

TRACING THE NARRATIVES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Between 1992 and 2011, the percentage of disabled American students educated in general classrooms increased by over 53%.

- Social Justice Narrative
- Technocracy Narrative

WHY has inclusion gained greater utilization?

TECHNOCRACY AS EDUCATIONAL POLICY

- Accountability Movement – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997, 2004) and No Child Left Behind (2001)
- High Stakes Testing Mandates includes students with disabilities
- Schools and Districts penalized for lack of progress (low test scores, reading & math)

TECHNOCRACY AS IDEOLOGY

- “a theory of governmental decision making designed to promote technical solutions to political problems” (Fischer, 1990, p. 18).
- “technocratic outlook” (Ridley, 1966, p. 42)
“technocratic mentality” (Putnam, 1977, p. 385)
“technocratic ideology” (Centeno, 1993, p. 311)
“technocratic mind-view (Bell, 1973, p. 349)
"technocratic consciousness" (Fischer, 1990, p. 41)

TECHNOCRACY: CONCEPTUAL FEATURES

1. *rationalization of human activity* – translates “the vital to the rational” (Bell, 1973)
2. *deterministic brand of positivist epistemology* – quantification
3. *top-down approach to governance* - authoritarian
4. *improving society through social engineering* – government expertise creates progress

CONCLUSIONS: KEY INFORMANTS

1. All informants agreed that *the inclusion movement has gained new energy and inclusive practice has gained greater implementation due to increase in top-down mandate.*
2. Six of the seven informants *described the top-down, technocratic mandate as supporting and furthering the social justice narrative of inclusive education.*
3. Despite speaking in strong support of inclusive education, two of the administrators warned that *inclusion is not for all disabled students.*

MEANS AND ENDS

“the technocratic outlook gives little guidance, except in broad terms, where there is a choice between different ends” (Ridley, 1966, p. 44)