

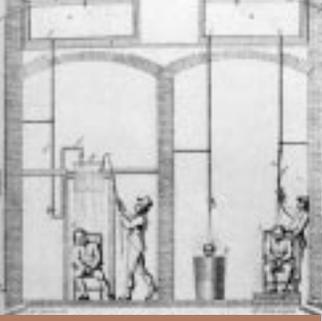
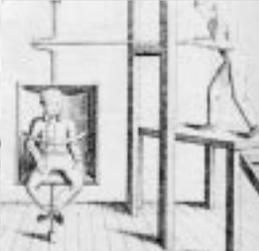
TREATMENT

SOCIETAL VALUES:

Education, belief in science, and a romantic view of humanity.

RESPONSES TO DISABILITY:

Study and attempt to cure the "patients," lock away those found incurable, and build large facilities to house them.



Early treatments to "cure" disability were often brutal. Versions of the tranquilizer chair (top left) can still be found in some institutions.

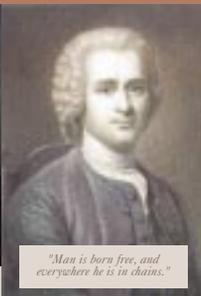
Moral Management: Philip Pinel (1745-1826), the leading French psychiatrist of his day, was the first to say that the "mentally deranged" were diseased rather than sinful or immoral. He practiced gentle treatment and patience rather than using physical abuse and chains on hospital patients. In 1793, Pinel famously removed the chains and restraints from the inmates at the Bicetre asylum, and later from those at Salpêtrière.

A GRADUAL UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENCE LEADS TO NEW AND OFTEN PAINFUL TREATMENTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

John Locke



Jean Jacques Rousseau



"Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains."

Jean-Marc Gaspard Itard



In 1799, Jean-Marc Gaspard Itard (1774-1838), a student of Pinel and an advocate of Rousseau's "noble savage" beliefs, heard reports of a boy abandoned in the woods of Aveyron, France, who had apparently been raised by wolves. "Victor, the Wild Boy of Aveyron," as he was called, was chosen by Itard as an experimental subject to prove the validity of John Locke's "blank slate" concept: that a person could become, or be made into, whatever one wants. Victor was probably in his early teens, a child with severe mental retardation who likely had been abandoned by his parents. Victor made some progress in adapting to his new environment, but Itard grew discouraged, not seeing the dramatic changes he hoped for. Still, with his limited success, Itard did prove that children with mental retardation could improve to some extent.

With the industrial revolution of the 18th century, more and more people flooded into cities, working for extremely low wages and living in squalid conditions. Children represented a large portion of the work force, performing grueling work for twelve to sixteen hours per day. Pauper children were often contracted to factory owners for cheap labor. To get rid of "imbecile" children, parish authorities often bargained with factory owners to take one "imbecile" with every twenty children. In most cases, these children disappeared mysteriously.



In 1798, Thomas Malthus published "Essay on the Principle of Population," arguing that population multiplies geometrically, food arithmetically, and therefore that population will outstrip food supply. In addition to cutting the birth rate by sexual restraint and birth control, Malthus advocated identifying all people "defective" in any way, who looked or behaved or functioned differently than the rest of us, and eliminating them.



INVOLVEMENT BY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES:

People become objects of study, are used in experiments, and assume the role of "patients."

1799

"Victor, the Wild Child," is discovered in the woods of Aveyron, France. Philip Pinel removes the chains and restraints from the inmates at the Bicetre asylum, and later from those at the Salpêtrière.

1805

Rush's Medical Inquiries and Observations is the first modern attempt to explain mental disorders.

1801

Jean-Marc Gaspard Itard publishes De l'Education d'un Homme Sauvage which describes his efforts to educate Victor, the Wild Boy of Aveyron.

1815

Thomas H. Gallaudet departs for Europe to seek methods to teach the Deaf.

1809

Louis Braille is born at Coupvray, near Paris. At three years of age an accident deprives him of his sight, and in 1819 he is sent to the Paris Blind School which was originated by Valentin Haüy.

1816

Laurent Clerc, a Deaf French man, returns to America with Thomas H. Gallaudet.

1817

Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons, the first permanent school for the deaf in America, opens in Hartford on April 15.

1824

The Connecticut Retreat for the Insane (later named the Hartford Retreat and now named the Institute for Living) admits its first patients.

1825

Louis Braille learns of a military method of communicating at night through the use of 12 raised dots on paper. In 1829 he simplifies the code to a 6-dot system for use by the blind. Samuel Gridley Howe opens the New England Asylum for the Blind (later named the Perkins School for the Blind) in Boston.

1822

American School for the Deaf adds vocational training to curriculum.