

system: mainly children who have been labelled mentally handicapped, disabled or emotionally or behaviourally disturbed.

Children are screened out of the education system by being divided into two categories: those who can be educated and those who cannot be educated. Those who are labelled uneducable are then no longer considered the responsibility of the neighbourhood school. These classifications — educable and uneducable — are accepted because they are said to be based on objective and value-free criteria.

The problem is these classifications are founded on a knowledge base which presumes that the criteria determining whether a person is "educable" are inherent in the potential student. With this presumption, other conditions — such as the way the education system is structured or the way it operates — are not taken into consideration. There is no investigation into how structural or operational conditions affect a child's ability to benefit from regular education.

Most people have been convinced that scientific criteria ensure objectivity and, therefore, it is acceptable to create legislation based on such criteria. The political and social consequences of deciding that someone is uneducable are seldom taken into account or questioned.

### ***The Myth of Equitable Education***

The second myth is that education is equitable. Not only is it presumed that all children have access to the public education system but it is presumed that they all receive a similar or equal education.

Universal access to education is thought to include the notion of an equivalent and impartial quality of learning. This means it doesn't matter who the child is or where the child goes to school, what the child learns will be up to an accepted standard.

Once a person has access to education, which is said to be available for all, it then follows that the student's personal