has a great power to reduce that effect. It’s commonly remarked that people behave differently on the Web. This is because the Web divorces them from their mundane routine—and this is true for everybody. On the Web, with a well-designed and accessible website, people with disabilities such as cerebral palsy, sight impairment, or hearing impairment can have an experience fundamentally equal to the experience of the so-called “normal” user.

In any context, people with a disability are disabled not because of an inherent inability to compensate, but because they are in an environment that requires tasks they are unable to perform. If we change the environment, we can remove the disability.

SOURCE: From Dolson, Joe. 2011. “Leveling the Playing Field: We’re All Differently Abled.” Retrieved August 2, 2011, from <http://accessites.org/site/2009/03/leveling-the-playing-field-were-all-differently-abled/>. Text and photo Copyright © Joe Dolson. Reprinted by permission.

# A Changing Era in the Lives of People with Disabilities

In our opening Snapshot, Joe Dolson, an Internet accessibility consultant, emphasizes the point that “disability is not an absolute.” Yet, for good or bad, labeling is the fundamental way society chooses to describe human difference. The purpose of a label is to communicate specific differences in people who vary significantly from what is considered “typical or normal.” Sociologists use labels to describe people who do not follow society’s expectations (e.g., *sociopath*); educators and psychologists use labels to identify and provide services for students with learning, physical, and behavioral differences (e.g., *autistic*); and physicians use labels to distinguish the sick from the healthy (e.g., *diabetic*). Governments label people to identify who is eligible for, or entitled to, publicly funded services and supports (e.g., *disabled*).

## Disorder

A disturbance in normal functioning (mental, physical, or psychological).

## Impairment

A state of being diminished, weakened, or damaged, especially mentally or physically.

## Disability

A condition resulting from a loss of physical functioning; or, difficulties in learning and social adjustment that significantly interfere with normal growth and development.

## Handicap

A limitation imposed on a person by the environment and the person’s capacity to cope with that limitation.

## Exceptional

An individual whose physical, mental, or behavioral performance deviates so substantially from the average (higher or lower) that additional support is required to meet the individual’s needs.

## Gifts and talents

Extraordinary abilities in one or more areas.

## Learning disabilities

A condition in which one or more of an individual’s basic psychological processes in understanding or using language are deficient.

## Intellectual disabilities

Substantial limitations in functioning, characterized by significantly subaverage intellectual functioning concurrent with related limitations in two or more adaptive skills. Intellectual disability is manifested prior to age 18.

## Deaf

Individuals who have hearing losses greater than 75 to 80 dB, have vision as their primary input, and cannot understand speech through the ear.

## 1-1 Why Label People?

We use many labels, including *disorder*, *impairment*, *disability*, and *handicap*, to describe people who are different. These terms are not synonymous. **Disorder**, the broadest of the three terms, refers to a general abnormality in mental, physical, or psychological functioning. **Impairment** goes one step further to indicate that the disorder creates a barrier to typical functioning. A **disability** is more specific than an impairment and is associated with a loss of physical functioning (e.g., loss of sight, hearing, or mobility), or a challenge in learning and social adjustment that significantly interferes with typical growth and development. A **handicap** is a limitation imposed on an individual by demands in the environment and is related to the individual’s ability to adapt or adjust to those demands. For example, Franklin Roosevelt, the 32nd president of the United States, used a wheelchair because of a physical disability—the inability to walk—that resulted from having polio as a child. He used a wheelchair to move from place to place. When the environment didn’t accommodate his wheelchair (such as a building without ramps that was accessible only by stairs), his disability created a handicap. Historically, *handicap* has taken on a very negative connotation and is seldom used in today’s society. The word *handicapped* literally means “cap in hand”; it originates from a time when people with disabilities were forced to beg in the streets merely to survive. For President Roosevelt, his advisers took great pains to disavow his “handicap” because many people in the 1930s and 1940s viewed it as a sign of weakness. However, there is hope that such negative attitudes are changing in the United States today. The national monument in Washington, D.C. that honors President Roosevelt includes a life-size bronze statue of him sitting in a wheelchair.

**Exceptional** is a comprehensive label. It describes an individual whose physical, intellectual, or behavioral performance differs substantially from what is typical (or normal), either higher or lower. People described as exceptional include those with extraordinary abilities (such as **gifts and talents**) and/or disabilities (such as **learning disabilities** or **intellectual disabilities**). People who are exceptional, whether gifted, disabled, or both, benefit from individualized assistance, support, or accommodations in school and community settings.

Labels are only rough approximations of characteristics. Some labels, such as **deaf**, might describe a permanent characteristic—loss of hearing; others, such as *overweight*, describe what is often a temporary condition. Some labels are positive, and others are negative. Labels communicate whether a person meets the expectations of the culture. A given culture establishes criteria that are easily exceeded by some but are unreachable for others. For example, one society may value creativity, innovation, and imagination, and will reward those who have such attributes with positive labels, such as *bright*, *intelligent*, or *gifted*. Another society, however, may brand anyone whose ideas significantly exceed the limits of conformity with negative labels, such as *radical*, *extremist*, or *rebel*.

Moreover, the same label may have different meanings within a culture. Let's take the example of Ellen who is labeled by her high school teachers as a *high achiever* because she always follows the rules and produces quality work. From the teachers' point of view, this is a positive characteristic, but to Ellen's peer group, it could be negative. She may be described by her high school classmates as an *overachiever* or *teacher's pet*.

As emphasized in our opening Snapshot, labels are not absolutes and are often based on perception and not fact. As such, what are the possible consequences of using labels to describe people? Although labels have always been the basis for developing and providing services to people, they have also promoted stereotyping, discrimination, and exclusion. Some researchers suggest that the practice of labeling people has perpetuated and reinforced both the label and the stereotypical behaviors associated with it (Hardman & McDonnell, 2008; Mooney, 2007; Shifrer, 2013).

If labels may have negative consequences, why is labeling used so extensively? One reason is that many social services and educational programs for people who are exceptional require the use of labels to distinguish who is eligible for services and who is not. Discussing the need to label students who have special educational needs, Woolfolk (2013) suggested that labeling may actually help protect a child with learning differences from a class bully who, knowing the child has an "intellectual disability," may be more willing to accept the learning differences. Others (Hardman & McDonnell, 2008; Rose, Swearer, & Espelage, 2012) argue that labeling a child often has just the opposite effect—the child becomes more vulnerable to discrimination and abuse.

As Woolfolk suggests, however, the fact remains that being "labeled" in today's society still opens doors to special programs, useful information, special technology and equipment, or financial assistance. To illustrate, Antonio, a child with a hearing loss, must be assessed and labeled as having a "hearing impairment" before specialized educational or social services can be made available to him in his school. Another reason for the continued use of labels is the "useful information" they provide to professionals in communicating effectively with one another; they also provide a common ground for evaluating research findings. Labeling helps people to identify the specific needs of a particular group of individuals. Labeling can also help people to determine degrees of needs or to set priorities for services when societal resources are limited.



**Standard 6**  
Professional Learning and  
Ethical Practice

## 1-2 Three Approaches to Understanding Human Differences

Differences are found in every society. Most people *conform* to what is expected of them. Conformity—acting as we are "supposed" to act, or looking the way we are "supposed" to look—is the rule for most of us, most of the time (Baron, Branscombe, & Byrne, 2008). Usually, we look the way we are expected to look, behave the way we are expected to behave, and learn the way we are expected to learn. When a person differs substantially from these expectations, three approaches may be used to describe the nature and extent of these differences (see Figure 1.1).

### 1-2a A Developmental Approach

To understand human differences, we must first establish the definition of typical development or what is often described as "normal." According to the developmental approach, typical development can be described by using statistics (and milestones)—that is, observing in large numbers of individuals those characteristics that occur most frequently at a specific age. For example, when stating that the average 3-month-old infant is able to follow a moving object visually, *average* is a statistical term based on observations of the behavior of 3-month-old infants. When comparing an individual child's growth to that group average, differences in development (either advanced or delayed) are labeled accordingly.

**Figure 1.1** Three Approaches to Describing Human Differences



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## 1-2b A Cultural Approach

From a cultural view, “typical” is defined by what any given society values. Whereas a developmental approach considers only the frequency of behaviors to define differences, a cultural view suggests that differences can be explained to a large extent by examining the *values* inherent within a society. What constitutes a significant difference changes over time, from culture to culture, and among the various social groups within a culture. People are considered *different* when they do something that is not expected of or valued by other members within the dominant culture. For example, in some cultures, intelligence is described in terms of how well someone scores on a test measuring a broad range of cognitive abilities; in other cultures, intelligence relates much more to how skillful someone is at hunting or fishing. The idea that people are the products of their cultures has received its greatest thrust from anthropology, which emphasizes the diversity and arbitrary nature of cultural rules regarding dress, eating habits, sexual behaviors, politics, and religion.

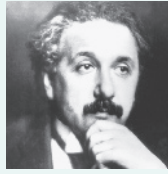
## 1-2c Self-Labeling

Everyone engages in a process of self-labeling that may not be recognized by others with whom they interact. Thus, self-imposed labels reflect how we perceive ourselves, not how others see us. Conversely, a person may be labeled by society as different, but the individual does not recognize or accept the label. Such was the case with Thomas Edison. In school, young Thomas Edison was described as “addled,” unable to focus, terrible at mathematics, a behavior problem, dyslexic, and unable to express himself in a coherent manner (difficulty with speech). Although the schools imposed many negative labels on young Thomas Edison, he eventually recognized that he was an individualist, ignored the labels, and pursued his own interests as an inventor. (See the nearby Reflect on This feature, and take a quiz on other famous people with disabilities.)





## A Few Famous People Who Are Differently Abled (Yet Labeled As Having a Disability)



a. Albert Einstein



b. Frida Kahlo



c. Stephen Hawking



d. Whoopi Goldberg



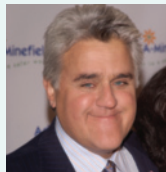
e. R. J. Mitte



f. Tom Cruise



g. James Earl Jones



h. Jay Leno



i. Julia Roberts

### Match the Names to the Descriptions:

\_\_\_ 1. He was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS—Lou Gehrig’s disease) at the age of 21. He must use a wheelchair and have round-the-clock nursing care. His speech has been severely affected, and he communicates through a computer by selecting words from a screen that are expressed through a speech synthesizer. Acknowledged as one of the greatest physicists in history, he developed a theory on black holes that provided new insights into the origin of the universe. Currently, he is professor of mathematics at Cambridge University, a post once held by Sir Isaac Newton.

\_\_\_ 2. She experienced severe pain and other health conditions as a result of a bus crash when she was a teenager. Her artwork is celebrated for its surreal style that was influenced by indigenous cultures of Mexico.

\_\_\_ 3. A well-known, tireless humanitarian advocate for children, the homeless, and human rights, and also involved in the battles against substance abuse and AIDS, this Oscar-winning actress and Grammy winner is a high school dropout with an acknowledged reading disability.

\_\_\_ 4. He is the voice of Darth Vader and the most in-demand narrator in Hollywood. Virtually mute as a child, he stuttered throughout most of his youth. With the help of his high school English teacher, he overcame stuttering by reading Shakespeare aloud to himself and then to audiences. He went on to debating and finally to stage and screen acting.

\_\_\_ 5. He is an actor that strives to enlighten his audience about disability by selecting roles that have depth and reduce stereotypes. He lives with mild cerebral palsy caused from oxygen deprivation during his birth.

\_\_\_ 6. He did not speak until the age of 3. Even as an adult he found that searching for words was laborious. Schoolwork, especially math, was difficult for him, and he was unable to express himself in written language. He was thought to be “simple-minded” (retarded) until he discovered that he could achieve through visualizing rather

than the use of oral language. His theory of relativity, which revolutionized modern physics, was developed in his spare time. *Time* magazine named him the most important person of the 20th century.

\_\_\_ 7. He didn’t learn to read while in school due to severe dyslexia and was unable to finish high school. Today he is regarded as one of most accomplished actors of his time. Although unable to read early in his career, he could memorize his lines from a cassette tape or someone reading to him. He later learned to read as an adult.

\_\_\_ 8. He is an American stand-up comedian and television host. From 1992 to 2009 and from 2010 to 2012, he was the host of NBC’s *The Tonight Show*. He grew up in Andover, Massachusetts, and has confirmed that he is dyslexic. Although his high school guidance counselor recommended that he drop out of high school because of his grades, he not only graduated but also went on to receive a bachelor’s degree in speech therapy from Emerson College in 1973. He also attended Bentley College in Waltham, Massachusetts.

\_\_\_ 9. She is an Academy Award-winning American film actress and former fashion model. She became the highest paid actress in the world, topping the annual power list of top-earning female stars for four consecutive years (2002 to 2005). She acknowledged that she stuttered when she was child, but with therapy, she now speaks fluently.

### Question for Reflection

Select two of these famous people, or another famous person with a disability that you know about, and write a short essay on how their disability has had a positive influence on their lives. Can you describe someone with a disability that you know and how he or she has met the challenges of being a person who is “differently abled”?

SOURCE: The original source of the information contained in this quiz is unknown.

Photo Credits: Einstein: Topham/The Image Works; Kahlo: Bettmann/Corbis; Hawking: AP Images/Banks; Goldberg: AP Images/Lisa Bul; Mitte: AP Images/Richard Shotwell; Cruise: Stephane Cardinale/Sygma/Corbis; Jones: AP Images/Bob Galbraith; Leno: © Featureflash/Shutterstock.com; Roberts: © Featureflash/Shutterstock.com

Answers: 1(c), 2(i), 3(d), 4(g), 5(e), 6(a), 7(f), 8(h), 9(i)

## 1-2d The Effects of Being Labeled

Reactions to a label differ greatly from one person to another but can often be negative (Hardman & McDonnell, 2008; Rose, Swearer, & Espelage, 2012; Woolfolk, 2013). In a study of the reactions of family members, professionals, and the general public to the commonly used label *mental retardation*, researchers found the label generated a more negative reaction than the more current terminology of “intellectual disabilities” (see Chapter 9) (Schroeder et al., 2002).

**Separating the Person and the Label** Once a label has been affixed to an individual, the two may become inseparable. For example, Becky has been labeled as having autism. The tendency is to refer to Becky and her condition as one in the same—Becky is autistic. She is described by a disability label, causing people to lose sight of the fact that she is first and foremost a person, and that her exceptional characteristics (intellectual and social differences) are only a small part of who she is as an individual. To treat Becky as a label rather than someone who is differently abled is discrimination, and an injustice, not only to Becky, but to everyone else as well.

The use of person-first language, putting the person before the disability, can offset the potentially hurtful effects of labels. As an example of person-first language, a teacher could say “this student has a learning disability,” rather than “this is a learning disabled student.” Snow (2005) emphasizes that inappropriate use of labels perpetuate negative stereotypes and potentially reinforce attitudinal barriers.



### LEARNING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

#### “Spread the Word to End the Word!”

*A national campaign is under way to encourage everyone to pledge to stop using the words retard and retarded. Over 500,000 people have taken the pledge. Here are just a few of the comments made on the site:*

—From R-word.org (Retrieved October 1, 2014, from [http://www.r-word.org/Stories/Stories/R-word\\_Stories.aspx](http://www.r-word.org/Stories/Stories/R-word_Stories.aspx))

#### By Fatou Jawara

I don’t understand why people use the “R” word as a synonym for stupid or anything else flawed. It doesn’t make them sound “cool.” It just makes them ignorant. These people are completely apathetic. They don’t think about the person who has an intellectual disability or knows someone that has an intellectual disability. And what grinds my gears is when people say that it’s not “offensive” or “not that serious.” It is! I’m so thankful that we have organizations like Spread the Word to End the Word that look at ending the “R” word. It makes me feel warm inside that other people have the same feelings that I have on

ending the derogatory use of the “R” word. Kudos to you guys for trying to make a difference.

#### By Selena Barrows

My little brother has autism. He is very low functioning and does not talk and cannot do basic things you and I can do. One day a boy called me retarded. It hurt me because I started thinking of what he would call my brother if he were to meet him with no knowledge of his disability. The boy continued to call me a retard. After I told the counselor, she called him in. It stopped. When I mention my brother in conversation, and forget to mention his autism, people sometimes hesitantly ask if he is dumb. I reply with a simple, “Nope. He has autism.” While we can’t make people stop using this word, we can at least make a difference. I also have Asperger’s and fear I will be a victim of that cruel word if I tell people. I shouldn’t have to live in fear of telling others about my differences. I shouldn’t feel insecure. I hope for a change, something this site can hopefully bring.

#### By Sydney Neal

I have a friend named Sierra. She has Down syndrome. Ever since I met Sierra, I started realizing how many people throw around the R-word like it doesn’t mean anything and like it won’t hurt anyone. This seriously needs to stop. You have a million different words you could say and you choose the one that hurts tons of people who are amazing and don’t deserve that. I know by being close to Sierra that those words hurt. She is not a label; she is a person. It doesn’t matter whether you are just joking with a friend or actually calling someone with a mental disability the R-word. If everyone made this pledge, imagine what our world could be.

#### Question for Reflection

What can you do to get involved in “Spread the Word to End the Word”? Taking the pledge may be an important first step, but what else do you think is essential if the language of discrimination is to end? To take the pledge, go to [www.r-word.org/](http://www.r-word.org/).

**Contextual Bias** The context in which we view someone can clearly influence our perceptions of that person. In a classic study from 1973, psychologist David Rosenhan investigated this premise by having himself and seven other “sane” individuals admitted to a number of state-run hospitals that treat mental illness across the United States. Once admitted to the hospitals, these subjects behaved as they normally would. The question was whether the staff would perceive them as people who were mentally healthy instead of as patients who experienced mental illness. Rosenhan reported that the eight pseudopatients were never detected by the hospital staff but were recognized as imposters by several of the legitimate patients. Throughout their hospital stays, the pseudopatients were incorrectly labeled and treated as though they had schizophrenia. Rosenhan’s investigation demonstrated that the context in which the observations are made could bias the perception of what is normal.

Another example of contextual bias can be seen in the peer-to-peer treatment of students with disabilities who are taught in self-contained special education classrooms compared to those who are taught in inclusive classrooms. Rose, Swearer, and Espelage (2012) found that children taught in segregated settings report being targets of bullying more frequently than peers in inclusive settings, suggesting that the context has an effect on the perceptions of classmates.

## 1-3 Changing Societal Views on People with Disabilities: From Discrimination to Inclusion

In the fourth century B.C., the Greek philosopher Aristotle openly declared, “As to the exposure and rearing of children, let there be a law that no deformed child shall live...” (Aristotle, 1941).

Aristotle’s stark statement is inconceivable in a civilized 21st-century world, but from the beginning of recorded time, children with disabilities were vulnerable to practices such as infanticide, slavery, physical abuse, and abandonment. Many civilizations accepted infanticide as a necessary means of controlling population growth and ensuring that only the strongest would survive in societies highly dependent on “living off the land.” Early Greek and Roman patriarchies practiced selected eugenics—the belief in the possibility of improving the human species by discouraging the reproduction of people having genetic defects or inheritable “undesirable” traits. Although there are notable exceptions to the barbarism that marked early history, such as the ancient Egyptians who viewed infanticide as a crime, many early civilizations viewed “deformed children” as a sign of weakness, shame, and an unnecessary burden on society. Such views continued well into the 20th century. In Nazi Germany, genocide had come full circle from early Greek and Roman history to reach its pinnacle in 1939, with the planned extermination of “the mentally and physically disabled” under Operation T4. In the Hitler era, people with disabilities were openly targeted for the “final solution.” The German government actively terminated the lives of people with disabilities as a means to purify the human race and put these individuals whose “life wasn’t worthy of life” out of their misery (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2014).

The 20th century was an era of marked contradictions in societal and government support for people with disabilities and their families. On one hand, treatment and education that had been denied for centuries were becoming more accessible. Schools were offering special classes for slow learners, children with physical disabilities, and those who were deaf and blind. In contrast, the societal view became increasingly more negative and accusatory. Parents were blamed for both the genetic inferiority of their children and were held responsible for not being able to take care of their needs without additional government support. The fear grew that many disabilities were passed on from generation to generation, and that eventually these “defectives” would defile the